

The University of Akron
Minutes of Graduate Council
November 10, 2014

The Graduate Council met on Monday, November 10, 2014, in the Student Union, Room 314. R. Ramsier presided. Present were A. Booher, J. Goodell, M. Graham, Q. Jensrud, A. Joy, N. Makki, F. Moore, R. Otterstetter, I. Schwarber, J. Spiker, A. Thomas, P. Thomson, and R. Willits.

Guests in attendance: H. Blake and T. McCune

GC Members Absent with Notice: J. Puskas and B. Zhao

GC Members Absent: P. Allen and H. Sterns

Call to Order

R. Ramsier called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Roll Call

H. Blake recorded the attendance of those present.

Approval of Minutes

F. Moore made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2014 meeting.

J. Spiker seconded the motion.

Minutes of the October 27, 2014 meeting were approved without dissent.

New Business

R. Ramsier stated that he asked H. Blake to identify those University rules related to graduate students, so that they could be reviewed by Graduate Council alongside what is published in the Graduate Bulletin. Inconsistencies exist between the two, so it is necessary to discuss and determine what changes should be made. It seems appropriate that this task be undertaken by the Student Policy Committee.

First to be addressed should be the demonstration of English language proficiency by international students. University Rule 3359-60-06.2 states that this competence can best be established by achieving a score of at least 550 on the TOEFL; however, it doesn't say that it must be established through the TOEFL. Additionally, the rule indicates that completion of an English placement test after admittance will be required. Such test is to be administered by the University to its international students.

T. McCune explained the current practices undertaken and requirements imposed by the Graduate School related to English language proficiency for international applicants. Additionally, she provided information on what the RACGS institutions requires of their international applicants. While many University of Akron international applicants are academically qualified for admission if they do not meet the minimum TOEFL score they will be conditionally admitted. This would, then, require students to study in the English Language Institute, which they would have to pay for themselves and be permitted to take only ELI courses. No enrollment in graduate coursework is permitted before successful completion of ELI.

Graduate Council members discussed some possible options that could be explored such as in-house English testing, creation of a center through which students receive tutoring to improve English proficiency (speaking and writing), and limiting conditional admission.

R. Ramsier asked that the Student Policy Committee examine this issue and develop some recommendations about possible changes to the University rule and Graduate Bulletin as well as recommendation related to the establishment of a center for students. It is important that the recommendations are manageable.

R. Ramsier informed Council members about the necessity of compliance with Title IX. This is a matter on which everyone must be trained, including graduate assistants, thus a plan needs to be put in place to ensure students are trained on Title IX.

Meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Graham
Secretary