



Graduate School

Date: November 23, 2020
To: Members of the UAMS Graduate Council
From: Dr. Melanie MacNicol, Chair
Subject: Graduate Council Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2020

Members Present: Drs. Melanie MacNicol, Joshua Phelps, Patricia “Trish” Wright, Boris Zybaylov, David Ussery, Gunnar Boysen, Andrew James, Antino Allen (Nukhet Aykin-Burns), William Fantegrossi, Jerry Ware, Frank Simmen, Lin-Xi Li, Margarete Kulik, Clare Brown

Members Absent: Dr. Mohammed Elfaramawi

Non-voting Members Present: Drs. Robert McGehee and Latrina Prince (Recorder), Ashley Pike

Non-voting Members Absent: Sylvia Stewart

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Dr. Melanie MacNicol started the meeting by asking for approval of the October minutes. The October 19, 2020 Graduate Council minutes were approved.

Administrative Items:

Dr. Robert McGehee

An update on program assessment plans was provided. The template and timeline for submission was discussed. There was confusion regarding the deadline for submitting the program assessment plans. The program assessment plans are due now, at the end of fall semester. Clinical Nutrition and Biomedical Informatics have both successfully used the template. Dr. Tremaine Williams agreed to complete/test the template because he has experience with program assessment; this was his field of study in graduate school. Dr. Phelps completed the template because it was time for Clinical Nutrition to have a program review.

Since the last Graduate Council (GC) meeting, Dr. McGehee has met with all program directors who have not completed a program assessment plan or the new template. Dr. Gentry from Communication Sciences and Disorders already had an assessment plan in place that is similar to the new assessment template. Dr. Gentry will provide responses to the three program assessment questions and their assessment will be complete.

Dr. Mark Mennemeier has been extremely helpful in providing his expertise on program assessments. His experience stems from experience with program assessments at UCA. Dr. Mennemeier has been meeting with the GPIBS program and assisting with getting a program assessment plan in place.



Graduate School

The need for a program assessment plan for all Graduate School programs is a result of recommendations by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Although most programs have been performing program assessments, there was no formal documentation on file. All programs will now have to document implementation of program assessments and measures for assessing student learning outcomes. Dr. Kristen Sterba would like to have all program assessments submitted by the end of the year. The GC members will be updated on the status of the program assessment plans.

Dr. McGehee will begin meeting more frequently with the Graduate Student Association (GSA). Increased face-to-face interaction with students is needed. First year students currently have one class that meets face-to-face. Although Zoom works well, COVID is taking a toll on traditional face-to-face interaction among students and faculty. The IMSD students had a zoom “Happy Hour” recently that was well attended and worked well. Dr. McGehee discussed possible virtual activities for engaging the graduate students during COVID since all the regularly scheduled Graduate School events have been canceled. Dr. Boysen shared ideas for keeping students and faculty engaged while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Other ideas for increasing graduate student and faculty engagement during COVID will be explored.

Dr. McGehee confirmed that there will be no in-person classes this upcoming spring due to COVID. The colleges have been given lots of autonomy regarding options for in-person or online classes during COVID. Most GRS classes are meeting online this fall. Students are meeting with faculty in-person as needed. The three programs from COPH that re-affiliated with the GRS this fall will all be online this spring. Dr. Keith Williams offered Biostatistics with limited seating this fall, but will increase online enrollment this spring so that more students can enroll. Please note that Pharmacology and Toxicology has a course that meets the statistics requirements: Experimental Design and Quantitative Analysis.

The earliest time that things are expected to be back to normal is maybe summer 2021. Therefore it is important to think about ways to engage students during this challenging time. Students who are extrovert may be having a difficult time and need more help.

Latrina Prince

COVID-19 updates are available online. This webpage is updated by Academic Affairs and has information on COVID cases, screenings, and other topics related to academics, students, and faculty. The site can be accessed from the GRS homepage.

PPE packets are still available in the Graduate School. These packets are available to faculty and students. Each packet contains face masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, gloves, etc.

Report from the Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Ashley Pike: Ashley Pike had a meeting with the Provost where ways to help students during COVID was discussed. The GSA Vice President had good ideas for engaging students during COVID. Dr. MacNicol asked



Graduate School

Ashley to keep track of the GSA's activities and expressed appreciation for the work that the GSA does. Dr. Simmen asked Ashley to summarize the level of interaction among graduate students. Ashley explained that she is not on campus a lot, but thinks that most students are doing well although she cannot comment specifically on the level of communication among students during COVID.

Dr. McGehee mentioned that with the three new COPH programs re-affiliated with the GRS, there is opportunity for more students to get involved in the GSA. For example, Paige Newman is a student in the HSSR-PhD program; she is the new GSA Vice President. Dr. McGehee reminded everyone that the GSA is for all graduate students, although many biomedical sciences students tend to be actively involved. Nursing students often do not get as involved with the GSA due to their work schedules since many of them work full-time. Overall, GSA participation is good and representative of all GRS programs.

Old Business:

No report.

New Business:

GUS

All colleges will soon begin to schedule classes in GUS. The current process requires all colleges to send course scheduling spreadsheets to Latrina who then forwards them to Nadine in the registrar's office. Someone from the GRS will now be trained to open and close classes in GUS and to change course instructors in GUS when needed. This process will be easier for scheduling classes in the future.

IPE

No report.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee

No report.

Faculty Committee

There were four new faculty appointment applications from the Clinton School. Dr. McGehee explained the GRS and Clinton School collaboration. Dr. Ussery gave a brief overview of the graduate faculty applications that were received and reviewed by the committee. Dr. MacNicol asked for a motion to approve the graduate faculty applications. Members who were presented voted to approve graduate faculty applications from Drs. Charlotte Williams, Susan Hoffpauir, Nichola Driver, and Chul Hyun Park.



Graduate School

Program Assessment

The report was given by Dr. McGehee at the beginning of the meeting. He reminded everyone that Dr. Mennemeier has been extremely helpful with developing a program assessment plan for the GPIBS program.

Academic Senate

Dr. Andrew James gave a report on upcoming meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday at 4pm. The topics to be discussed include UAMS' response to COVID and adjustments that have been made due to COVID. There will be guest speakers from UAMS administration. Each will discuss the institutions response to COVID-19.

There were no other items to discuss. The meeting was adjourned by Dr. MacNicol.

Adjourned at 1:42 p.m.