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Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes

Graduate Council

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Graduate Deans' Group
Thursday, March 21, 2013, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.
334 Haslam Business Building
Minutes

Attending:

Chris Boake, Ralph Brockett, Ernest Brothers, Joy DeSensi (Chair), Carolyn Hodges, Stephen Kania, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Sandra Leach, Jan Lee, Catherine Luther, Stefanie Ohnesorg, John Stier, Masood Parang, Carol Parker, Annette Ranft, Kay Reed, Cynthia Rocha, David Schumann, John Stier, Dixie Lee Thompson

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi at 2:00 p.m. on February 14, 2013 in the 334 Haslam Business Building.

1. Minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group Meeting from February 14, 2013 were approved.
2. Updates – Carolyn Hodges
 - The dean provided updates on recent and upcoming activities. The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) sponsored a Town Hall meeting that was held on March 14 at the Law School. The Dean of the Graduate School, Taylor Eighmy (Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement), Jim Boyle (director of the Student Health Center), Maxine Davis (Dean of Students), and Troy Lane (UT Police Department) were available to answer questions and provide information. Students raised a number of questions about how to improve efficiency in getting new and returning students enrolled in the insurance plan at the beginning of the year. Mr. Boyle talked about ways to improve communication between the Health Services Department and the departments and programs to cut down on the lag time between appointments and the relay of information from Human Resources through IRIS to the Health Center. He offered to hold meetings with several group (program administrative assistants, deans, department heads) and encouraged students to be persistent in checking with administrative assistants about the status of their appointments. Other questions posed included the prospects for increase in student stipends, programming to enhance mentoring, and the role of the Office of Research and Engagement, and UT Institute of Agriculture's proposal to allow fracking as part of an oil and gas lease and research project.
 - Dates and location for fall orientation activities were announced. The orientation for new graduate students is a new initiative that will be held on August 13 in the Tennessee Auditorium in the University Center. Tentative planning includes morning-long session (8-noon) with a series of speakers and afternoon activities (e.g., tours, social) headed up by the GSS. The annual orientation for new graduate teaching assistants/associates will be held on the morning of August 15, 8-noon, in the Tennessee Auditorium at the UC Center.

- The SPEAK Test will undergo changes in Fall 2013 to provide more flexibility and efficiency for those taking the test for the first time as well as for those being retested. The oral proficiency test developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) will replace the SPEAK Test, which is no longer being updated by Educational Testing Services. It is a computerized version of the oral proficiency testing interview and provides an internationally recognized certificate, valid for one year for all who pass. ACTFL will provide the rating and Dr. JoBeth Bradley, SPEAK Test coordinator, will continue to manage registration, to handle reporting, and to monitor student placement and successive testing. ACTFL charges \$65 for each test, which will be taken at the UT Language Resource Center: the Graduate School will pay for all first-time test takers. Assignment for charges for repeat testing is under review. Students will be able to repeat the test at random times, rather than being locked into firm dates. The adaptive test, which makes use of an avatar, adjusts to the interests and content responses of the students during the course of the interview.
 - Ernest Brothers, Director of the Office of Graduate Training and Mentorship, and the Program for Excellence and Equity in Research (PEER) will host a Professional Development Workshop. The workshop presenter, Dr. Laura Lunsford, Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona, will speak on the topic: *"Throw the Lifeline: Reversing Sink or Swim Attitudes & Mentoring Doctoral Students."* The workshop for faculty will be held on April 18, 2013 in Room 435, Min Kao Building, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and in Room 221, University Center, from 3:30 to 5:30 for students. Ernest Brothers also works with departments/programs to set up other mentoring workshops.
3. Ph.D. Teaching Certificate – David Schumann, Tennessee Teaching Learning Center
- David Schumann, director of the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center (TNTLC) reviewed the plans for teaching certification for doctoral students that is being developed as a joint effort between the TNTLC and the Graduate School. He asked for input from the Graduate Associate Deans about his proposal to levy a \$500 charge for each participant, which could be cost-shared by the programs and colleges and would be used to support half the salary of a full-time assistant director position in the TNTLC. He describes the components of the three-semester program and answered questions about its implementation. The graduate associate deans asked him to write up and distribute a summary of the program, with particular emphasis on the value added it provides, so that the associate deans can share it with their college deans and department heads and come back with their responses to the proposed fee.
4. Alignment of Graduate Admissions & Departmental Websites
Annual Change Period – Fall 2014 Online Admission Applications – Yvonne Kilpatrick
- Yvonne Kilpatrick presented information (Attachment # 1) from the applicant survey on the Admit Program. 6,000 students were contacted with 1,433 responses. The Graduate Admissions Office plans to have focus group discussions on how to better serve the departments, share the process in the Admit Program and will be hosting a CollegeNET agent all day on June 4 to allow feedback from departments. Some departments need to update their website with

the new application information. Some concerns of departments with the new program, were adding a portfolio to the application and an issue with communication alignment.

5. Unpaid Adjunct Faculty

Report of Survey on Associate Deans – Jan Lee

- Jan Lee requested feedback regarding unpaid adjunct faculty working with graduate students. She also shared information from a Graduate Deans Survey regarding administrative responsibilities which was conducted on December 2012.

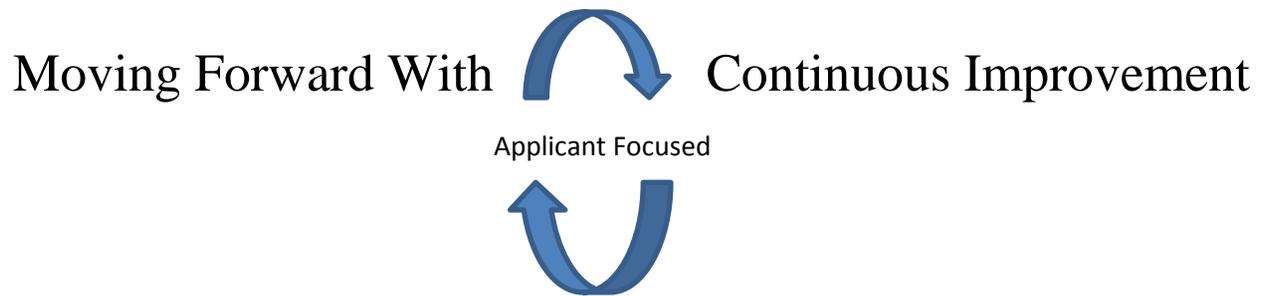
6. Other

No other business was discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:20.

The first Graduate Deans' Group meeting for 2013 - 2014 will be held in late August.
The meeting location will be announced at a later date.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gay Henegar
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group



Feedback from Applicant Survey to the statement,

“Overall, I am satisfied with my experience while completing the Graduate Admissions on-line application.”

- 1,433 responses
- 84% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement

Targeted Area of Focus for Fall 2014 Application Period:

Communication Alignment

- The application fee for new applicants is \$60
- The application fee for readmission is \$30 (including change of program)
- The link to the Graduate Admissions website is: <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/>
- The direct link to the on-line application is: <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/apply.shtml>
- The following downloadable and/or pdf documents are obsolete and should be removed from websites:
(1)the Graduate School application, (2)the Graduate School Readmission application, (3)the Change of Program form
- Post current department/program application deadlines
- Departments/programs participating in uploading supplemental documents in the Graduate School application should remove instructions indicating materials should be sent directly to the department or directly to the Graduate School