

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

MINUTES, Meeting 421

May 2, 2014

2:00 p.m., 261 University Center

PRESENT: L. Bennett (CAS), G. Emmert (CHEM), S. Neely-Barnes (SWRK), D. Sherrell (MSCM), M. Logan (CCFA), C. Stewart (COMM), E. Rakow (CEHHS), J. Byford (ICL), L. Weiss (HSS), W. Haggard (ENGINEERING), R. Meier (CIVL), D. Wark (SCSD), G. Shiba (NURSING), D. Irwin (UNIV. COLLEGE), M. Levy (SPH), R. Evans (FACULTY SENATE), K. Weddle-West (Graduate School), J. Brownlee (Graduate School), L. Griggs (Graduate Admissions)

ABSENT: M. B. Mader (PHIL), J. Dhaliwal (FCBE), M. O'Nele (THEATRE), A. Curry (BIOMED)(proxy= R. Meier), K. Duckett (GSA), B. Park (Library)

GUESTS: Robert Jackson

K. Weddle-West opened the meeting at 2:02 p.m. when a quorum was attained.

421.2.1 - K. Weddle-West invited our guest, Robert Jackson, to present the Advisory report drafted by the Committee for Centralized Applications for Admission to Graduate Programs. This committee was formed in order to review electronic, program-specific applications. The committee focused on identifying ways to improve efficiency in the collection of reference letters and other documents required by individual graduate programs but not required by Graduate Admissions. They also addressed the needs of the School of Public Health and the School of Nursing to participate in their professional organizations' centralized application services. In the end, the committee found that these programs should proceed with the investigation and implementation of SOPHAS/HAMPCAS and NursingCAS. Mr. Jackson informed the council that these efforts are moving forward independently without further committee input. In regards to the search for a centralized application, the committee found that no one product will meet the needs of every single department without constraining the ability to process materials as needed by the program. However, there are two products already being used by departments in the Graduate School that the committee felt would meet most departments' needs, Decision Desk and Perfect Forms. Mr. Jackson provided an overview of both products. Mr. Jackson volunteered to visit programs and help with the implementation of either of these products. He also noted that we can look into other vendors if necessary.

421.1 - L. Bennett moved (2/G. Emmert) to approve the minutes from meeting #420, held March 7, 2014. The motion was carried by voice vote.

421.2.2 - L. Griggs provided the council with an update on our internal ability to calculate grade point averages of foreign credentials. He informed the council that they started two pilot programs with computer science and physics, as these programs received a high number of international applications. Instead of charging the applicants for external credential evaluations we are developing procedures to evaluate their credentials internally. With the help of Ms. Cynthia Hightower, L. Griggs has developed a step-by-step process for calculating GPAs. The results of the pilot programs suggest that if we had more manpower in the Office of Graduate Admissions we would be able to increase our internal capabilities. L. Griggs noted that they are not reviewing official documents when doing these calculations. However, the student must submit all required documents before a final decision can be made.

421.2.3 - K. Weddle-West asked the council members to review the Academic Partnerships post conference website on the globalization of higher education. Academic Partnerships is similar to Royal, which is being used at the undergraduate level. President Rudd is interested in exploring the possibility of using Academic Partnerships at the graduate level. Please share this information with your colleagues. We will re-visit this topic next year.

421.2.12 - K. Weddle-West asked that when thinking about 2015 recruitment tactics that programs consider using things such as the GRE Search Service. We will re-visit this topic next year.

421.2.4 - K. Weddle-West provided the council with an update on the late processing fee proposal. The proposal was not approved by Interim President Martin. Since we are saying that the university isn't increasing tuition or adding any additional fees it is possible that implementing the late processing fee could be misperceived as contradictory to this statement. We will try submitting the proposal again next year.

421.2.5 - K. Weddle-West provided the council with a brief overview of our trip to Legislative Plaza for Graduate Education Week. She noted that TCGS is in support of moving Graduate Education Week from the first week in April to the beginning of March.

421.2.6 - K. Weddle-West announced that University of Memphis student, Emily Elderbrock, was awarded the first TCGS Thesis award this year. It is important to remember for next year that once of the requirements of the winner is to attend Graduate Education Week at the Legislative Plaza, as well as the spring TCGS meeting.

421.2.7 - K. Weddle-West gave the council a brief overview of the 2014 Student Research Forum. Participation was unusually low this year, with only 80 total students presenting their research. It is not clear why turnout was so low this year. Next year we will send out an announcement at the end of 2014 and again in January 2015.

421.2.8 - K. Weddle-West announced that New Graduate Student Orientation will be held on August 18, 2014. We had to schedule this event earlier in the month than usual due to scheduling conflicts. Please make sure that new graduate students are aware of this event and encourage them to attend.

421.2.9 - K. Weddle-West announced that the Teaching Effectiveness Workshop for Graduate Teaching Assistants will be held on August 20, 2014. Please share this information with Graduate Teaching Assistants to continue making this event a success.

421.2.10 - K. Weddle-West announced that the 2014-2015 Graduate Catalog has been published online.

421.2.11 - K. Weddle-West informed the council that the unclear statement on the Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide - Electronic Method webpage has been corrected online. (http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/tdinfo_electronic.php)

421.2.13 - K. Weddle-West reviewed the latest Application Activity report with the council. She noted that it is a good indication of success of the Recruitment Fair.

An issue was raised regarding Graduate Assistantships and what will happen when a student wants to take more than the allotted nine hours of courses. Is there a mechanism in place to make the student pay for the remaining hours themselves? No, there is not a mechanism in place for monitoring students that enroll in more than nine hours. J. Brownlee stated that this issue falls into phase two of the budget revision. We will explore how to resolve this issue over the summer and re-visit the topic next year. We do not anticipate this being a big problem.

421.4.1 - The council discussed at length the pros and cons of approving the new procedures for closing and opening of graduate program admissions. L. Weiss stated that the process was too cumbersome and time consuming. K. Weddle-West assured him that the process will not be difficult or cumbersome. D. Sherrell moved (2/E. Rakow) to approve the new procedures for closing and opening graduate programs admissions. The motion was carried by voice vote.

The council gave outgoing member L. Bennett a round of applause, thanked her for her hard work, and wished her a very happy retirement. K. Weddle-West reminded the council that there will be a reception in L. Bennett's honor on Monday May 5, 2014.

K. Weddle-West also thanked our other outgoing council members, J. Byford, C. Stewart, and M. Mader. She noted that two year terms are too short. Next year we should re-visit the issue of extending term lengths to three years.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.