

The University of Akron
Minutes of Graduate Council
April 25, 2016

The Graduate Council met on Monday, April 25, 2016, in the Student Union, Room 314. Dean Chand Midha presided. Present were Dr. Philip Allen, Charles Beneke, Dr. Amanda Booher, Dr. John Goodell, Dr. Qetler Jensrud, Dr. Nidaa Makki, Dr. Judit Puskas, Dr. Martha Santos, Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Dr. Julia Spiker, Dr. Harvey Sterns, Lauri Thorpe, Dr. Margaret Tung, Dr. Anne Wiley, Dr. Nicole Zacharia, and Dr. Baomei Zhao.

GC Members Absent with Notice: Dr. Ronald Otterstetter

GC Members Absent: Dr. Andrew Thomas

Call to Order

Dean Midha called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Roll Call

Heather Blake recorded the attendance of those present.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Sterns made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2016 meeting.

Dr. Puskas seconded the motion.

Minutes of the March 28 meeting were approved without dissent.

Remarks – Dean Midha

Dean Midha stated that Galen Graber from Ruffalo Noel Levitz was scheduled to join Graduate Council via WebEx; however, he is still working on the preliminary report. Charles Beneke and Lauri Thorpe spoke with Galen Graber on Friday, April 22, and determined some data in the report were not consistent. As a result, they will continue working with him over the next couple of weeks to get a presentation prepared for Graduate Council.

Dean Midha reminded Council members of the annual graduate faculty meeting on Wednesday, April 27, 3:00 PM. A reminder will be sent to the graduate faculty.

Dean Midha shared that the alternative models for tuition remission being considered was raising a big concern among several sections of the university. He said that over the summer months a subset of members of the graduate council would meet to draft how to streamline the process and make it more efficient and offer these recommendations for discussion to the council. Dr. Allen expressed concern that it was not clear what needed to be improved – revenues? Enrollment? Members discussed that Cleveland State University has proportionally larger graduate student population (about 4000 students) and only 10% of them are supported by the graduate school. CSU enrollment in Business and Education are large. Members discussed the need to grow enrollment at UA. Currently, the expenditure is about \$8.3M in assistantships and about \$22M in tuition remission (2014-15 data) and we need to examine how much we are spending on Research Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Administrative Assistants on campus in a comprehensive manner. Dr. Sterns mentioned that for good-or-for-bad, some commitments have already been made and we need to continue these commitments without hurting the students. Everyone agreed that student impact was a high priority and we must do everything to make sure this is minimized, if at all.

Discussion followed pertaining to the location of the Graduate School. Members of Graduate Council expressed that the Graduate School should be in a more central location. This would provide greater visibility.

Dr. Sastry made a motion to move the Graduate School offices to a central location.

Dr. Puskas seconded this motion.

Motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Sastry conveyed a suggestion from a faculty member in Engineering for the strategic plan to consider improving diversity among the student body. Dean Midha stated that there used to be a pool of money specifically for diversity funding; however, this will become a regular part of graduate assistantship allocations. It is necessary to increase diversity among graduate students. Discussion followed related to defining diversity and identifying diverse populations. It was agreed that a comprehensive and holistic view of diversity that includes racial diversity, intellectual diversity, and more representation of under-represented groups would be considered. Dr. Makki stated that the McNair Scholars Program was one of the best programs to get minority students. Dr. Allen suggested that to get more diverse students at the graduate-level we need to emphasize research at the undergraduate-level.

Related to the discussion of how Research Assistantships, Teaching Assistantships and Administrative Assistantships were being allocated from the same pool of money, Dr. Allen said that people should have only one vote pertaining to recommendations related to graduate assistantships. A Vice Provost for Research should not also be an academic dean. This affects Graduate Council's ability to make recommendations related to graduate assistantships, including making difficult decisions about research assistantships. Everyone present agreed that the Vice Provost for Research can weigh in on the decision that impacts how Research Assistantships are allocated currently and who is receiving these awards. Members present expressed that all the allocations of UA Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Remissions must happen through the Graduate School.

Dr. Allen made a motion that Graduate Council recommends that a Vice Provost for Research not also be an academic dean, because it affects Graduate Council's ability to impact change on recommendations on funding related to research assistantships using the graduate assistantships pool or money, and concerns regarding conflict of interest.

Dr. Judit Puskas seconded the motion.

Eleven members voted in favor of the motion.

Three members abstained.

The motion carried.

Remarks – Charles Beneke, Associate Dean-Academics

Charles Beneke had no remarks.

Committee Reports and Referrals

Curriculum Committee – Dr. Allen presented a log of 14 proposals reviewed and approved by the committee: A&S-CHEM-15-15143, EDUC-CURR-14-9246, CHP-NURIN-16-17244, CHP-SPLANG-15-15066, CHP-SPLANG-15-13093, CHP-SPLANG-14-12177, CHP-SPLANG-15-13092, CHP-SPLANG-15-13095, POLY-PSCI-16-17446, POLY-PSCI-16-17447, POLY-PSCI-16-17449, POLY-PSCI-16-17458, POLY-PSCI-16-17463, and POLY-PSCI-16-17486. Approved by Council.

Graduate Faculty Membership Committee – Dr. Makki presented a log of 24 graduate faculty applications as reviewed and approved by the committee. Approved by Council.

Michael Collard	Zhong-Hui Duan	Kevin Kern	Gregory Wilson
Janet Klein	Zachery Williams	Valerie J. Callanan	Joseph W. Wilder
Ethel R. Wheland	Jeffrey M. Riedl	Kathleen D. Clark	Andrew S. Rancer
Francis K. Doamekpor	Guy Bordo	Bridgie A. Ford	Alfred W. Daviso
David Roke	Joan Carletta	Akhilesh Chandra	Maria Riaz Hamdani
Jeong Hoon Choi	Barbara A. Osyk	Liping Liu	Steven R. Ash

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Secretary