

**The University of Akron  
Minutes of Graduate Council  
September 18, 2017**

The Graduate Council met on Monday, September 18, 2017, in the Student Union, Room 310. Dean Chand Midha presided. Present were Dr. Wondimu Ahmed, Dr. Philip Allen, Mr. Charles Beneke, Ms. Heather Blake, Dr. Amanda Booher, Dr. George Chase, Dr. Gary Holliday, Ms. Diane Maffei, Dr. Carolyn Murrock, Dr. Francesco Renna, Dr. Jina Sang, Dr. Shivakumar Sastry, Associate Dean Marnie Saunders, Dr. John Senko, Dr. Mark Soucek, Dr. Baffour Takyi, Dr. Margaret Tung, and Dr. Nicole Zacharia.

GC Members Absent with Notice: Dr. Marcus Braga Alves, Dr. Martha Santos, and Mr. Taylor Swift

**Call to Order**

Dean Midha called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

**Roll Call**

Heather Blake recorded the attendance of those present.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Allen made a motion to approve the minutes of May 3, 2017. Dr. Takyi seconded the motion. Minutes of the May 3, 2017 meeting were approved without dissent.

**Remarks – Dean Midha**

Dean Midha welcomed the members of Graduate Council and asked each member to introduce him- or herself. He shared that Charles Beneke has returned as a faculty member to the School of Art; however, will continue to assist the Graduate School as Coordinator of Policies and Procedures. He introduced Dr. Marnie Saunders who joined the Graduate School in August as Associate Dean.

Dean Midha stated that Provost Ramsier was to attend today's meeting; however, due to a conflict he was unable to make it.

Dean Midha informed Graduate Council that the Graduate School has moved to the fifth floor of Leigh Hall. He introduced Diane Maffei, Business Reporting Analyst, who joined the Graduate School earlier this year. Dean Midha said that in the last year a great deal of changes have occurred related to funding of graduate tuition awards and stipends. A two-year savings plan was developed. This year there was a savings of \$750,000 from master's programs and \$1.3M savings in research assistantships. Next year's savings will depend upon graduate enrollment and the recruitment process. Provost Ramsier will announce allocations to the colleges in October. The Provost will advise that if this funding is not utilized by May 1, 2018 he will take it back. The Graduate School was still processing some assistantship contracts in the last week of August, and this must change. Dean Midha said that President Wilson has asked for a comparison of dollars spent between last year and this year. He will share this information with Graduate Council at the next meeting.

**Election of Vice Chair**

Dr. Baffour Takyi was elected as Vice Chair of Graduate Council.

**Election of Secretary**

Dr. Sastry was elected as Secretary of Graduate Council

**Selection of Standing Committees**

Chairs and Vice Chairs of the three standing committees of Graduate Council were elected. Remaining members of the standing committees will come from the membership of the graduate faculty.

## **Graduate Student Admissions/Enrollment Dashboard**

Diane Maffei stated that she has been involved with the centralization of data on dashboards in conjunction with the representatives from Ernst and Young. These dashboards are searchable databases. They are working to identify basic data elements that would help colleges and departments analyze the quality of students, enrollment history, areas from which students are coming, etc. Ms. Maffei said that the initial part of the project is to identify all necessary data elements. She has already provided the working group with some data elements for the Graduate Student Admissions/Enrollment Dashboard; however, wants to provide Graduate Council with the opportunity to provide suggestions of elements they think would be helpful. Example of an element is GRE scores. Currently, we cannot get information on the quality of students, because GRE scores are not recorded in PeopleSoft. It would be helpful to have this type of information more automated. Ms. Maffei indicated that she will advocate for what departments would like to see in the dashboard.

Dr. Sastry stated that it may be helpful to run this by departmental admissions committees.

Ms. Maffei said that she will have the document containing the data elements she submitted to the working group distributed to Graduate Council members, so they have the opportunity to provide suggestions. She wants to make sure graduate-related information is included in the development of the admissions and enrollment dashboard.

## **Graduate Assistantship Allocation Process for 2018-2019**

Associate Dean Saunders presented information on the graduate assistantship allocation process for 2018-2019. The University wants to develop a process for improving recruitment, releasing funds earlier to allow for the recruitment of quality students, and tracking such students. Students who are admitted should be identified by the departments as either acceptable or unacceptable. Students identified as unacceptable will not be eligible for assistantship funding. Associate Dean Saunders provided an example of sheets to be filled out by departments on which they list their pool of applicants, log the number of offers made, and the number of students on a waiting list. These sheets would be updated monthly.

