

**Graduate Council Summary Report  
Faculty Senate Meeting – 10/16/17**

Submitted by Jennifer Ann Morrow, chair & Mehmet Aydeniz, chair-elect

**Summary report of the Graduate Council, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

- The Graduate Council approved minutes of the meeting of August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- Committee Reports:

**Academic Policy** – The chair presented two reports, one from the August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting and one from the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting was both a joint meeting with the Credentials committee and the first meeting for APC. Dr. Thompson summarized the work of the three summer working groups: issues related to ESL students, credentialing process, and layout of academic policies and procedures in the Graduate Catalog. During the joint meeting with Credentials we discussed the credentialing process and the various issues that needed to be addressed. Prior to any changes being made here there will be campus-wide listening sessions to vet the proposed changes. For the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting we focused on the issues related to the ESL working group. We discussed the English language certification and the English proficiency exam. We discussed the fact that our current practice is not in alignment with our policy as stated in the catalog. We talked about getting additional data to inform our decisions regarding policies. The Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science put forth a proposal to revise the MS non-thesis final exam policy for the courses only option. They are requested that there is no final comprehensive exam for this program. We asked Dr. Gregor for additional data.

**Appeals** – No appeals to review at this time. We did discuss our policies and procedures of the committee and whether or not they needed to be revised. We will update you as we continue to discuss this.

**Credentials** – The chair presented two reports, the August 31<sup>st</sup> and the September 7<sup>th</sup> report. We are still working with the summer working group on reviewing the policies and the procedures of the credentialing process. We will have additional meetings to discuss this. 18 applications were submitted for the August 31<sup>st</sup> meeting, 6 could not be reviewed due to the fact that the department does not have a Ph.D. degree at this time. The other 12 were discussed and approved. For the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting we had 1 application to review. It was approved.

**Curriculum** – The September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting was cancelled as there were no proposals submitted for review.

- Vice-Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Dixie Thompson: Dr. Thompson is out of state at a conference. Therefore, no reports from the Dean today.
- No New Business

- Vice-Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Dixie Thompson: Dr. Thompson is out today. Please review the August and September Graduate Associate Deans Reports online.
- The Graduate Student Senate Vice-President, Jamie Greig, gave an update:
  - The GSS is no longer under SGA, we are now an independent organization under the Graduate School
  - We have a few core priorities we want to focus on this year:
    - Base stipends: we have not seen an increase since 1993. Our current base stipend is below the poverty level and 20% below our peer institutions
    - Allocation of classes for GTAs: GTAs typically only have the opportunity to teach 100 and 200 level classes. Many employers expect applicants to have experience teaching 300 and 400 level classes. Also, sizes of 100 and 200 level classes are quite large (up to 200) and this can be a burden on our graduate studies and research
    - Grievance procedure: we want to revisit the grievance procedure. We would like to have a way to air our grievances without having our names blacklisted. We would like departments to think about how to address these stressful situations. One suggestion offered was to involve the Director of Graduate Studies. The plan is to write resolutions this summer and submit to Chancellor Davenport
  - Announced the brown bag series with CCD
- Graduate Council Chair, Jennifer Ann Morrow, discussed:
  - Reported on the issue regarding the possibility of Qualtrics, our survey software package, being discontinued because of a substantial increase in cost. Bob Muenchen is forming a taskforce to look at alternatives and gather data. Dr. Morrow urged Council members to speak with their colleagues and students as this will have an impact on many. A survey gathering feedback will be disseminated soon.
- Items from the floor:
  - Beauvais Lyons (Faculty Senate President): mentioned UT's Office of National Scholarships and Fellowships and that 8 students were assisted with applications this year. He would like to see a conversation between the Graduate School and this group so they can work together to provide helpful information to graduate students applying for these awards.

Link to 9/28/17 meeting minutes: [http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk\\_gcminutes/94/](http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gcminutes/94/)

Link to Graduate Council Website: <http://gradschool.utk.edu/faculty-staff/graduate-council/>