Graduate Deans' Group
Thursday, October 13, 2011, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
Graduate School Conference Room
Minutes

Attending:

Ernest Brothers, Chris Boake, Catherine Cox, Joy DeSensi (Chair), George Dodds, Tom George, Carolyn Hodges, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Tom Ladd, Catherine Luther, Mike McEntee, Carol Parker, Peggy Pierce (proxy), Cynthia Rocha, Kay Reed, Rita Smith, John Stier

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi, on Thursday, October 13, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. in the Graduate School Conference Room.

1. The minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group meeting from August 25, 2011 were approved.

2. Travel Funding for Graduate Students

   Carolyn Hodges, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School sought feedback from the Graduate Deans' Group regarding additional Travel Funding ($200,000) to be made available through the Provost's office for Graduate Students. Feedback from the deans included: a) to develop steps to process the applications through the departments, colleges, Graduate School and Provost's office; b) to clarify how this process would differ from that already utilized by the Graduate Student Senate; c) to require presentations by graduate students to be at a premier conference; d) to determine if funds would be in addition to or separate from that offered by the Graduate Student Senate; f) establish deadline dates for applications; and g) explore the issue of perceived unfairness if funds are awarded on a "first come, first served" basis.

3. Withdrawal Procedures for Graduate Students

   Kay Reed discussed reviewed the process that graduate students use to withdraw from all courses in registration for a term. The process is available on MyUTK and may be done through the last day of classes in the semester. Graduate Students are required to apply for readmission if they process a total withdrawal.

4. Overview of Changes in Admission Processes for Graduate Students

   Yvonne Kilpatrick, Director of Graduate Admissions gave a progress report which included the UT Graduate Admissions Efficiency and Effectiveness Action Plan for Year 1, 2011-2012. Topics addressed included:

   a) On-Line Application, Electronic Letters of Recommendation, and Supplemental Materials: Materials developed were submitted to CollegeNet and tested by Greg

Tipps in order to assure good service regarding these materials. CollegeNet is in the process of revising the tested materials. Alternative processes have been activated to allow applicants to submit documents electronically until the new on-line application is launched.

b) Unofficial Transcripts: Carolyn Hodges, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School approved a blanket exception to accept unofficial transcripts for evaluation purposes for fall 2012. A proposal is being considered by the Academic Policy Committee to make this policy. Official transcripts will be required upon notification of admission.

c) Application Instruction on Website: New application instructions are on the Graduate Admissions website. Faculty and staff should review the new instructions. Once the new on-line application is launched, additional instructions will be added to the website.

d) Document Imaging: UT Central Imaging is located on Middlebrook Pike. Plans are in place for central imaging to scan admissions documents received by mail beginning November 15, 2011. This will expedite the processing of admission materials.

e) Staff Training: Additional staff have been trained to evaluate international transcripts and degree credentials by the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers.

f) Evaluation of Graduate Admission Processes: This past summer the staff evaluated the admissions process. Over processing was eliminated i.e. double entering. Based on the Graduate School policy, if an applicant has completed graduate work, only the graduate GPA will be calculated. Previously, both the bachelor's and graduate GPAs were calculated. Departments may choose to calculate the bachelor's GPA for departmental evaluation purposes.

g) Reports: OIT is working to make admission reports accessible to departments. Once these reports are available to departments, GRE scores will no longer be scanned into the imaging system.

h) Investigation of Future Technology: Admissions is working with CollegeNet. A new product, ADMIT – which is interactive with departments is being explored. There is a need to meet with OIT.

5. Directors of Graduate Studies Workshop

Joy DeSensi reported the workshop for Directors of Graduate Studies would be held on Wednesday, October 19, 2011, 9:00-11:00 a.m. in the Shiloh Room of the University Center. The agenda topics for the meeting were reviewed and it was noted that the Directors of Graduate Studies are strongly encouraged to attend the workshop.

As a reminder, the policy regarding Directors of Graduate Study was reviewed as stated in the Graduate Catalog, "Each academic department or program has designated a tenured or tenure-track faculty member who is the director of graduate studies. This individual with the assistance of the other graduate faculty in the department is responsible for the administration of the graduate program(s) in the department and also serves as the contact person with the Graduate School".

6. 2012-2013 Graduate School Fellowships

   Joy DeSensi noted the fellowships offered through the Graduate School for 2012-2013-would be announced in November. Information will be posted on the Graduate School website and Deans, Associate Deans, and Directors of Graduate Studies will receive announcements regarding the fellowships.

7. Evaluation of GTA's/TA's

   In order to assist with future discussions regarding the evaluation of GTAs/TAs, the policy regarding the Evaluation/Supervision of Graduate Assistants which is located on the Graduate School website was reviewed by Joy DeSensi. The Graduate Deans were encouraged to explore how their departments carry out this process and to share the information in a discussion during the next meeting.

8. Other

   Catherine Cox announced the December 1, 2011 deadline for curricular items to be included in the 2012-2013 Catalog

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joy T. DeSensi
Chair, Graduate Deans' Group