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Academic Policy Committee Report - March 2, 2017

Graduate Council

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ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, March 2, 2017, 2:00 P.M.
111 Student Services Building

Present: Mehmet Aydeniz (acting Chair), Eric Boder, Julie Bonom, Shandra Forrest-Bank, Reza Seddighi

Other attendees: Mary Albrecht (Accreditation), Katherine Ambroziak (College of Architecture and Design), Stephanie Galloway (Assistant Dean, Graduate School), Todd Moore (College of Arts and Sciences), Jennifer Morrow (Graduate Council, Chair Elect), Charles Noble (Haslam College of Business), Masood Parang (Tickle College of Engineering), Dixie Thompson (Dean of the Graduate School), Catherine Cox (Graduate Council Liaison)

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

ITEMS DISCUSSED

- 1) Todd Moore from the College of Arts and Sciences gave handouts from a survey concerning the Credentials Committee.

Some points from the survey:

1. Does the current process take more time than is advantageous?
2. Is historical purposes the reason we have this committee?
3. What is the effectiveness of the Credentials Committee?
4. The committee does not have expertise in each field of study to make the decision.
5. Faculty go through the vetting process when hired and/or for promotion.

Discussion points at meeting:

1. What are other high-quality institutions doing? Do we have a benchmark?
2. Will there be slippage of high standards if there is no Credentials Committee?
3. Faculty should not mentor doctoral students that have little or no experience.
4. If the credentialing is managed in the departments, what are the standards that each department will use?
5. Clinical and adjunct faculty should go through an application process.
6. Not all faculty are hired tenured-track.
7. Maybe the burden of the committee can be lessened / reduce the scope of the committee. But, the committee should not be eliminated.

Todd Moore will gather information from benchmark institutions and will generate a report to share at the next Graduate Council meeting for discussion.

- 2) Leave of Absence Form (revision to wording) – Stephanie Galloway

Stephanie Galloway asked the committee to review the wording of the first paragraph for clarification. After discussion, the committee agreed to reword the first paragraph as follows (new wording in red font, strikethrough shows deletion).

If extenuating circumstances arise that make it necessary for students to interrupt their studies temporarily, a Request for a Leave of Absence (LOA) for a maximum of 2 years may be granted by the Graduate School upon ~~approval~~ **review and recommendation** by the student's home department or program. All Graduate Student Leave of Absence Requests, **with supporting documentation**, are reviewed and granted on a case by case basis. There are many

situations for which a leave can be requested, such as the birth or adoption of a child, dependent care, a serious medical condition, military service, or other **serious** personal reasons. A Leave of Absence (LOA) will not be granted with the sole reason of financial hardship.

VOTE: APC voted and unanimously approved the revised wording in the above paragraph for the LOA. The proposal is moving forward with recommendation for approval to the Graduate Council.

3) Plagiarism text for review – Dixie Thompson

Dixie Thompson asked the committee to review the wording of the plagiarism text that was presented and discussed at the previous Graduate Council meeting. After discussion, APC endorses the policy and wording as shown below:

Proposal for plagiarism text in Graduate Catalog:

All theses and dissertations must be scanned with university-approved plagiarism detection software prior to thesis or dissertation defense. Major professors must confirm, at the time the thesis or dissertation is submitted to the Graduate School, that documents have been analyzed using the university-approved plagiarism detection software. Additional information on this process can be found in *The Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations* (<http://web.utk.edu/~thesis/Guide.shtml>).

APC is satisfied and approves the plagiarism language be added to the Graduate Catalog. APC voted and unanimously approved the plagiarism language. The proposal is moving forward with recommendation for approval to the Graduate Council.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox
Graduate Council Liaison