

The University of Akron
Minutes of Graduate Council
December 11, 2017

The Graduate Council met on Monday, December 11, 2017, in the Student Union, Room 310. Dean Chand Midha presided. Present were Dr. Philip Allen, Mr. Charles Beneke, Ms. Heather Blake, Dr. Amanda Booher, Dr. Marcus Braga Alves, Dr. George Chase, Dr. Gary Holliday, Dr. Carolyn Murrock, Dr. Francesco Renna, Dr. Jina Sang, Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Associate Dean Marnie Saunders, Dr. John Senko, Dr. Mark Soucek, and Dr. Margaret Tung.

Guest in Attendance: Dr. Harvey Sterns

GC Members Absent with Notice: Dr. Wondimu Ahmed, Dr. Martha Santos, and Dr. Nicole Zacharia

GC Members Absent: Mr. Taylor Swift and Dr. Baffour Takyi

Call to Order

Dean Midha called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

Roll Call

Heather Blake recorded the attendance of those present.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the November 20, 2017 meeting were approved without dissent.

Remarks – Dean Midha

Dean Midha stated that since the November 20 meeting there was some clarification on the resolution passed by APC and Faculty Senate that undergraduate students be charged undergraduate tuition rates for graduate courses taken to satisfy baccalaureate degree requirements. Associate Dean Saunders clarified this with Mr. Bill Rich, Chair, Faculty Senate. Associate Dean Saunders added that neither APC nor Faculty Senate considered the question whether undergraduate students should pay the undergraduate tuition rates for graduate courses when they are taken for credit toward a graduate degree. Mr. Rich said that this should be considered by Graduate Council, but asked that this occur after the administration and Board of Trustees act on the resolution already passed by Faculty Senate.

Committee Reports

Membership Committee – Dr. Holliday stated that the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee has discussed the issue of graduate faculty membership for NTT faculty and recommends that the NTT faculty not be accorded full-time graduate faculty membership. NTT faculty members are permitted to apply for Ad Hoc Temporary graduate faculty membership. The committee also recommends that the section of the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty pertaining to Ad Hoc Temporary graduate faculty membership be amended to read, “adjunct, part-time, visiting, NTT, and other faculty members shall be eligible for Ad Hoc Temporary “Category I” appointment to the graduate faculty.”

Dean Midha said the length of time for an Ad Hoc Temporary appointment should be considered. He inquired about the contract length for NTT faculty.

Dr. Renna responded that it depends on the individual NTT faculty member’s appointment letter. NTT faculty members can be appointed for one, three, or five years.

Dr. Allen made a friendly amendment to the committee’s recommendation to include a change in the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty related to the length of time of Ad Hoc Temporary graduate faculty appointments to read, “The Dean of the Graduate School shall make such an appointment for a specified period of time to fulfill specified function(s), normally for duration of the appointment or up to a period of five years.”

The amended motion was unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Dean Midha said that many instructors are granted Ad Hoc Temporary graduate faculty status year after year, and now, according to HLC, instructors need to hold terminal or master's degrees to teach. He has an Ad Hoc Temporary graduate faculty application for an instructor who only holds a bachelor's degree. This instructor has been teaching at the graduate-level since 1997. There is another instructor holding only a bachelor's degree and one that does not possess any degree. Both currently have Ad Hoc status. Dean Midha informed Graduate Council that he is going to approve the application given the length of time the instructor has teaching graduate courses.

Dr. Sterns stated that there are many institutions that have instructors who don't hold a terminal degree but are well-qualified to teach based on their level of expertise and reputation in their field.

New Business

Dean Midha stated that the funding model for allocations to new master's students has been reviewed. The colleges of Arts and Sciences and Engineering have provided information on how they have distributed their respective allocations. Where money is distributed within the colleges is up to the dean of that college not the Graduate School.

