

The University of Akron
Minutes of Graduate Council
March 13, 2017

The Graduate Council met on Monday, March 13, 2017, in the Student Union, Room 310. Dean Chand Midha presided. Present were Associate Dean Charles Beneke, Heather Blake, Dr. Amanda Booher, Dr. Marcus Braga-Alves, Dr. Gary Holliday, Dr. Ronald Otterstetter, Dr. Martha Santos, Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Dr. John Senko, Dr. James Steiger, Dr. Harvey Sterns, and Dr. Baffour Takyi.

GC Members Absent with Notice: Dr. Philip Allen, Dr. Qetler Jensrud, Dr. Judit Puskas, Dr. Andrew Thomas, Dr. Margaret Tung, and Dr. Nicole Zacharia

GC Members Absent: Marina Pelemis

Call to Order

Dean Midha called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Roll Call

Heather Blake recorded the attendance of those present.

Remarks – Dean Midha

Dean Midha stated that there have been significant changes in the funding model for graduate assistantships. Monies have been allocated to the deans for master's students. Stipend dollars associated with doctoral students who are graduating this year will be allocated back to the deans. The deans have flexibility in reallocating those dollars. The Graduate School will continue to award tuition dollars for doctoral students with the exception that student will get 12+12+6 as FTE, according to OBR, is 30 credits per year. For certain STEM programs 20 credit hours is considered FTE. One credit hour of enrollment equals 1.5 FTE. At the University Chemistry and Polymer Science are identified as STEM programs for subsidy purposes.

Dean Midha explained that for bachelor's and master's degrees SSI is based on course completion and degree completion. Enrollment doesn't count directly. Subsidy levels are different for different disciplines. Degree completion is relative to the number of degrees awarded in the state. For doctoral degrees a fixed amount has been set aside. This was determined in the late 1990s. The University is given approximately \$10 million based on 761 FTE. As long as the University is within 85% on the lower end of 761 and 120% on the upper end the amount given is not going to change. Doctoral subsidy is based on enrollment; degrees awarded, and research expenditures. Each year the reliance on enrollment becomes less while the reliance on degrees awarded becomes greater.

Current rules define full-time enrollment at the University as fall – nine credits, spring – nine credits, and summer – zero credits (or six credits if the student is receiving financial support). There is no requirement for summer enrollment if the student is not being supported. If an international student begins his/her program in the summer, then the student must enroll in nine credit hours.

The University's full-time enrollment requirement of 9+9+0 (or 6) fits into the doctoral student requirement of 12+12+6.

Dean Midha stated that there are many STEM programs at the University, but for subsidy purposes only two programs fall into this category according to the state, Chemistry and Polymer Science. In order to meet the goal of FTE students in these programs only need to enroll in 8+8+4. This situation has been discussed with the Provost, and he supports limiting credit hours of tuition, requiring 30 credits for doctoral students and 20 credits for STEM doctoral students. This will require a rule change.

Dr. Sastry suggested an enrollment of 9+9+2 for STEM doctoral programs as most courses are three credit hours. The enrollment requirement could be either 8+8+4 or 9+9+2.

Associate Dean Beneke stated that University Rule indicates that full-time for graduate students is nine credit hours and anything less than nine credit hours is considered part-time.

Dean Midha said that for doctoral students it is important to maintain 12+12+6. A student becomes a doctoral student if he/she holds a master's degree or has completed 30 credit hours. When a student enters a doctoral program without holding a master's degree the first 30 credits taken by the student are considered master's-level.

Dr. Sastry made a motion that for certain STEM doctoral programs for which the state allows 1.5 FTE 8+8+4 or 9+9+2 constitutes full-time registration.

Dr. Sterns seconded the motion.

Dr. Otterstetter made a friendly amendment to the motion as follows: for STEM programs designated by the state to get higher subsidy full-time enrollment is considered 8+8+4 or 9+9+2.

Friendly amendment to the motion was accepted, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Associate Dean Beneke stated that an amendment will now need to be made to the University Rule.

Dr. Sastry made a motion that Graduate Council recommends that this change in full-time status be made in all rules, bulletins, and advertising materials.

Dr. Takyi seconded this motion.

Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Dr. Sastry requested that discussion regarding full-time enrollment for master's students be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Consider allowing two credit hours of enrollment for summer instead of six.

Dr. Sterns said it is important to note that there are fewer courses offered during the summer.

Graduate Council Membership Rules

Dr. Sastry stated that the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty do not allow members serving full three-year terms to succeed themselves. Graduate Council members should be able to seek re-election if they choose, seeking an additional term.

Dr. Sastry made a motion that Graduate Council members may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Dr. Booher seconded this motion.

Nine aye votes. One abstention. Motion carries.

Associate Dean Beneke stated that the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty do not include Faculty Senate representatives as members of Graduate Council.

Dr. Sterns made a motion to revise the Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty to include the two Faculty Senate representatives as members of Graduate Council.

Dr. Holliday seconded the motion.

Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

Dr. Midha said that the number of Graduate Council representatives from each of the colleges should be looked at. This can be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Shivakumar Sastry
Secretary