MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, January 25, 2019 – 3:00 PM  
Robert Scott Small, Room 235

Chair – Godfrey Gibbison, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members and Guests Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIEP), Seaton Brown (MBA), Annalisa Calini (MATH), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Lucy Davis (EVSS), Mike Duvall (ENGL), Christine Finnan (MTLA), Martin Jones (MATH), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS), Amy Mercer (HPCP), Bob Mignone (MATH), Judy Millesen (MPA), Nancy Muller (LGC), Bob Perkins (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Silvia Rodríguez Sabater (HISP/LCWA), Emily Rosko (MFA), Amanda Ruth-McSwain (COMM/CGE), Norma Salcedo (MBIO), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Allan Strand (BIOL/SSM), Sebastian van Delden (CSIS/SSM), Rafael Teixeira (SCI/M/CS), William Veal (EDMG), Annette Watson (EVSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

GSO Staff Present: Jon Hakkila (Associate Dean), Robyn Olejniczak (Student Records)

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:02pm.

II. Approval of the Minutes December 14, 2018 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. New Business

   A. Curriculum Proposals - Amanda Ruth-McSwain (COMM/CGE) presented on behalf of CGE chair, Sandy Slater.

   i. English

      The proposal reduces the required number of credits from six to three that a student must complete in the three areas of study: American Literature, Pre-1800 British Literature, and Post-1800 British Literature. It also increases the number of elective hours for the MA. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) asked for clarification that the proposal does not reduce the number of degree hours.

      The proposal passed unanimously.

   ii. Computer and Information Sciences

      The proposal adds CSIS 632 to the prerequisites for CSIS 641, which better prepares students for the content.

      The proposal passed unanimously.

   iii. Environmental Studies

      The proposals update the course descriptions for two courses, EVSS 611 and EVSS 640. The program is updating the EVSS 611 course title and content to reflect the program’s new name (Environmental and Sustainability Studies) to better orient new students. The new course description for EVSS 640 better reflects current teaching practices and content.
The proposals pass unanimously.

iv. Operations Research

The proposal adds and removes courses from the certificate electives to more clearly communicate the program requirements. Martin Jones (MATH) added that these changes are to encourage breadth of knowledge rather than depth.

The proposal passes unanimously.

v. Math – Doctoral Program

Annalisa Calini (MATH) reiterated the small and niche nature of this program; the department is forecasting an average enrollment of eight students. A master’s degree will be required for admission. Computation in this context is the combination of theory and software application. The program is modeled after the PhD at Bryn Mawr, which is small and has a robust undergraduate program. It also vertically integrates undergraduates, graduates, and faculty on research projects. Another element of the program is the part-time option, which they expect will allow a student to finish in five years. There is no desire for the program to grow to the point where it threatens the College’s NSF PUI status. Bob Mignone (MATH) spoke to the concerns about the budget and already limited resources. The program is designed to be internally funding within the department and with summer school monies. The department is requesting two assistantships at $22,000, otherwise they will have to cannibalize the assistantships from the master’s program. Roger Daniels (ACCY) asked if the doctoral students would be teaching undergraduates. Mignone (MATH) responded yes. Allan Strand (BIOL/SSM) asked if there will be enough students in to create a sense of community for the program. Calini (MATH) responded that they will likely integrate with the master’s students. Daniels (ACCY) asked how the new doctoral courses are going to be offered with such small enrollments. Calini (MATH) responded that exceptions will have to be made to ensure the courses are offered. Daniels (ACCY) asked if there are potential issues with Clemson or USC. Mignone (MATH) responded that it is likely, but the College has launched other programs that were feared to be opposed such as the Data Science and Analytics master’s. He added that the College has the support of other colleges and universities around the state. Nancy Muller (LGC) said they should emphasize and market the part-time option since that demonstrates the program and the College are serving the local area. Companies are more interested in recruiting and retaining talent, not necessarily about the specific skillsets. Emily Rosko (MFA) requested a secret ballot when the program was put up for a vote.

The program proposal passed with 16 “yes” votes and three “no” votes. The new course proposals passed without discussion.

IV. Fellowship and Funding Processes for 2019-20

Godfrey Gibbison (GSO/SPS) updated the group on the current application numbers for fall 2019 – there are 578 applications in progress or submitted. He also announced that the Board of Trustees approved a flat rate tuition for online graduate programs, which would include the MA in Communication, the MED in Languages, and the ESOL graduate certificate. Any subsequent online
programs will receive this rate. The rate will be calculated at 0.8% of the resident tuition. This tuition rate does not apply to programs that offer online or hybrid courses; the program must be fully online. He continued that the administration, including Interim President Osborne and CFO Paul Patrick, were reluctant to consider the proposal to set one graduate tuition rate during the transition of President-Elect Hsu. He added that he will put forth a separate proposal to offer in-state tuition to out-of-state College of Charleston undergraduates who continue into a graduate program. He also added that President-Elect Hsu is interested in graduate education.

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) then announced that the Graduate School is currently out of abatement funding for the semester and remainder of the fiscal year. Criteria will be implemented to determine abatement qualification and prioritization going forward as the number of out-of-state students may continue to increase. The criteria will include full-time enrollment, previous semesters of funding, and number of years in the program. The Graduate School may also make determinations based on whether or not summer enrollment is required. Susan Simonian (MSCL) and Daniels (ACCY) said that the inability to guarantee abatement funding will negatively impact their ability to recruit and retain students. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded that there are not enough funds to promise abatement funding to every student and/or program. He will ask the administration for additional funding and continue to advocate for a flat graduate tuition. Daniels (ACCY) pointed out that this funding is not real tuition dollars that the College would have collected. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) agreed and added that because the College abates so many out-of-state students, it is not really collecting out-of-state tuition revenue. However, the College is only permitted to use 4% of its revenue for institutional scholarships. Craig Plante (MBIO) asked if there was any way to provide additional funding for the current semester. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded unfortunately not. The continued abatement funding shortfall will force the administration to consider the flat graduate tuition rate as pressure builds. Van Delden (CSIS/SSM) suggested inviting Interim President Osborn and CFO Paul Patrick to the next graduate council meeting so they can hear the concerns. Seaton Brown (MBA) asked what the distribution of abatement funding was between undergraduate and graduate. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded that undergraduate receives more institutional support because of the difference in population volume. He added that Undergraduate Admissions is facing the same issue as they increase the number of out-of-state students. The administration cannot ask the Graduate School to increase enrollments without providing financial support. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) concluded the discussion by addressing the fellowship criteria and deadlines for 2019-20. Some programs expressed hesitation about the requirement of a standardized test to be eligible for a fellowship. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) noted that these fellowships are meant to attract and yield the top 20% of the applicant pool and should be a higher bar than admission to the program. For 2019-20, the fellowships will require a standardized test. He closed by letting programs know that the deadline to nominate their applicants will be March 15.

V. Graduate Student Association – Zach Stephens, President

Zach was not present at the meeting.

VI. Announcements, Updates and Reminders – GSO Staff

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) reminded the group that they should continue to work on their assessment plans and analyses.

VII. For the Good of the Order – no comments

VIII. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:31pm