Associate Dean Saunders provided information on the total savings resulting from the new funding model for master's students (AY 17 vs. AY 18). A total savings of \$8.4M was incurred. There was \$5.75M savings from tuition remission and \$2.64M savings from stipends. In assessing the GA allocation process for new master's students Associate Dean Saunders shared that for Fall 2017 \$700,000 in stipends was allocated to the colleges, and \$915,000 in tuition remission was allocated. The College of Arts and Sciences was given \$341,000 for stipends and \$440,000 for tuition remission. The College of Engineering was given \$169,000 for stipends and \$220,000 for tuition remission.

Dean Midha mentioned that at the last meeting a question was raised about scholarships given last year in Arts and Sciences and such scholarships not being offered this year. He stated that this is entirely up to the dean. Tuition waivers were given as scholarships. This was successful in some departments and unsuccessful in other departments. Stipends in the College of Arts and Sciences did not go to all departments.

Dr. Chase asked if the information provided represents a combination of teaching and research assistants.

Associate Dean Saunders responded that the information provided is representative of all Graduate School funded graduate assistants.

Dean Midha said that there are very few master's-level RAs. Last year, the recommendation was made that no research assistants be funded by the Graduate School. Polymer Science had 37 graduate assistants funded as RAs until last year. This year, these graduate assistants are funded as TAs. Fourteen are working in the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering, and 23 are serving in other colleges (19 in Engineering and 4 in Arts and Sciences). All are supposed to work 20 hours per week. The question arose whether or not they have 20 hours of work.

Dr. Sterns asked how well these students assigned to other areas are working out.

Dean Midha responded that he can ask for this information.

Dr. Sastry said that someone should be authenticating the work of these TAs.

Associate Dean Saunders provided information on allocations for new master's students for Fall 2018. The allocations were based on what was actually spent the previous year. The College of Arts and Sciences received \$325,000 for stipends and \$465,000 for tuition remission, and the College of Engineering received \$150,000 for stipends and \$265,000 for tuition remission. These funds have been distributed to the departments by the college deans. There were no stipends or tuition remission allocated to Business, Education, or Health Professions.

Dr. Allen stated that departments may be able to get five or six new students if provided a stipend. These new students would have net revenue.

Dean Midha stated that last year some departments were paying a stipend of \$3,000 to attract new students. The College of Arts and Sciences tried this last year by using the stipend as a scholarship. This worked for some departments and did not work for others.

Dr. Allen questioned if it could or should be continued for those departments for which it did work.

Dr. Sastry stated that net revenue is critical for the budget. He asked if there is a plan to give the deans a net revenue target.

Dean Midha said that in the program review cycle there have been discussions on the budget table, including the number of credit hours generated and net revenue gained.

Dr. Soucek stated that all master's students in the College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering pay tuition.

Associate Dean Saunders provided a summary by college of the stipends and tuition remission allocated for master's students. The summary included allocations for new master's students in Fall 2017, continuing master's students in Fall 2018, and new master's students in Fall 2018. The amount spent in Fall 2017 will be used to fund continuing students in Fall 2018.

Dr. Sterns asked if there would be another benchmark done with other institutions.

Dean Midha requested Mr. Beneke get these comparisons.

Dr. Soucek questioned whether there is a policy stating that if a student has a graduate degree from the University all credit hours roll into cumulative credit hours and years of funding. He has a doctoral student for whom he has paid the stipend, but the student is now entering her seventh year and will not receive tuition remission.

Dean Midha responded that it is not an issue of credit hours, but, rather degrees. Students are not graduating and staying here going from one program to another. They are not graduating with one degree before beginning another, then continuing to be funded.

Dr. Sastry stated that students should not be permitted to earn three or four degrees and have them all paid for.

Dean Midha said that if the stipend is coming from a grant the Graduate School may make an exception to fund the tuition.

Dr. Allen asked if the grant could cover tuition.

Dr. Soucek stated that he cannot fund tuition with the grant.

Associate Dean Saunders said that no subsidy is received beyond 174 graduate credit hours.

Meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Shivakumar Sastry
Secretary