Dr. Allen expressed concern with the May 1 deadline for commitments when it may take more than two weeks to get a response from a student to whom an offer has been made.

Dr. Chase said that it is great that funds will be allocated much earlier, but students will be making multiple decisions, so the departments must be provided some degree of flexibility. He also asked the reason for the deadline.

Dean Midha responded that there will be some flexibility as long as the department has a qualified pool of applicants, and the deadline of May 1 is an extension of the original deadline of April 15. The Provost wants to reallocate funds that are not spent by May 1.

Associate Dean Saunders stated that departments can note on their lists that they received late applicants. The concern is that offers are made to these late applicants, who often are not quality students.

Dr. Zacharia asked if there was any possibility of the May 1 deadline being moved to May 15.

Dean Midha said that if a department made an offer on April 15 to a second person on their list and needed extra time to secure that student there will be some flexibility.

Dr. Sastry suggested that somewhere in the process there has to be documentation of departmental recruitment efforts.

Dean Midha stated that the suggestions made by Graduate Council will be taken back to the Provost for consideration.

## **CIGA Program Updates for International Students**

Associate Dean Saunders stated that the CIGA program permits graduate students to work off campus; however, the process has not been scrutinized, because there are international students who have been working off campus. F-1 and J-1 students will no longer be able to participate in the CIGA program. Current CIGA contracts will be honored. The International Center will verify a student's ability to work off campus. Associate Dean Saunders indicated that Robyn Brown from the International Center and Mark Stastis from

the Office of General Counsel have agreed that international students in the CIGA program cannot work off campus.

Dr. Soucek questions where students, who have expiring CIGA contracts, will get funding.

Dr. Allen suggested that the research being done by the student could be done on campus. It would functionally be the same, but the student would not be working on campus.

Dr. Soucek indicated that intellectual property issues could arise as a result.

Dean Midha said that we do not want to harm students currently in the pipeline. He asked Drs. Allen and Chase to look into this on the research side. Confirmation must also be made with the legal office as this is a compliance issue. Graduate Council will be informed as the Graduate School receives further information and clarification on this matter.

### **Program Review**

Dean Midha stated that the program review cycle was started last spring with 20% of the programs to be reviewed and report back the last week of May. Complete information was received from approximately seven of the 11 programs reviewed. Due to the HLC report and the budget situation a program review was launched for the entire campus. The difference between the last review and the current review is we are now looking into revenue and expense information. Dean Midha said that the previous review committee was co-chaired by Dr. Allen and Charles Beneke. Dr. Sastry is now serving as co-chair along with Dr. Allen. All data and templates were sent to the academic units on Friday, September 15. There were some observations made on the revenue and expense information provided. Revised information will now be sent. Self-studies will have to be written by department faculty. Dr. Midha shared that it was emphasized in the Council of Deans meeting that faculty input is necessary. The college deans, with input from department chairs, will put programs into three categories. This must be done by December 15. By January 15 the program review committee will review the information submitted by the departments. Recommendations from the program review committee will, then, go to the academic policies committee on March 1, and the academic policies committee will present its report to the Faculty Senate in April.

Dean Midha said that additional members are going to be included on the program review committee. Currently, there are ten members of the committee, and 14 more members are expected to be added. An executive advisory committee exists for program review. He urged Graduate Council members to serve on these committees if asked. Dean Midha indicated that we must follow the CCGS (Chancellor's Council on Graduate Studies) rule that all graduate programs are reviewed every seven to ten years. In consultation with the Associate Vice Chancellor he was able to determine that external reviews of programs are not required. This is left up to the academic units. During this first cycle of program reviews there will be no external reviews conducted.

Dr. Allen informed Graduate Council that this is a holistic program review not just a budgetary analysis.

Dr. Holliday shared that he has heard some faculty members express concern about the categorization of programs. Does it imply that certain categories will be eliminated?

Dean Midha said that the idea is to identify those programs that need more investment.

Dr. Sastry said that Michelle Byrne, Assessment Director, will be reaching out to faculty members to get information on academic issues and substantive program quality.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Shivakumar Sastry  
Secretary