

Graduate Associate Deans

October 10, 2019

Minutes

Members Attending: Dixie Thompson (Vice-Provost & Dean), John Stier (Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources), Katherine Ambroziak (Architecture & Design), Emily Bivens (for Todd Moore, Arts & Sciences), Bruce Behn (Haslam Business), Virginia Kupritz (Communication & Information), David Cihak (Education, Health & Human Sciences), Ozlem Kilic (Tickle Engineering), Roberta Lavin (Nursing), Sherry Cummings (Social Work), Claudia Kirk, (Veterinary Medicine), Holly Mercer (Library)

Ex Officio & Guests: Sadie Hutson (Nursing), Yvonne Kilpatrick (Graduate School), Sara Bradberry (Graduate School), David Willis (GSS President),

I. Welcome – Dixie Thompson

II. Grad School Updates – Dixie Thompson

- Graduate School DGS Meeting was yesterday with a good turnout. Among other things, we discussed professional development; new electronic signatures for forms, and the Slate conversion. It was a good meeting and an engaged group; we really appreciate those who are “boots on the ground” in the departments.
- Sean Hendricks & Kimberly Cupp are on their way to Cincinnati to visit a campus that has migrated to Slate. We are hoping they will bring back some useful information as we prepare for our own migration.
- In two weeks we will welcome our new Graduate Admissions Associate Director (Anna Maria Murphy).
- It is again time for Hooding Speaker Nominations (Summer or Fall 2019 Graduates). Millie can help if you need those deadlines. Email nominations to gradschooldean@utk.edu

III. Minutes – Approved

IV. GSS Travel Award – Guest, David Willis, GSS President

Dixie explained that GSS has moved to an electronic process for travel awards, and there were a few hiccups during the recent deadline, which we are addressing. David Willis, the GSS president, is here to share information and bring us up to date.

David Willis:

Apologized that there were some glitches, but they have worked to address those and make improvements. He shared a power point presentation and handout to review the issues how they have been addressed. A copy will be provided with the minutes.

David will need a list of the signatures of those who are approving the forms. Millie will provide him with a list of this committee, as many are approvers for their colleges. It was noted that students in Nursing, Social Work, Vet Med, and the Bredesen Center may not have department heads or advisors, so the same person may need to sign in multiple places. GSS will clarify what the approval language on the application needs to be with Dr. Thompson. They have made corrections for the students who were caught in the glitch...addressing those in a case by case basis.

Discussion followed regarding the algorithm that determines how much a person can be funded. While there is an algorithm, there is also a finite amount of money, so the number of applications received will also play a part. They have \$220,000 to award for the year (in 3 distributions).

GSS will work on ways to provide information and training for faculty; perhaps a video (closed captioning) or a Zoom session. David will work to provide funding stats for previous years to share.

Dixie suggested that communicating with directors of graduate studies would be a good place to start in order to distribute information.

V. Policy Updates

The Graduate School is researching a couple of policies among our peers:

Academic Second Opportunity

The first is an Academic Second Opportunity for students who have been gone for a while (leaving their program), and then come back but their GPA is too low. Right now we don't have any way to help them. UG has a second opportunity option; but there isn't one at the Graduate level.

We would set GPA criteria, and a certain amount of time that would have passed since they last enrolled. They would have to put together materials to include a departmental endorsement. The onus would be on the student to go to the department and to work out a plan.

How to handle those previous grades is still being discussed. One option would be to move those grades to a W; another is to just not count those as part of their GPA and have a notation that it is second opportunity. We would put together a plan for the first year (close monitoring). Departments can certainly opt out.

None of their former grades would count (whether they were As or Fs). It is a fresh start. This is for those historical students who have dug themselves into a GPA hole that keeps them from pursuing their degree.

Discussion followed. If Ws are given, would they have financial aid issues? Sara will check and find out.

Seat Fees

May 1 is UG confirmation deadline. With a few exceptions, the University does not require seat fees...certainly nothing campus wide. We are looking into this...it would not override seat fees already in place, but it may be beneficial to have a confirmation fee or seat fee that will count towards tuition. It would apply to all programs, but will not impact the April 15 deadline. Perhaps it could be due sometime around mid-June. It is very difficult for us to communicate with new students over the summer because we don't know who the players are.

Discussion followed:

Social work has a seat fee, but some people still don't show up; Haslam College of Business does, as well.

We haven't gotten to the point about rolling admissions.

Exceptions can be made, if needed.

Some felt the amount was too low...higher than \$50 would be better, perhaps \$250, \$500...we want the commitment, just not the intention. If people don't come, it has a negative impact on other students.

It needs to apply to all students – international; GRA, etc.

Dixie shared that we still have a lot of details to work out. Perhaps Spring 21 can be a target.

VI. Bridge to the Doctoral Program

- There is a NSF proposal to provide a bridge to the doctorate STEM programs. NSF pays stipend and in-state tuition. The institution absorbs out of state tuition.

VII. Fellowships Update

- Fellowship packages were sent out to the DGSs this week. We will share that information with this group as well.
- We have one new fellowship this year (Rowland Family Fellowship)
- We will be communicating with you and your colleges over the next few weeks to let you know what your allocations will be.
- It would be nice to handle fellowships as we do assistantships (waive out of state tuition)...can't do it right now, but it would lower the barriers we face. We continue to advocate for that.

Meeting adjourned @ 3:30 pm