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Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes

Graduate Council

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MINUTES

Graduate Associate Deans

October 13, 2016

405 Student Services Building

2:00 – 3:30PM

Members Attending: **Dixie Thompson** (Vice-Provost & Dean), **Jeffrey Fairbrother** (Education, Health, & Human Sciences), **Mary Gunther** (Nursing), **Sherry Cummings**, (Social Work), **Charlie Noble** (Haslam Business), **Katherine Ambroziak** (Architecture and Design), **Todd Moore** (Arts & Sciences), **Ernest Brothers** (Graduate School), **Claudia Kirk** (Veterinary Medicine)

Ex Officio: **Holly Mercer** (University Libraries), **Sean Hendricks** (Graduate School), **Yvonne Kilpatrick** (Graduate School)

1. **Welcome & meeting called to order** at 2 p.m. by Dixie Thompson.
2. **Minutes of the October 13, 2016 meeting were approved** as presented.
3. **Graduate School Updates**

The Graduate School met with the Directors of Graduate Studies yesterday. Some of the items discussed included:

1. **Graduate admissions changes** – A few changes you will notice:
 - A. We have added questions to our application to bring us more in line with what is asked at the UG level and on common applications. Our staff has met with our legal council to make sure we are where we need to be on our application materials. If you need additional information, please see Yvonne Kilpatrick.
 - B. We now have a waitlist option in Admit. Now you can approve, deny, or waitlist an applicant. This provides an official way to put people who are in the middle, and they will receive notification that their application is still under consideration.

Dr. Thompson talked about challenges with the Admissibility – GPA. It works from an admissions standpoint, but not in terms of collecting data. There are ongoing discussions about how we are going to build our graduate blueprint. Currently, the Admissibility – GPA can mean different things. If students are coming in from their UG, it will be their UG GPA; or if that is too low, it could be from their senior year. If they come in with 9 hours of graduate work, the GPA that goes in is

the graduate GPA. We need to be able clearly define what GPA means when we see it.

We may eventually change some things; from a data perspective we need to be able to develop a profile of our students, including what was their UG GPA (for everybody), and graduate GPA if they have one. All of that is important for comparison. Right now from an admissions standpoint, the department can see it all, it is just the one number that gets pushed into Banner. The issue from our perspective is that we need to be able to put more numbers into Banner. That is something behind the scenes that we have to do to get our graduate blueprint working.

2. **Graduate Fellowship New Process and Timeline:** We have been working on a new process to improve on last year. Departments will be able to nominate students for fellowships, and upload their CV and endorsement letters into Admit. The review team will then be given access to that pool of students. The big change is that students won't apply...departments will nominate. Additional information will be forthcoming in a few weeks, with additional details on each fellowship. We had good discussion and feedback at the meeting yesterday. We will make a few modifications based on that to make this run more smoothly. We are making changes to the timeline...last year by the time we announced fellowships, students had already accepted other offers. A revised timeline will be sent in a few days.
3. **Use of Prospect for Recruitment:** The reception to Prospect has been great thus far. We are excited; this will really take us to a different level in terms of recruitment. Dr. Brothers shared that we are hoping to create a community of recruiters. We are working to identifying those designated to recruit for their units/departments. In the Spring, we will have a "best practices in recruitment" dialog. Hopefully, we can be more strategic in our efforts. The Graduate School can be a coordinator of sorts. It is not just one unit out there, but the institution that is recruiting; and those efforts can be enhanced by Prospect.
4. **Top 100 Fellowship Program:** Distributed Handout "Restructuring Chancellor's Top-Off Funds - \$4M Recurring Investment (\$1M Annually)"

Discussed the Top 100 Fellowships Plan – over the years it has been utilized in a variety of ways. There is now approximately \$4 Million that can be used to build programs to help us bring in the best students, but it has not been maximized in terms of effect. Dr. Cheek has emphasized that he wants this to be used as a recruitment and retention tool for the very best students. Dr. Thompson has spent time looking at other universities and what we can do to build a signature program from this

fund. This new plan will set a stage for us to tell the story of great things happening in graduate education...it has real potential to help us enhance our reputation, to get more visibility. The current program has not always been focused on recruitment, but this one will be. Instead of giving the students x amount of money, departments will get a targeted number of students to bring in, each of whom will receive \$10,000 on top of the package you build for them for four years. We will require that they be given some type of assistantship with tuition waiver. This will be managed through ADMIT, and we will be able to generate a profile on these students. We will also enroll them into Elements, so that every time they publish a paper, have an exhibit, go to a conference, we have that in the system and can generate an outputs profile for those students while they are here.

