



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

**April 22, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.**

Graduate Council Chair William F. Tate, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences and Vice Provost for Graduate Education, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. in Laboratory Sciences, Room 250. Approximately 41 graduate students and faculty members attended.

**I. Consideration/Approval of the Minutes**

The Graduate Council reviewed and approved the minutes of its February 11, 2015 meeting as presented. Dean Tate thanked Angineh Djavadghazaryans for her work recording and writing up Graduate Council minutes throughout 2014-15.

**II. Consideration/Approval of the Preliminary List of Candidates for Advanced Degrees, May 2015 list**

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.

In response to a question from a Graduate Council member, Dean Nancy Pope informed the council that candidates who are not eligible for the May degree will be required to file a new intent for August graduation.

**III. Dean's Report**

Dean Tate opened his report informing the Graduate Council that one of the things that will be considered across the different governing bodies of the Graduate School next year is the question of credit requirements for Ph.D. students. Preliminary analysis of competitors/other private elite universities has shown that Washington University remains one of the few institutions that have a credit requirement for Ph.D. degrees (we currently have a 72 credit requirement for the Ph.D.). He would like to explore the possibility of moving away from the credit system. Departments that are build on credit generation in actual course work would still be able to hold on to the 72 credit requirement. In some departments this would improve time to degree and it would also result in cost savings. During the summer, Dean Tate will speak with Deans of Schools that offer Ph.D. programs to look into how programs that do not have credit requirements have set up their Ph.D. programs and what other requirements determine their Ph.D. education.

Dean Tate explained that the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences has appropriately responded to the Diversity Report that was put forward by the Graduate Student Senate in this past academic year. A Diversity Committee has been established with members appointed by the Graduate School. Members include faculty, staff, and graduate students. The Committee will develop content for professional development on diversity and inclusiveness for teaching assistants. Moreover, the provost office is working on a similar type of training for faculty.

**IV. Report of Graduate Student Senate Co-Presidents**

Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Co-Presidents Ashley Macrander, a Ph.D. student in Education and Vice President of Professional Development of the Graduate Professional Council (GPC), and BrieAnna Langlie, a Ph.D. student in Anthropology, presented the report of the GSS.

## GSS updates:

- The GSS held its Annual Graduate Research Symposium in March. Over 50 graduate students presented their research and winners were elected across disciplines. The event was very successful giving graduate students the opportunity to share their research with graduate students outside their field.
- The GSS Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee held its Second Annual Diversity Roundtable. The committee invited Dean William Tate, Provost Holden Thorp, Dean Rochelle Smith, and Associate Provost Dedric Carter, who served as panelists and responded to the diversity report. The panelists then joined smaller groups of graduate students, faculty, and staff to listen to their experiences about diversity on campus. The GSS hopes that this event will become their third signature event.
- The Annual Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award Ceremony took place in April. The GSS received about 100 nominations and awarded eight (8) Outstanding Faculty Mentor Awards and six (6) Special Recognition awards. The GSS wanted to point out how important it is for graduate students to recognize their mentors. Not only did faculty members receive numerous nominations, but nominations were sent in by current graduate students as well as alums who graduated as many as 10-15 years ago.
- The GSS has put forward its First Annual Strategic Action Plan & Report 2014-2015. The report is intended to bridge the gap between outgoing and incoming members of the GSS and to serve as a document that creates a historical legacy with institutional memory of their efforts; it identifies and communicates concerns and current issues of graduate students that need to be addressed. The report came out of GSS meetings and has been written by committees of the GSS. Ashley and BrieAnna pointed to the following highlights of the report:
  - The Library Committee recommends ProQuest Dissertation and Theses Database to be available to graduate students.
  - The Health Committee recommends subsidized vision and dental insurance as well as improvements in communication between administrators and students so that information about health services and deadlines reaches students promptly.
  - The Sexual Assault Committee recommends that administrators address the vulnerability of graduate students to sexual assault, harassment, and violence, particularly in their dual roles as both student and teacher. The Committee has created a website ([care.wustl.edu](http://care.wustl.edu)) that outlines various needs of graduate students in respect to sexual assault as well as recourses.
  - The Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee recommends revamping the advisory board and mission statement of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.
  - Additionally, the GSS makes following recommendation in regard to safety and security. They request that WUSTL Police advertise to graduate students and offer particular services that meet their needs.
  - In conclusion, the report outlines that graduate students often feel a lack of acknowledgement as a community with specific needs. Websites need to be updated across campus with information for graduate students. International graduate students and graduate students with families need better resources and support. GSS urges administrators and faculty to become further involved with and supportive of the activities of graduate students both in their personal and professional lives. Further, the GSS requests that administrators improve resources and services for all graduate students including housing, safety and security, and health insurance. The GSS envisions this annual plan and report as a tool to pinpoint issues, strategize action, and pursue solutions to our community's issues.

Dean Tate acknowledged Ashley and BrieAnna for their outstanding service as co-presidents of the GSS.

## **V. 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.

## **VI. New Business**

Announcements:

- Dean's Award for Teaching Excellence Ceremony & Reception will take place on April 23, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. in the Women's Building Formal Lounge; the deadline for nominations was February 20, 2015.
- Hooding and recognition ceremony will start at noon instead of 11 on May 15, 2015.
- Graduate School-wide Orientation will take place on August 17, 2015:  
<http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/Graduate-School-Orientation-Overview>
- First day of classes Fall 2015: August 24, 2015 (Monday)
- TA Orientation will take place on August 12, 2015 for the Medical Campus and on August 19, 2015 for the Danforth Campus.

Dean Tate closed the meeting by thanking his colleagues in the Graduate School and all the members of the Graduate Council for their service.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Dean Tate adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

*A. Djavadghazaryans*