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

November 29, 2017 at 4:00 PM

Graduate Council Chair William F. Tate, Dean of the Graduate School, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm in the Danforth University Center, Room 276. Approximately 60 graduate students and faculty members attended.

Welcome and Introductions

Introduction of all committee members and guests. Welcome from Dean Tate.

Voting results from the September 2017 Graduate Council Meeting Reviewed

Dean Tate announced the voting results from the September 26, 2017 cancelled graduate council meeting:

- Minutes from the April 25th, 2017 were approved: Yes: 36, No: 0, Abstain: 4.
- August degree list was approved: Yes: 39, No: 0, Abstain: 1.
- September new course list was approved: Yes: 40, No: 0, Abstain: 0
- AM in German combined with Higher Education Administration was approved: Yes: 36, No: 2, Abstain: 2.
- The graduate certificate in Early Modern Studies was approved: Yes: 37, No: 2, Abstain: 1.

Dean's Report

Dean Tate opened his report by discussing the possibility of tuition waivers qualifying as taxable income as stipulated by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R.1). There are three direct concerns to the University with the potential passing of H.R.1:

1. Currently, of 6,955 graduate students, 55% of them have tuition remission or a scholarship, all of whom would be affected by H.R.1 and would be required to pay income taxes on tuition waivers.
2. The taxing of university endowments will have an immediate effect on the university, as the endowment funds cover a large portion of student scholarships.
3. The potential elimination of tax deductions accrued for charitable donations to the university could result in a loss of $13 billion annually.

The University has sent representatives to Washington, D.C. to lobby on behalf of students and make our voices heard. Dean Tate encourages attendees to write and call representatives; efforts should be targeted at the House of Representatives.

If H.R.1 passes, there will need to be a way to manage changes in government regulations and resolve potential issues as they relate to the financial status of current students. This financial burden is projected to cost tens of millions of dollars. This is currently a huge challenge, and it is coming quickly as the government is hoping to have the bill to the president by January 25th. This issue will be discussed further with the Board of Trustees on Thursday.

Report of Graduate Student Senate Co-Presidents

Graduate Student Senate (GSS) co-presidents Tabbetha Bohac, a PhD Student in Chemistry, and Marina P. Gross, a PhD student in Psychological and Brain Sciences, presented the report of the GSS. GSS updates:
Welcome back BBQ was held in August to welcome graduate students and start off the new academic year.

The 2nd annual diversity happy hour was funded through the CDI – had 55 people in attendance. Be on the lookout for future interdisciplinary events to come.

The Legislative Concerns Committee hosted a couple call days, expressing concerns on both DACA as well as the Tax Reform bill.

Look out for events to take place in the spring semester: the annual Graduate Research Symposium and the Health Forum. The health forum will provide in depth information about navigating health insurance and increase awareness of campus health resources.

Consideration/approval of the list of the candidates for advanced degrees

The Graduate Council reviewed and approved the candidates for advanced degrees as it was presented. Yes: Approx. 60 No: 0, Abstain: 1

Action to consider and approve new graduate courses

Senior Associate Dean Diana Hill Mitchell presented the list of new courses. The Graduate Council approved the new graduate courses. Yes: Approx. 60 No: 0, Abstain: 0

Professional Development Survey

Professor Lori Markson, Teaching and Professional Development Committee Chair, presented on behalf of this committee. A survey will be coming out next week for both graduate students as well as directors of graduate study. The survey will identify what types of professional development are taking place in each department, what is still needed, and further programming opportunities for the Graduate School and Career Center. Associate Dean Thi Nguyen and Michelle Repice are already designing a number of programs to address the needs of students.

YMCA Leadership Symposium (flyer handed out) is a great opportunity to engage and aligns with those who aspire to be leaders. Contact Assistant Dean Ashley Macrander for additional information.

PhD Program in Nursing Science

Dean Tate presented the new program. The program was approved. Yes: Approx. 60, No: 0, Abstain: 3

Question: who will award the degree? Answer: The degree will be jointly awarded between Washington University and Goldfarb Nursing School.

Dean Tate expressed that the program will need to conform to all current policies in place. Dean Tate will ensure that this will be put into the program proposal.

Promising Practices in Graduate and Professional Students Conference

Conference was attended by a number of institutions. Topics covered at this conference included:

- A universal push for jobs and leadership opportunities for students.
- To be consistent with numerous peer institutions, Washington University would like to offer housing for graduate and professional students.
- Mental Health is another huge push by other universities. WashU has implemented an embedded counseling model.
- The elimination of the GRE is still a hot topic.
- The number of doctoral and master's students in the United States is growing, managing this enterprise is a growing need.
New Business

Question: Result of the union vote? Answer: SEIU withdrew the petition.

Question: Will students get a chance to meet with the administration regarding unionization? Answer: Legally, the administration cannot meet with students if they are representing the union, only as individuals.

Dean Tate recommended we stand together to ensure this tax bill does not pass.

Attendees provided positive feedback regarding the Title IX Think About It training.

Adjournment

Dean Tate adjourned the meeting at 4:58 PM.