MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES

September 29, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

Graduate Council Chair William F. Tate, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, called the meeting to order 4:00 p.m. in the Danforth University Center, Room 276. Approximately 67 graduate students and faculty members attended.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Dean Tate opened the meeting by reminding the Graduate Council representatives that this Graduate Council serves as a discussion forum for all matters that pertain to the Graduate School and represents the legislative body of the Graduate School. The Graduate Council consists of one faculty member and one graduate student per each degree program that is offered by the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. Dean Tate introduced the various sub-committees of the Graduate Council. The Executive Committee consists of eight elected members and serves as an advisory committee. The Executive Committee has met and discussed the plans for the upcoming academic year. Prof. Rich Loomis, Chemistry, is the Chair of the committee. The Policies and Services Committee works with the Dean on changes in the accreditation system at Washington University. Prof. Bill Clark, Speech & Hearing, is the chair of the committee. The Teaching and Professional Development Committee focuses on issues related to TA training in regard to diversity and inclusiveness. Prof. Rich Loomis is the chair of the committee. Dean Tate emphasized that Graduate Council representatives serve as an agent of communication between the Council and their respective departments and programs.

II. Consideration/Approval of the Minutes

The Graduate Council reviewed and approved the minutes of its April 22, 2015 meeting as it was presented.

III. Consideration/Approval of the Preliminary List of August 2015 Candidates for Advanced Degrees

The final list was sent to members of the Graduate Council prior to the meeting. The Council reviewed and unanimously approved the list as it was presented.

IV. Dean’s Report

Dean Tate opened his report by discussing the contractual agreement between the Graduate School and each student. He assured the Council representatives that there has been no change in the commitment of years of funding for graduate students.

Dean Tate presented an example of a doctoral program by a competitor university that has learning objectives publicized on their website. He highlighted the George Warren Brown School and Psychological and Brain Sciences (formerly known as the department of Psychology) as best practices of this front. He encouraged other schools and departments to follow this model and provide transparent and clearly outlined learning goals to the students. The Dean argued that transparency would not only benefit the students, but it would also be beneficial for future accreditation processes.

The Dean presented information on the TOEFL waiver policy. To be eligible for an expedited TOEFL waiver the applicant must have completed a full-time bachelor’s or master’s degree from a regionally accredited university located in the United States. Please note that the entire program of study must have been completed.
at the institution. Other evidence will be considered as well. However, these cases may require more time and evidence.

Annual reviews will start a bit later this year (in late October and beginning of November) to incorporate some new data that is being evaluated currently.

V. Report of Graduate Student Senate Co-Presidents
Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Co-Presidents Pierre Haenecour, a PhD student in Earth & Planetary Sciences, and Nisha Iyer, a PhD student in Biomedical Engineering, presented the report of the GSS.

GSS updates:
- The GSS Co-Presidents announced their annual signature events:
  o The GSS will hold their Annual Graduate Research Symposium in the spring. Graduate students across disciplines present their research and winners are elected. In order to increase attendance by graduate students and faculty alike, the GSS is planning to host this event on a weekday instead of a Saturday.
  o The annual Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award Ceremony will take place in the spring. The GSS requested for staff members to be eligible for nomination and their request was granted. This means that this academic year, staff members can be nominated to receive the Outstanding Mentor Award.
- The GSS also wants to offer a travel award for a student. This award is intended to help the student to conduct research, travel to archives, or the like.
- The annual Welcome BBQ was a great success. For the first time, it was hosted in the courtyard next to Umrath Hall.
- The GSS is co-sponsoring the screening of the film The Hunting Ground which addresses the issue of sexual assault on university campuses across the country. The screening is scheduled for Oct 26, 2015, 6pm, and will take place in January 110. It will be followed by a discussion with Kim Webb (Director of the RSVP Center) and Jessica Kennedy (Title IX Coordinator).

VI. Action to consider and approve proposal for change of degree names from Psychology to Psychological and Brain Sciences
The change of name was sent to members of the Graduate Council prior to the meeting. The Council reviewed and unanimously approved the change as it was presented.

VII. Action to consider and approve proposal for joint PhD/AM degree in political science and statistics
The proposal was sent to members of the Graduate Council prior to the meeting. The Council reviewed and unanimously approved it as it was presented.

Dean Tate outlined the steps necessary in order to get a certificate or degree program approved. The department votes on the program and then the document is sent to the Dean of the Graduate School, where it is reviewed. The proposal is then submitted to the Provost’s office, which, together with the Council of Deans, reviews the proposal. If it is approved or recommendations are being made, it is sent back to the Dean of Graduate School. If there are no objections by the department or unit, it is sent to this body, namely the Graduate Council, which votes on the proposal. Once the proposal is ratified, it returns to the Provost for final approval. Dean Tate pointed out that an approval process takes multiple steps. Thus, the approval process timeline is dependent on meeting alignment. Thus, departments need to plan ahead when submitting grant proposals or other proposals that are time sensitive.

VIII. Action to consider doctoral degree credit deregulation policy
The intent of this proposed doctoral degree credit deregulation policy, Dean Tate stated, is to prioritize discovery and research. The consideration of a deregulation of credit requirement involves:
• Removing the minimum number of credits to complete the doctorate degree
• Setting research credits to 0, where appropriate
• Granting full-time enrollment status without consideration of credit units
• Setting a GSAS tuition remission boundary of 72 units
• Leaving other standing requirements intact

Dean Tate pointed out some benefits of the credit deregulation:
• Attracting additional transformative graduate students
• Individualizing programs with a focus on discovery
• Shifting the focus to more transparent learning goals

Dean Tate provided some additional context to the information he outlined. He presented data that illustrated that a significant majority of Arts & Sciences faculty earned their doctoral degrees at institutions that do not have a credit requirement or a small fraction relative to our requirement. Dean Tate further stated that most state schools have a credit requirement to address political pressures rather than intellectual aims. He raised the question of why are we following their path? In order to further examine the topic, Dean Tate asked the Directors of Graduate Studies or faculty members to compile a list of five institutions to which each department loses the most prospective students. He also asked the graduate students to compile a list of programs in their respective disciplines that they considered before they ultimately decided to attend WashU. Please send the list to Erin Daugherty at edaugh@wustl.edu by October 9, 2015. Finally, Dean Tate assured the Council that this is merely a first proposal on which the Council might vote in November or at a later point in time.

Discussion of this proposal ranged widely, from possible implementation procedures to more general questions about the relationship of funding mechanisms to student discovery. Dean Tate concluded by thanking everyone for the stimulating and substantive contributions.

IX. Action to consider and approve new graduate courses
The list of new graduate courses was sent to members of the Graduate Council prior to the meeting. The Council reviewed and unanimously approved the list as it was presented.

X. New Business
Announcements:
• October 9, 2015 is the 19th annual Chancellor’s Graduate Fellowship Conference.
• A speaker has been selected for the 41st annual Olin Conference which will take place on October 29 at 4pm in Anheuser-Busch Hall, Bryan Cave Moot Courtroom.
• The Hooding Ceremony is scheduled for the Thursday before Commencement, which is scheduled for May 20, 2016.
• Graduate School-wide Orientation will take place on August 22, 2016.
• There is a new citation program for students with a focus on entrepreneurship connected to the Biological and Social Sciences.

XI. Adjournment
Dean Tate adjourned the meeting at 5:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Simone Pfleger, Germanic Languages & Literatures
Recording Secretary to the Graduate Council 2015-16