

The University of Akron
Minutes of the Graduate Faculty
April 26, 2017
College of Arts and Sciences, Room 407

Dean Chand Midha called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

Present: Dr. Philip Allen, Dr. Forrest Sheng Bao, Associate Dean Charles Beneke, Ms. Heather Blake, Dr. George Chase, Dr. Kristina English, Mr. Sean Kennedy, Ms. Diane Maffei, Mr. Alan Mathis, Dr. Ronald Otterstetter, Dr. John Peck, Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Dr. Linda Shanks, Dr. Harvey Sterns, and Dr. Margaret Tung.

Approval of the minutes of the 2015-2016 Graduate Faculty meeting held April 27, 2016

Dr. Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of the 2015-2016 Graduate Faculty meeting. Dr. Shanks seconded the motion. Minutes were approved without dissent.

Reports

University Libraries

Mr. Sean Kennedy, Collection Management Librarian, provided a report from the University Libraries on behalf of Interim Dean, Dr. Aimee DeChambeau. Mr. Kennedy stated that the Instructional Services (Audio Visual, Distance Learning, Design and Development, and CBAE) was reorganized within the University Libraries structure. Room 61 in Bierce Library was renovated into a flexible classroom set-up. Two new Library staff members have been hired, a new Applied Technology Coordinator and a new Head of Electronic Services. Mr. Kennedy highlighted some of the University Libraries programming this year, including the first Library Amnesty event, which cleared students' fines and holds; RefWorks Migration workshops, New Explorations in Teaching Conference, and targeted workshops on research, scholarship, and academic integrity issues for Engineering students.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the collections budget for University Libraries is funded through student fees and an allocation from the University. University Libraries has experienced a decrease in funds from student fees as a result of the current enrollment challenges. The only way to add new content is to cancel current subscriptions to journals, databases, or monographs. Savings from cancellations are reinvested into new content. New journals fill collection gaps, meet areas of research need, and take faculty recommendations into consideration. Notice is sent to students when cancelling a journal; however, even if a journal is canceled the article can be acquired for students. Mr. Kennedy added that University Libraries works closely with OhioLINK and nearby institutions to gain as many benefits as possible through collaborative collection development. Funding for new resources is projected to remain limited for a minimum of two more fiscal years.

Graduate Student Government

Mr. Allen Mathis, Senator, Graduate Student Government, provided a report from the organization on behalf of GSG President, Marina Pelemis. Mr. Mathis stated that the biggest program GSG had this year was funding students to attend conferences through

professional enrichment grants (PEGs). GSG offered a resume writing and interview training program. Unfortunately, the program did not garner much participation. \$3,000 will be rolled over from this year to next year's GSG budget. Lastly, Mr. Mathis said that a new GSG President and Vice President have been elected. Taylor Swift has been elected President, and Eric Succup has been elected Vice President.

Dr. Allen asked how much money was requested for PEGs and how much was awarded.

Mr. Mathis responded that GSS had \$12,000 this year. This money ran out in February.

Graduate Council

Dr. Ronald Otterstetter, Vice Chair, Graduate Council, provided a report on this year's activities of Graduate Council. Dr. Otterstetter stated that since the beginning of the academic year Graduate Council has had 13 meetings. Fifty-eight curriculum proposals were approved as recommended by the Curriculum Committee. Fifty-four graduate faculty applications were approved as recommended by the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. A program review committee consisting of nine members was established. The program review committee is co-chaired by Associate Dean, Charles Beneke, and Dr. Phil Allen and includes three members of Graduate Council and four additional graduate faculty members. Graduate Council spent this academic year working on strategic initiatives for graduate assistantships that have resulted in changes in Graduate School funding, including a new funding model for master's students. Graduate Council has discussed oral English proficiency for teaching assistants and approved a motion that no new teaching assistantship contracts can be awarded to students who have not received a 23 or higher on the speaking component of the TOEFL. Lastly, Dr. Otterstetter stated that Graduate Council has begun discussing the HLC policy requirement that instructors teaching in graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and has also begun looking at the requirements for *Ad Hoc* Temporary graduate faculty status.

Dean of the Graduate School

Dean Midha stated that the University is in a difficult financial situation. At the bi-monthly meeting of the Chancellor's Council on Graduate Studies he asked graduate deans from other institutions what they spend on graduate assistantship. The University of Akron, in comparison, is awarding many more assistantships than other institutions. In exploring possibilities to make cuts we didn't want to hurt research productivity at UA nor hurt doctoral programs; however, the Graduate School will no longer fund any research assistants. Additionally, it is necessary that departments clearly identify what teaching assistants are doing. Dean Midha added that the University must also maximize state subsidy. He and others met with Jim Bennett at ODHE to discuss these issues. Ms. Diane Maffei has joined the Graduate School as a Business Reporting Analyst and will be working on subsidy issues. The number of a course does not make a difference but, rather, the content of the course. Ms. Maffei may start meeting with departments to look at their graduate courses. Dean Midha mentioned that HLC is concerned with who is teaching graduate-level courses. Some NTT faculty hired to teach graduate courses may only hold a recently conferred master's degree. Many institutions have a graduate faculty category just for teaching.

Dr. Sterns asked if graduate contracts are currently being written.

Dean Midha responded that new contracts have been sent out and are available. Student previously received 15+15+15. Most master's programs require 30-35 credits; however, students are taking many more credits than required. The maximum number of credits allowed on an assistantship is 30 per year (12+12+6). Students should graduate upon completion of their degree requirements.

Dr. Chase mentioned that students are required to take a minimum number of credits in addition to a research project, so students may need to enroll in credits for the research project.

Dean Midha stated that students are not going to be hurt in the process, but going forward every discipline will be looking at the number of credits required for the degree. Revenue is coming from tuition and subsidy from the state, and expenses include faculty and staff salaries, operating expenses, scholarships and stipends. This is going to be calculated for every unit.

Changes University Rule 3359-24-01 Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty

Associate Dean Beneke presented the following revisions to the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty:

Replace Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School with Dean of the Graduate School throughout the rule.

Dr. Chase made a motion to approve this change. Dr. Sterns seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Amend Graduate Council membership to include appointed Faculty Senate representatives, thus the Graduate Council shall consist of sixteen voting members, including fourteen elected graduate faculty members and two elected Faculty Senate representatives.

Dr. Sterns made a friendly amendment to the proposed change to include the Associate Dean of the Graduate School as a non-voting member.

Dr. Otterstetter made a motion to approve this change, including the friendly amendment. Dr. Chase seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Amend language so that Graduate Council members may serve two consecutive terms but no more.

Dr. Chase made a motion to approve this change. Dr. Otterstetter seconded the motion. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Changes to University Rule 3359-60-06.6 Graduate Student Assistantships

Associate Dean Beneke presented the following revision to the graduate student assistantship rule:

Graduate School funded assistantships are awarded for up to two years of master's study, up to five years of doctoral degree study, and up to five years of masters'/doctoral degree study. No student will receive an assistantship for more than five years.

Dr. Sastry made a motion to approve this change. Dr. Chase seconded the motion.
Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather A. Blake
Graduate School