MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, November 22, 2019 – 3:00 PM  
Robert Scott Small, Room 235

Chair – Godfrey Gibbison, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members and Guests Present: Divya Bhati (OIEP), Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Seaton Brown (MBA), Jason Coy (HIST), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Susan Divine (HISP/LCWA), Julia Eichelberger (ENGL), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Jiexiang Li (MASC), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Jon Marcoux (HSPV), Nancy Muller (LGC), Bob Perkins (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (CREW), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Sandy Slater (CGE), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Allan Strand (BIOL/SSM), Laura Turner (EDPA), William Veal (EDMG), Annette Watson (ENSS), Mikey Zinn (GSA)

GSO Staff Present: Laura Everett (Recruitment & Marketing), Susan Hallatt (Admissions), Jon Hakkila (Associate Dean), Robyn Olejniczak (Student Records), Erica Shirley (Admissions & Support Services)

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

II. Approval of the Minutes September 20, 2019 & October 25, 2019 Meetings – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. ESOL Certificate: change in required credit hours from 12 to 15

The certificate is being updated to align with the State Department of Education’s requirements for teachers seeking add-on certificate or additional endorsements in ESOL. This update will address this mismatch between the graduate certificate and the state requirements.

The proposal passed unanimously.

B. MEd Languages: update to allowable transfer credit hours from 9 to 12

The program currently limits students to 9 hours of transfer credit. The program wants to match the Graduate School’s allowance of transfer hours, which is 12.

The proposal passed unanimously.

C. MEd Languages: LALE 695, pre-req change

The course previously had unenforceable prerequisite requirements. This change will update those and also better enforce that students are taking this course at the end of their program of study.

The proposal passed unanimously.

Godfrey Gibbison (GSO/SPS) asked that people please submit any major curriculum proposals soon because the deadlines are early in the spring semester. Slater (CGE) asked that additional deadlines and clarifying language be added to the website so people understand the parallel processes for CHE and SACS approvals/notifications. Divya Bhati (OIEP) added that substantive change for SACS is based on a percentage of change to the program.
IV. **Fall 2019 Enrollments** – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) shared the fall 2019 program enrollments and noted that the numbers are fairly steady, though a few programs had drastic increases or decreases. Ron Magnuson (MBA) asked if the data were viewable in terms of credit hours or revenue generation since the enrollments include part-time students. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) requested that data from Institutional Research so the Graduate School can have a full picture of graduate education revenue.

V. **2020-2021 Funding Allocation** – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Godfrey Gibbison (GSO/SPS) opened the discussion by reminding the group that there are limited resources available to the Graduate School and graduate education. He described the model used in the Graduate School to determine resource allocation; it is built on a three-year average of enrollment data, but there is still a human element to the final allocation. He noted that the Graduate School audits programs on their use of the allocated funds and if there are unspent or unawarded funds, it signals to the GSO that resources were misallocated. He also emphasized the need to use the funds as recruiting tools for their best applicants. Emily Rosko (CREW) pointed out a mistake in the MFA data. Brian Lanahan (EDEL) asked about his program’s lack of allocated assistantships; Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded that the accelerated format of the program is not conducive to students also holding assistantships, but that there were Old Glebe funds available to the program.

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) asked program directors to think of these funds in terms of the new proposed budget model for the Graduate School, RCM, and what would the resource landscape be if a portion of revenue was returned to programs. RCM could be difficult for the Graduate School to undertake as programs are interdisciplinary or are heavily dependent on an undergraduate department. Rosko (CREW) asked if there would be more support for programs who are revenue neutral than program that are revenue generating. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded that it depends on the model that is eventually adopted; there will always be consideration for new programs needing resources as they launch. Coy (HIST) asked if programs were being penalized for recruiting non-resident students. Rosko (CREW) asked if program’s with capped enrollments would also be penalized. Hakkila (GSO) responded that the question of abatements is still central to the funding issues facing programs and the GSO, but that directors should still recruit non-residents as it only speaks to the high quality and reputation of the program.

