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Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes

Graduate Council

9-8-2016

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Recommended Citation

Graduate Council, "Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes - September 8, 2016" (2016). *Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes*.
https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gcassocdeans/62

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Minutes – September 8, 2016
Graduate Associate Deans
405 Student Services Building
2:00 – 3:30PM

Members Attending: **Dixie Thompson** (Vice-Provost & Dean), **Joan Rentsch** (Communication & Information), **Jeffrey Fairbrother** (Education, Health, & Human Sciences), **Mary Gunther** (Nursing), **Alex Long** (Law), **Sherry Cummings**, (Social Work), **Masood Parang** (Engineering), **Bruce Behn** (Business), **Katherine Ambroziak** (Architecture and Design), **Stephen Kania** (Veterinary Medicine)

Ex Officio: **Holly Mercer** (University Libraries), **Stephanie Galloway** (Graduate School), **Yvonne Kilpatrick** (Graduate School)

1. **Welcome & meeting called to order** at 2 p.m. by Dixie Thompson.
2. **Minutes of the August 11, 2016 meeting were approved** as presented.
3. **Graduate School Updates – Dixie Thompson**

Speaker Nominations: The Associate Deans were asked to make recommendations of students who would be good candidates to deliver the speech at hooding. If there is someone in your college who stands out, email Dr. Thompson @ GradSchoolDean@utk.edu with a nomination letter and the student’s CV by September 30.

Student Appeals: There are four students with appeals coming before Council this semester. (Note: The Appeals Committee will meet next week to discuss them, but it will not make decisions at that time).

Professional Development Awards: We get approximately \$100,000 to distribute for these awards and currently none of it is directly benefitting our graduate students. We want to revise the distribution so that it allows faculty and students to pair up to work together in an arena of both of their interests. Dr. Thompson distributed a draft of proposed revisions (see handout: “Student/Faculty Research Awards”) for the Associate Deans to review and discuss. The response was favorable with the discussion focusing on:

- adding an approval line for the major professor;
- questions about the guidelines for use and reporting;
- requiring that all compliance guidelines be met;
- having the faculty member carry the burden for how the results will be disseminated.)

Dr. Thompson will take the draft and notes from today’s discussion to the Professional Development Committee and see how they would like to proceed.

Graduate Admissions Report (Yvonne Kilpatrick): Yvonne reported that departments have done a great job at reducing the outstanding applications (currently only 5 remain). Admission stats for Fall 2016 term of entry are:

- 6042 Applications
2146 Admitted (includes 1 English Proficiency Conditional Admit)
- 2820 Denied by the departments
- 577 Denied by Graduate Admissions
- 482 declined or withdrew their admission
- 17 pending decision in departments
- 0 pending decision in Graduate Admissions

- At the 14th day, **1350 newly admitted students were registered for Fall 2016** (an enrollment yield of 63%)
- Last year, 1369 newly admitted students were registered for Fall 2016 at the 14th day count (an enrollment yield of 69%)

Fellowships: Dr. Thompson announced that the Graduate School will be streamlining the fellowship application process, making changes that will help it to operate more smoothly for departments. We also want to get in front of the April 15 deadline that graduate schools face by offering awards earlier as an incentive for applicants to attend UT. One change is that we will move up the deadline for departments to submit fellowship applications to the Graduate School to approximately February 1. We are developing the full calendar now and clarifying the details and instructions for each fellowship. We are also looking to see if there is a way to use the ADMIT system in this process (making sure to keep it clear who is being endorsed for a fellowship vs. those who are being offered admission). Additional information will be distributed by October.

4. **Brainstorming for AY 16-17:** Dr. Thompson asked the group to help brainstorm on three areas: Data needs (Graduate Blueprint), Resource Needs, and Distance Ed.

Data Needs: Dr. Thompson distributed a draft of the Graduate Blueprint, which will track graduate student progress from the time of admission through placement. She asked the associate deans to look over it, specifically to address what data needs to be provided centrally:

- What do we need to prioritize?
- What needs to come first?
- Are there things that are not on the list that should be?

Other discussion points/issues:

- Academic Unit Statistics
- Financial Aid (it can be difficult to determine; it is already on the list)
- GPAs (of last degree? Incoming GPA?)

- The GTA/GRA/GA information in the Academic Unit Statistics can be difficult to interpret. We need clear definitions of each group and an understanding of the source for this data.
- Time to degree (that can also be difficult to determine, especially with stops and starts)
- Internships? Placement?
- Some information is contextualized with colleges: (Dr. Thompson noted some things will always be unit-by-unit capture.) At the same time, we have data out there that isn't being used.

Dr. Thompson will continue to provide updates on the project as information becomes available.

Resource Needs: We often think, “we could grow with more money,” but what would really help? What are our priorities and what will help transform graduate education at UTK?

Discussion focused on:

- Helping our Brand Rating
 - Publications, grants, getting the word out
 - Presentations, papers, attracting quality faculty
- More GTA lines with fee waivers/discussion about stipends & equity;
- Making sure positions are strategically placed;
- Centralized assistantship lines at the university level (only some colleges reexamine assistantships each year, most are allocated similarly each year)
- Comparing our practices to that of our aspirational peers.

Distance Education:

Historically we have not emphasized distance education; some colleges were interested, but most were not. We want to look at this more closely: What tuition model and departmental structure would you like to see? What do we need to look at? Discussion included:

- Equipment & facilities: what can we do on our own? (perhaps ask Jennifer Gramling what is already available for use on campus)
- Tuition – currently both out of state and in-state models. We are already more expensive than many others.
- Currently there is a lot of variation across departments who offer DE programs;
- Brief discussion re: existing models and pending considerations (DSW vs. MSW; Social Work, Nursing, Communication & Information, etc.)
- Discussed recovery monies: started with 80% recovery originally. That is now reduced. Current rate?
- Cutting back recovery money for some means having to close down offerings
- If more units want to pursue DE, they will need support and help with start up

Dr. Thompson thanked the Associate Deans' for their feedback today and as we move forward on each of these issues.

Other Items?

Graders: (Discussion item only: no action taken.) Bruce Behn inquired about using Master's students as graders in other graduate courses. For example, students in Business grading Nursing students. The committee discussed pros and cons, how it would be determined who would grade who, comparing the grading of multiple choice exams vs. essay exams. The overall consensus in the discussion was that it seems the process would be difficult to oversee and maintain standards.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Our next meeting is **October 13, 2016**.