

Minutes for Faculty Senate Budget & Planning Committee

- Monday, March 25, 2019, Strong Hall Room 611

Guests: Dixie Thompson, Dean of Grad School, and Sharon Foy, Business Manager for Grad School

Attendees from FS B&P: Larry McKay, Joe Bailey, Beauvais Lyons, Ken Baker, Chris Boyer, Sean Schaefer, Beth Schussler

Dean Thompson gave a pptx presentation (slides attached). Topics and questions/discussion are summarized below.

- Summary of the UT model for central support of tuition and fees for graduate students
 - o 1659 centrally funded fee waivers, mainly for GTAs
 - o For GRAs, grants pay stipends and in-state tuition
 - o UT pays the out-of-state portion of tuition for GTAs and GRAs, where relevant
 - o Questions
 - Is the funding model a disincentive for recruiting out-of-state students? – Response was, no it is not. UT pays the out-of-state portion of tuition for GTAs and GRAs
 - Is UT likely to consider changing this funding model to eliminate the out-of-state tuition for GTAs and GRAs? Many view the present system as involving meaningless internal transfers. Dean's response included disagreement about the meaningless parts and caution about possible changes. Dean Thompson said real cost of grad education is higher than most people think. Changes could make the system worse from perspective of faculty. Grad School is working on a more detailed assessment of costs and revenues for graduate education.
- Stipends for GTAs
 - o Grad School sets minimum levels for stipends, but actual levels vary with colleges and departments
 - o Centrally-funded FY19 stipend increase of \$1M provided across the board raise of \$300/year and raised minimum levels of stipends (ex. 9 month half-time GTA rose to \$12K from \$10K). This benefitted departments with low stipends, but had little impact on other departments.
 - o FY20 raise plan (tentative) will use half the funds for across the board increases and half for strategic increases to programs, based on competitive proposals due in April.
 - o Questions, comments & discussion
 - How will the "competitive" application process work? Brief discussion.
 - What about students on ¼ GTAs? Response – they will get half the increase that students on ½ GTAs get.
 - How much would stipends have to increase to reach real value of stipends in 2002 (date of last raise, prior to FY18)? Dean Thompson said increasing GTA stipends is a priority, but has no long term targets. Also mentioned that GTAs (and GRAs) receive funds from many other sources that didn't exist in 2002, like Chancellor's Fellowships

- Summary of graduate fellowships and other support provided by Grad School
 - o Approximately \$4.4M in fellowships, including \$3M for returning students, \$1M for new students, \$445K in access and diversity funds
 - o Contributions to GSS travel awards, professional development travel awards, student/faculty research awards and tuition support for those on prestigious fellowships
 - o Questions, comments & discussion
 - Does the Grad School cover out-of-state tuition costs for students on prestigious externally funded fellowships (NSF, NASA, foundations, etc.)? Response – yes, spend about \$500K/year on this. All major fellowships are now covered and the Dean considers requests from recipients of lesser-known fellowships.

- Data on graduate stipends, enrollment, graduation, unit statistics, etc.
 - o Graduate Blueprint is now available online through OIRA and relevant data can now be downloaded. Faculty need to fill out a FERPA form and get Head's signature before they can get access. Form is attached to minutes. Faculty can get access to department and program statistics, but not information on individuals.

- New GTA lines
 - o Questions
 - How are new GTA lines created to handle recent increases in undergraduate enrollment? Response – These are handled by the Provost's office (R.J. Hinde) through strategic instruction funds (SIF)
 - What are the drivers for reallocation of GTA lines and are they related to graduate student job market? Response – these are related to teaching needs, not to which areas are “hot” for producing grad students.

- Brief discussion of grad student retention and time to degree. Dean Thompson referred committee to the Graduate Blueprint

- Comparing UT grad student stipends to other institution. Brief discussion of how the Oklahoma salary survey works (it collects data from a range of institutions)
 - o Questions, comments & discussion
 - Are we racing to the bottom? Wouldn't it be better to set our own goals, rather than follow other programs?

- Role of Grad School in setting GRA stipends
 - o Grad school sets minimum levels, but stipends are paid by external sources. Grad School also sets policies about workloads and other issues.
 - o Actual GRA stipend levels are much higher than the prescribed minimum. Current average for GRAs is about \$24K/year.

- Role of Graduate School in development and setting up new donor-supported fellowships
 - o Dean Thompson said that this was not part of her charge. It is mainly done by colleges and departments.

- Interaction between Graduate School and Graduate Council
 - o Dean Thompson thinks it is going very well. Graduate council is no longer involved in “credentialing” faculty to supervise dissertations, which gives them more time for other issues.

- Does the Graduate School play a role in helping students apply for prestigious external Fellowships? No. Other groups on campus serve in this role.

End of meeting

Upcoming FSB&P Meetings

- April 15 at 3:30 pm in SH 611 – David Manderscheid, Provost, and team

- May 2 at 3:30 pm in SH 611 – Tim Cross, Chancellor of UTIA, and team