

Graduate Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, April 07, 2021, Noon to 1:00 PM

Zoom: <https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/92961477971?pwd=c25Lc3JNYnZMZlVFcGluTE5YdzJBdz09>

Meeting ID: 929 6147 7971 / Password: 779629

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes from March 03, 2021 Meeting
3. Nominations Have Been Requested for the Following
 - Budgetary Affairs Faculty Standing Committee – One member needed. **Due to Kathy Wagner via email by April 21, 2021**
 - Personnel Faculty Standing Committee – One member needed. **Due to Kathy Wagner via email by April 21, 2021**
 - 2021-22 Graduate Faculty President and Secretary. **Due to Kathy Wagner via email by April 21, 2021**
4. Update on Graduate Students' Bill of Rights Ad Hoc Committee
 - Members: C. R. Kueny (Chair), A. Lueking, R. Morales, S. Fayek, B. Spencer, L. Hickerson
 - First meeting scheduled for April 14, 2021
5. Grad Track Pathways
 - Proposal from Biological Sciences to adjust the deadline for admittance to the GTP to the end of the fall semester, senior year (Dr. Matthew Thimgan) - See attached proposal
 - Modify to allow approved GTP courses to also be applied toward graduate certificate in addition to master's degree (Office of Graduate Studies – Dr. Tsatsoulis)
 - Modify master's admission from “semester” to “semester/session” (immediately following awarding of bachelor's degree) to include the option of summer admission to master's program (Office of Graduate Studies – Dr. Tsatsoulis)
6. Grade Replacement for Graduate Students (Dr. George Markowsky)
7. Process to Remove Advisor or Committee Member from Thesis/Dissertation Committee (Dr. Costas Tsatsoulis)
8. The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants (Dr. Costas Tsatsoulis).
 - Basically, this is saying that prospective graduate students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15 each year, and that earlier deadlines of acceptance of such offers violate the intent of the Resolution.
 - Here is the link to the Resolution:
https://cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CGS_April15_Resolution_Oct2020Revision.pdf
 - The other UM System schools adhere to the resolution. S&T does generally, *in practice*, but is not formally named on this list. Should we adopt this Resolution formally and be included?
9. New Business

Developing a Grad Track Program in Biological Sciences

Rationale: The university has undertaken a priority to establish Grad Track Programs (GTP) in departments across the university. The initial parameters for GTPs stipulated that one must be admitted by the fall semester of the student's junior (3rd) year. While offering a unique opportunity for our students, this proposal was not designed in a way that would capitalize on the characteristics of students in Biological Sciences that might benefit from this program. For example, many of our students are interested in attending a medical school, physician's assistant program, or pharmacy program. These students are well-qualified for an advanced/professional degree and they are more likely to have taken 5000/6000 level classes given their ambitions to distinguish themselves and the decreased course offerings in a small department. Lastly, their motivations are often to go to professional school once they have finished their undergraduate studies. Yet sometimes these students realize that another year of experience and education can benefit their application. Because they have been focused on meeting the numerous requirements for entering a program and the admittance requirements can be so stringent, this realization comes later than fall semester, junior year.

Proposal: Thus, the biology program is missing the opportunity to benefit some students by having the deadline for acceptance be so early in their academic career. Thus, we would like to propose one alteration to the current structure of the GTP that was approved by the Graduate Studies Council: the deadline for admittance to the GTP for Biology be established as the end of the fall semester, senior year.

Evidentiary support: In January, we polled the undergraduate majors in Biological Sciences regarding their decision-making process. 80% of respondents felt that they would have sufficient information to make a decision and be in a situation place to commit to their decision by the end of fall semester, senior year (Fig 1D). Moreover, there is interest in the program (Fig 1C) from individuals that plan to continue their education (Fig 1B).

Fig 1A - Demographics:

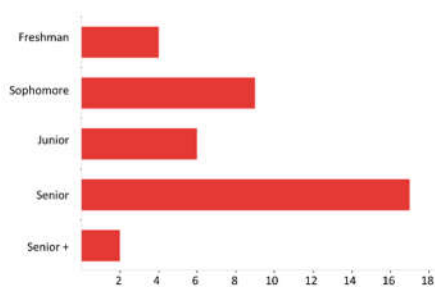


Fig 1B - Educational Goals:

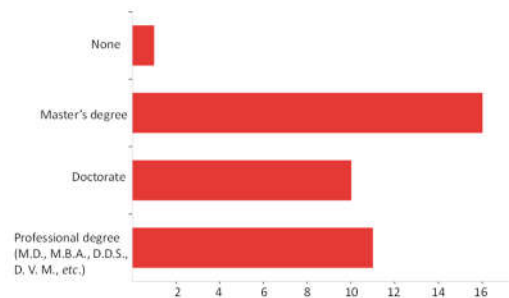


Fig 1C - Are you interested in enrolling in a Grad Track Program?

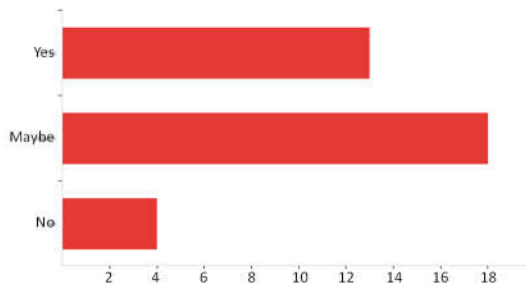
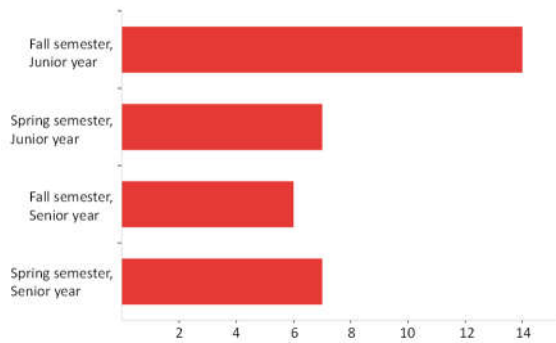


Fig 1D - Q6 - If you decided to enter a program such as this, when do you think would be most optimal time to apply for it? (Assume you are graduating the Spring of your Senior year)



Based on these data and anecdotal interactions with our students, we would like to adopt a change to the framework of the initial GTP by extending the deadline to the end of Fall semester, Senior year for which qualifying students can be admitted to the Biology GTP without exception.

By extending the deadline, we believe that we can capture students that may need one additional year and some added experience to bolster their application to professional schools in addition to other populations that may have a more concrete vision of their future. This change would support our students to achieve their career goals. Moreover, it would enhance education within the Biology Department by retaining mature and motivated students to serve as examples in the classroom and around the department.