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) said that he has made progress in addressing the out-of-state tuition issue. He has received support from Business Affairs regarding a tiered approach to graduate tuition. The first tier will include service programs like education and child life; in-state and out-of-state tuition would be lowered and abatements would not be available to these students. Grant Gilmore (CPAD) asked how program directors should approach recruiting for 2020-2021; Gibbison (GSO/SPS) responded that until anything new is approved, it is business as usual. Annette Watson (ENSS) wants to do a better job of using non-program assistantships for recruiting purposes. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) responded that this is difficult as we do not want to place students in assistantships that the office or department did not select themselves, but there is a lot of room for improvement and relationship building between programs and offices with clear connections.

Hakkila (GSO) encouraged people to remain optimistic and pointed out that the new president is interested in graduated education. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) added that there is earnest work going on in programs to determine the value of their program and degree. He also added that the Graduate School wants to increase spending on marketing.
VI. Graduate School Grading Scale – Judy Millesen, MPA

Judy Millesen (MPA) was not present so Magnuson (MBA) introduced a resolution to add minus grades to the graduate grading scale. There is a concern about grade compression and this could be one way to address that issue. Jason Coy (HIST) reminded the group that we need to be cognizant of joint programs. William Veal (EDMG) asked if the grading scale could belong to the faculty’s institution. Bhati (OIEP) responded that per SACS requirements, joint program requirements and academic elements must mirror each other. Julia Eichelberger (ENGL) added that there would be issues with GPA calculations if different programs or school’s used different grading scales; faculty would also need to recalibrate their own personal calculations for grade distribution. Mikey Zinn (GSA) asked that the group consider what the changes may do to the 3.0 GPA requirement for graduation. It was noted that students would still need to achieve the 3.0 GPA for graduation; the minuses would not negatively impact that other than provide increased variation of quality points. Magnuson (MBA) asked that the resolution be approved pending further research on the joint programs and consultation with the Registrar. Hakkila (GSO) emphasized that there must be one grading scale at the graduate level. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) noted that when the grading scale added minuses at the undergraduate level, there was worry that there would be damage to student performance. That has not turned out to be the case.

The resolution passed pending further research on joint programs and consultation with the Registrar.

VII. Graduate Student Association – Mikey Zinn, President

Zinn (GSA) updated the group on the GSA’s progress this semester as well as their plans for the spring. GSA has created a task force to review the governance structure of the student organization; they want to determine if the current structure is working or if a new model would be better suited for growth. For example, should GSA delegates come from the academic schools instead of the academic programs. Currently, delegates are unsure of their roles or are overburdened between servicing their program-specific student groups and GSA. Zinn hopes this task force to complete its review by early next semester and to possibly implement changes by 2020-2021.

VIII. Announcements, Updates and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) is working with Erica Shirley to develop a resource manual for prospective students. He intends to survey current students so the manual includes meaningful information for incoming students. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) asked that any programs with their own manuals to please share them with the Graduate School. John Peters (SMFT) added that the manual should include social media information so students can engage with each other before arriving on campus.

B. Hakkila (GSO) announced that the Graduate School selected two winners of the thesis award, one from Marine Biology and one from Environmental Studies. He thanked the selection committee for their work. The winners will have their theses submitted to the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools regional competition in March 2020. He also announced the winners of the 3MT competition, and thanked everyone for their support. This was the Graduate School’s largest group of participants.

C. Nancy Muller (LGC) reminded the group that the Lowcountry Graduate Center has funds available to support program development or redevelopment. There is a $75,000 budget
available between the three member institutions: MUSC, the Citadel, and the College. The deadlines to apply are November 1 and February 1. Gilmore (CPAD) asked what constitutes a new program and Muller (LGC) responded an entirely new program or a new format/structure of an existing program.

D. The Graduate School hosted its first fellowship reception for recipients of Graduate School or program fellowships and scholarships. Gibbison (GSO/SPS) thanked everyone who attended the reception earlier in the month and noted its great success.

IX. For the Good of the Order

There were no comments for the good of the order.

X. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:27pm