MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, March 15, 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), Seaton Brown (MBA), Annalisa Calini (MATH), Karen Chandler (ARTM), Jason Coy (HIST), Rachel Donaldson (HIST/HSS), Mike Duvall (ENGL), Christine Finnan (MTLA), Ashley Fisher (GSA), Martin Jones (MATH), Renée McCauley (CSIS), Michelle McGrew (Academic Affairs), Amy Mercer for Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Judy Millesen (MPA), Nancy Muller (LGC), Bob Perkins (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Sandy Slater (HIST/CGE), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Barry Stiefel (HPCP), Annette Watson (EVSS)

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

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:03pm.

II. Approval of the Minutes February 22, 2019 Meeting

The minutes were not circulated so they will be considered at the April meeting.

III. New Business

   A. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater (HIST/CGE) presented the curriculum proposals.

      i. Early Childhood Education

         The program is updating their admissions requirements to allow students to submit GRE or PRAXIS scores. The requirements currently only allow the PRAXIS.

         The proposal passed unanimously.

      ii. Performing Arts Education

         The program is renumbering two courses, THRE 712 to THRE 521 and THRE 610 to THRE 522, in order to cross-list them with undergraduate courses.

         The proposals pass unanimously.

      iii. Community Planning, Policy, and Design

         The program is updating the special topics course, CPAD 690, from 3 hours to 1-3 variable hours to allow more flexibility. The program is also limiting the number of special topics hours that a student can count towards the degree to six.

         The proposals pass unanimously.

      iv. MPA / Urban Studies 4+1
This 4+1 is being terminated due to lack of student interest and lack of program management. It did not require a vote, but the proposal passed unanimously.

v. MPA

The program is creating a new elective course, PUBA 519, after offering it as a special topics course three times. The program is updating the course descriptions of PUBA 550, PUBA 600, and PUBA 701 to better align with current trends and course experiences. The program is decreasing the degree hours from 39 to 33 by removing a core course, PUBA 603, and reducing the number of elective hours from 15 to 12. The content of PUBA 600 and PUBA 603 are overlapping enough to justify the removal of 603 and the inclusion of some content into 600.

The proposals passed unanimously.

vi. MPA / Environmental Studies Concurrent Program

The concurrent program is being updated in order to facilitate the changes to the MPA program regarding the decrease in degree hours and the removal of a core course. The total degree hours still remains at 60. There was also clarifying language added to the program regarding the thesis/internship requirement. Concurrent students must complete the Environmental Studies thesis or internship requirement, but they may still complete the MPA internship as an elective. Divya Bhati (OIEP) asked if the decrease in MPA hours will impact the number of shared hours between the program. The total degree hours will remain at 60 as required by SACSCOC.

The proposals passed unanimously.

vii. Environmental Studies

The program is creating a special topics course, EVSS 595, and adding it to their electives.

The proposals passed unanimously.

IV. Graduate Student Association – Ashley Fisher, Vice President

Ashley Fisher (GSA) let program directors know that elections have been postponed until April 17 to allow to more participation. The final GSA meeting will be held on April 2. The GSA distributed an involvement survey to students to gather some data to better plan events and activities for the coming year. The GSA is also working with Student Affairs and Business Affairs on developing agreements with apartment complexes to serve graduate students with flexible leasing or lower rates. The GSA is also working to increase the Graduate School’s profile to potential donors. Seaton Brown (MBA) asked if there were any MOUs in place regarding the graduate student housing options. Godfrey Gibbison (GSO/SPS) said that Amy Orr is determining whether the College can move forward on these types of arrangements without formal contracts. Susan Simonian (MSCL) asked when students could run for office. Fisher (GSA) responded that elections are held in the spring and any open positions are electable in the fall. It was suggested that elections be held in the fall instead of the spring to allow new students to run for office. It also prevents the need for an ad hoc transition team or contingency plan if no one runs.
V. **Announcements, Updates and Reminders – GSO Staff**

Gibbison (GSO/SPS) thanked everyone for participating in Graduate Education week events. He then announced the winners of the Graduate Research Poster Session.

VI. **For the Good of the Order**

Craig Plante (MBIO) made a comment about the Council of Graduate Schools’ April 15 Resolution regarding offers of funding to admitted students. He said that we are not adhering to all the requirements set forth in the letter, including providing a link to the resolution in all funding offers. We are also not preparing or requesting release letters from students who wish to accept other offers or want to accept our offer. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) said she would add the Resolution link to all funding offers going forward. Jason Coy (HIST) added that programs lose their recruiting power if we are waiting until the April 15 deadline. Jon Hakkila (GSO) asked program directors to document any instances where students are being pressured to make decisions before the deadline. Graduate School Deans who are signatories to the Resolution are supposed to communicate with each other when this happens.

VII. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 3:48pm