

# Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

140 Toomey Hall

12:00pm Wednesday, February 07, 2024

Present: Serhat Hosder, Irina Ivliyeva, Jee C Wang, Manishi Nath, Magdy Abdelrahman, Yishu Zhou, Chang Soo Kim, Kyle Perry, Vahe Permezadian, Cecil Chua, Lana Alagha, Hyunsoo Kim, Cihan Dagli, Ed Malone, Jeff Winiarz, Sarah Stanley, Colin Potts, Samuel Frimpong, Susan Murray, David Spivey, Petra Dewitt, Manoj Twarakavi, Steve Corns, Sylvia Skouby, Madison Armstrong, Jade Sinnott, Katherine Grote, Emma Lowe, Sharon Matson, Sahra Sedigh Sarvestani, Mehdi Ferdowsi, Shari Hill, Jodi Hasekamp

Chair S. Corns called the meeting to order, 12:00 pm

1. Roll call-via sign in sheet
2. Approval of minutes from November 01, 2023 meeting. Motion to approve as written: Winiarz; second: Abdelrahman; approved
3. Interim President's Report
  - a. Calculating GPA with GradTrack students
    - i. Will be part of a larger GradTrack discussion
    - ii. Limitations with PeopleSoft may need to be resolved in conversation with the registrar's office
  - b. Request for volunteer for committee to review Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLO) report format/questions - Through discussions with Drs. Frimpong and Raper it was decided to establish a committee to examine how we are doing the GLO reports
4. Graduate Awards
  - a. Outstanding Contributions to Graduate Studies
  - b. Graduate Staff Excellence Award
  - c. Need volunteers for the committee (
    - i. Does not have to be graduate council
    - ii. Traditionally contains one staff person
    - iii. If you are serving on the committee, and nominated for an award, you may recuse yourself
5. Graduate Faculty Membership Renewals
  - a. Those expiring in 2024 must reapply either by the first March 4 for May vote or the first Monday in October for December vote
  - b. Reminder will be sent to faculty and chairs
  - c. May also check website
6. Nominations will soon be requested for the Faculty Standing Committees and other committees
7. Nominations will soon be requested for the 2024-25 Graduate Faculty President and Secretary (to be elected by the Graduate Faculty at the May 2024 meeting) – The need for effective leadership was strongly emphasized
8. Modify and expand current Grad Track Pathway program (see attachment for expansion of BS to MS into BS to PhD program)
  - a. Those working towards a PhD would be eligible for Kummer fellowship
  - b. Aerospace has been supporting this program for many years

- c. Good opportunity for retention, added incentive to continue on with PhD
- d. Concerns about unintended added credits, addressed in ECE by waiving the 9 extra credit hours
- e. Will we waive GRE requirement for our PhD applicants?
  - i. Grad fac sets the floor, which does not currently include a GRE requirement, and departments can be more restrictive
  - ii. Point made that we know our students and their academic ability, and thus comfort was expressed for waiving the GRE, with additional expressed support for such waiver
- f. Do we really need to limit to “top 2%” as currently stated?
  - i. Point made that students do not know this standing, and past productivity should be more heavily weighted
  - ii. Proposed to have application mechanism similar to Kummer fellows program, which could also help in assuring faculty funding (see 8.h.)
- g. Problems observed with switching in MS program from thesis to nonthesis, and perhaps we need to discourage through policy to prevent this switching
  - i. May be addressed, as in ECE, by no longer allowing the 9 waived credit hours to count towards their MS degree, but only towards their undergrad degree
  - ii. May also be addressed by having different courses for thesis and nonthesis students
- h. Guarantee of funding?
  - i. Has not been discussed in detail yet
  - ii. Point made that GTP provides mechanism to recruit highly qualified domestic students, and that most faculty will have funding available for such students
  - iii. Proposed that perhaps faculty should be required to have funding to participate in doctoral GTP program
  - iv. Point made that extra requirements may dissuade some students, so perhaps we should allow faculty to participate so long as it is made clear to the student that funding is not included
- i. Issue raised of students doing well in GTP as undergrads, but then not maintaining the required GPA as grad students, and how to handle such situations
  - i. Currently courses taken as an undergrad to not count in Graduate GPA, and some cases this would make the difference between < and > 3.0 GPA
  - ii. GPAs show differently on Form 1 and in PeopleSoft
  - iii. Likely should be handled via registrar
  - iv. We may be able edit the graduate catalogue, or modify the Form 1 – transparency for students is foremost important
  - v. Point made that it is important to educate departments/students/advisors on GTP policies

9. Modify current Grad Track Pathway to allow twelve hours of shared credit

10. Doctoral collaborations with global universities (see attachment)

- a. Could be national or international collaboration
- b. 2 years at host university, 2 years at S&T, and degree is from both universities
- c. Inspired by COACHE survey indicating underprepared nature of students, circumvented by this program because we know the quality of participating universities which we are already working with
- d. Concerns raised about some universities not requiring course work
- e. Clarification: how are measuring or defining ‘top 100’ universities as stated in current proposal?
  - i. Point made that university ranking does not always correlate with program ranking – perhaps appropriate change should be made
- f. Need to ensure visa processes are addressed preemptively
- g. How are students recruited?
- h. In practice difficult to commit to funding for a student several years in the future

- i. Point made that PhD from US also carries implications of certain level of English proficiency – need to make appropriate considerations in this regard
- j. This program may ‘jump-start’ PhD programs in departments trying to initiate such programs

#### 11. New Business

Meeting adjourned by Chair Corns, 1:00pm