

Graduate Council Minutes

November 13, 2015

Attendance: Emilia Alonso-Sameno, Tim Anderson, Steve Bergmeier, Sonsoles De Lacalle, Andrea Frohne, Janet Hulm, Sarah Kaplan, David Koonce, Krisanna Machtmes, Vladimir Marchenkov, Brian McCarthy, Martin Mohlenkamp, Shawn Ostermann, Liudmila Pestun, Erik Ramsey, Joseph Shields, Gaurav Sinha, Gursel Suer and Katherine Tadlock.

Excused: Austin Babrow, Geoff Dabelko, Michelle Ferrier, Jennifer Horner, Chulho Jung, Jody Lamb, Jundong Liu, Bose Maposa, Chris Moberg, Ann Paulins, Anirudh Ruhil, and Carl Smith.

Convened: The meeting was convened at 3:10 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes of the October 9, 2015 meeting

The minutes of the October 9, 2015 meeting were approved.

2. Chair's Report (Steve Bergmeier)

Steve introduced the Graduate Student Senate members; Sarah Kaplan (Vice President of Communications) and Liudmila Pestun (Vice President of Finance and Administration). Sarah said she is from Athens and is a Master's student in the Public Administration program. Liudmila said she is from Belarus and is a Master's student in the International Development Studies program.

Joe asked members if they would be okay with having the next meeting of the Graduate Council on December 11th instead of the 4th (currently scheduled for this day). He added that Joe and David will be out of town on the 4th of December. Members agreed to have the meeting on December 11th, 2015.

3. Remarks by Joseph Shields, Dean of the Graduate College

Joe told members about the Theatre Delta presentation held last week. He said that the interactive performance group helps people think about issues encountered in graduate school. He said that this format of interactive theatre for social change allows the discussion of issues like advisor-advisee relationships and research ethics. He said there were about 40 people and the feedback has been positive. He said that he would like to consider a future presentation as well. Joe thanked Sara Helfrich for organizing the event.

Joe said that Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) was on campus 10 days ago. He added that he was in four meetings with the group and that the university received positive feedback. He also said that he believes directives pertaining to more engagement with assessment might be coming through in the near future.

Joe said that last night he attended a meeting of the GSS which was also attended by President McDavis. He said that the students questioned the general fee and the lack of mention of it in their offer letters. Discussion focused on the importance of having all fees noted clearly in admission

letters. It was decided that a template with standard text should be made available to graduate chairs.

4. Remarks by David Koonce, Associate Dean of the Graduate College

David said that he enjoyed the excellent performance by Theatre Delta. He added that it would have been nice to see more students attend the event.

He said that Sara Helfrich is hosting information sessions for the three minute thesis competitions that will be held in February 2016. The three minute thesis is gaining popularity at institutions worldwide and that the institutions that have hosted it, have provided positive feedback.

David said that per the preliminary headcount for this fall (4932), it seems that we are just around where we were last fall (5036). He said that according to the Registrar's dashboard 5075 students are enrolled this semester. He added that enrollment for outreach has increased and he expects, the enrollment at the Dublin campus to hold steady.

5. Remarks by Katie Tadlock, Assistant Dean of the Graduate College

Katie informed members that last spring the Provost had set up a committee to look into certificates. She said that the committee is tackling the low hanging fruit first. She said one of the important topics of discussion has been clarification of language regarding the interdisciplinary nature of the certificates. She said that other issues that will be discussed are degrees earned through stackable certificates; i.e., completing a series of stand-alone certificates with the provision of a capstone project for the last one. She added that this method provides flexibility for delivering content for credentialing purposes; and that micro credentialing for specific skills and curricular transcripts are gaining popularity. Katie said that there are a lot of details that need to be addressed. The committee recommends moving forward with this structure. However, one of the issues that students run into is that certificates are non-degree by nature, and hence students pursuing a certificate are not eligible for federal financial aid. She said that significant amount of alumni tracking and salary infrastructures are required to look into making a case for financial aid eligibility. The advice from financial aid offices is to not pursue this option. The Provost is interested in a pilot program, so more information on this should be coming through. In response to a question from Steve, Katie said that graduate certificates are not required to be interdisciplinary in nature. Emilia asked about the credit hour limit for certificates. Katie said that the minimum number of hours is nine and that certificates over 20 hours have to be approved by the state. She added that most certificates fall in the 12-19 hour range; those can be initiated with department, UCC, and Graduate Council approval.