We are very excited about this plan! It is targeting primarily Ph.D. students, but knowing that there are other terminal degrees, there will be some exceptions. We are still working out details, for example if students decline, how do we re-allocate that within the college? Perhaps we have a list and a secondary list when students decline. That will be up to the colleges to decide.

Questions raised about what departments will do if a student comes in on paper looking stellar, but then doesn't turn out to be the best student. Dr. Fairbrother shared that his department has set criteria for keeping the fellowship. Twice a year they have to be evaluated, and they are held from the very beginning to the expectations of their performance. The department has to define that adequate progress is being made. If a student is not making progress and the offer is terminated by the department, then that money would then go back to the Graduate School.

Additional questions:

- What about 5-year programs? Departments would need to cover the 5th year. This would not apply.
- Does the DVM program qualify? What about CEM? Does this apply to dual professional programs, and what about those who do not have opportunities for assistantships? Because of the funding center, the DVM program would not qualify. Because the dual program is so small, we may need to look at other ways we can meet that need. We don't want to lose that ability to bring people in, but due to the size, we may need to look at creating something for them.
- Will we refer to this as a fellowship? Yes- Top 100 Fellowship. So much potential here!

This will be rolling in over the next four years. Don't worry about students that you have commitments to with the Chancellor's Top Off – those students are covered until their time runs out. By 2021 all of the money will be targeted to this new model.

Yvonne talked about the application and enrollment numbers. First time students enrolled is at 1800 (all graduate students) for Fall 2016.

We will be sending out additional information to the deans soon, as well as details about their specific distribution.

5. ***Hooding Speakers*** – Reminder to nominate a student from your college by the deadline tomorrow.

Additional Agenda Items: Note: If there are things you want to discuss in our meetings, send them to Dixie Thompson and she will add them to the agenda.

Discussion Items from Graduate Associate Deans

Todd Moore – Regarding Vol Vision 2020 implementation, and our strategic plan. We are starting to hold listening sessions on each of the 6 priorities on Vol Vision 2020. We would like to know what are other colleges are doing?

- Mary Gunther (Nursing): In January, we will have a 2-day retreat of all faculty and staff and begin looking to setting initiatives for the college that relate back to Vol Vision. We will then take each and identify strategic action; then we will nominate people to work on specific sections. Some was driven by title. Then we will have listening sessions with our external stake holders. By Fall 2017, we will have a revitalized document, as well as cross-walk tables for accreditation. We try to keep it alive: we have a dashboard and a dean's update twice each semester using our strategic plan.
- Jeff Fairbrother: EHHS has drafted a document, now we are working on cleaning it up then looking over it for consistency. The new APPM will involve a data pack that each department will receive. We are hoping to get the metrics that will be included in that to help facilitate our college-level discussions.
- Business: About three years ago we went through an extensive process with focus groups and discussions. At the end, we have a package of mission statements, values, etc. We would be happy to share. At the time ours was moderately tied into Vol Vision, and now we have to look at that and compare as we move forward.
- Cummings: Social work did a similar process as Nursing. A retreat with a consulting firm to develop strategic plan.

- Yvonne – we included staff, printed Vol Vision 2020 and we went through it. We want them to see how they are contributing to this process. I would encourage you to get them involved.

Jeff Fairbrother: Cognate for the PHD

The Graduate Catalog says that a cognate is “defined as 6 hours of graduate coursework in a given area outside the student’s major field;” but the glossary says it is “a limited number of courses or a block outside the unit in which a student’s major is offered.” The latter seems to imply that the cognate must be outside the department. Not necessarily raising it as an issue...just curious about the experience across the board. Has this come up in other colleges? How do you handle it?

Dr. Thompson shared that not all colleges have departments, so she tends to be generous in allowing the student committee to have freedom to make that call. At the same time, some departments have real variety inside the department that would certainly enhance the student experience.

With no additional items, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting is November 10 at 2 p.m. in 102 FBCC.