6. Graduate Course Availability

Sonsoles said that she has been told that graduate students are finding conflicting information about the classes offered and when they are offered. Steve said if there isn't enough enrollment for a class that was scheduled to be offered, then it is cancelled. This causes problems for students who are taking interdisciplinary classes. Martin said that he had written a script which allowed all the classes in his department over a period of eight years to be offered on a rotation. Steve said that most departments offer classes at least on a two year schedule. Sonsoles said that many times the

classes that are published are not offered. She added that we might need to raise consciousness about this issue and to encourage our students to enrich their perspectives by taking interdisciplinary classes.

7. IELTS score for clearing non-native English speaking Teaching Assistants

Katie drew members' attention to the handout about the IELTS scores. She said that Dawn Bikowski sent the table noted in the handout. Katie said that this provides students with one more avenue to meet the state mandated clearance required for TAs. She said that this would also allow the Graduate College to have a more automated process to mark this on a student's record. Katie clarified that all TAs, whether native or non-native speakers of English are required to be cleared by academic departments. By using the IELTS score, just like we use the iBT score, students can be cleared before the beginning of the term. Katie said that Dawn has helped us identify the band score for complete clearance and clearance with concurrent enrollment in the appropriate ELIP class. In response to a question from Steve about the number of students taking the speaking part of the IELTS, Katie clarified that it is a part of the test, so everyone who takes the IELTS, also has a score on the speaking part of the test. At this time, data is not available for the question asked by Sarah regarding the percentage of students who score 7 on that band. Liudmila said that as an international student, she can attest to the fact that the IELTS is a difficult test.

Katie explained that this is a state requirement and that many years ago, we used only the SPEAK test scores to clear students who had any instructional responsibility. Once OPIE and ELIP had enough data from the iBT that they could compare with the SPEAK test scores, they were able to recommend using the speak test score of the iBT to clear students for teaching. She added that proficiency in learning in a language and proficiency in teaching in a language are different. Shawn said that we have to ensure that the undergraduate students who take classes taught by non-native speakers of English are able to understand their instructors. Katie said that we did not see this proposal earlier because there wasn't enough data to support it. Dawn is comfortable with these scores, so we would defer to her expertise on this matter.

It was decided that members would review the proposal and it will be voted upon at the December 11th, 2015 meeting.

8. Graduate Student Fees

Members discussed that the different kinds of fees and their amounts should be made clear to graduate students. It was also noted that at the rally held yesterday graduate students spoke about the reduction in the general fees. Liudmila said that graduate students do not attend the athletics events which the general fee goes towards. A proposal was introduced to separate the undergraduate and graduate general fees and use the graduate general fee buy down to instead reduce the graduate general fee. Joe said that it would be helpful for any proposal that is endorsed by the Graduate Council, to also have the support of the faculty senate. That will help the process at the Budget Planning Council. Steve said that the planning and strategy committee can review this proposal and can bring it back to be voted upon at the December 11th, 2015 meeting. And, then it can be sent to the Faculty Senate, to see if they would be willing to support it.

9. Committee Reports

Martin drew members' attention to the hand out about the programs appeals process that he passed to everyone. In response to a question from Steve, Katie said that this is not addressed in the catalog. She added that it is important for students to be aware of the due process and to have clear information about policies. Members discussed the timeline noted in the proposal and whether the time period of 15 days noted for the first two steps would be sufficient. Shawn said that there are a few times in the year when the two week period is not enough. Steve added that the proposal can be edited to note that the Associate Dean will respond in 30 days. Brian and Shawn said that they do not see this issue too often. Biran added that based on the time allotted in the proposal, it comes to 105 days, and that he does not think, it would take that long. It would probably take half as long to get an issue of this nature resolved.

It was noted that everyone will need to be aware of the implications for international students, since their immigration status is at stake.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 pm.

Appendix

Proposal:

Set levels for IELTS scores be able to clear a potential non-native English speaking TA for teaching, in addition to the SPEAK test and the iBT speaking score.

Recommendation from Dawn Bikowski and ELIP, based on:

1. Policies at other institutions
2. An analysis of scores at OU (for those students who have an IELTS score for comparison, though it is not many)
3. Band descriptions for the IELTS (as compared to the iBT and SPEAK test bands)

	iBT Speaking	SPEAK Test	IELTS Speaking
Cleared to teach	24 or higher	230 or higher	7.0 or higher
Provisional teaching (teach with concurrent class)	21-23	190-220	6.5