MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, November 19, 2021 – 3:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Kameelah Martin, Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Keonya Booker (GSO), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Raúl Carrillo-Arciniega (HISP/LCWA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Navid Hashemi (DATA), Alex Kasman (MASC), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Mike Lee (MCOM), Shawn Morrison (CGE), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFE), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (MFA), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Maren Trochmann (POLI/HSS), Sofia Troya (GSA), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Divya Bhati (OIE), Seaton Brown (MBA), Lisa Chestney Leeke (RO), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Nancy Muller (LGC), Norma Salcedo (MBIO), Katie Yochim (MSCL)

GSO Staff Present: Susan Hallatt (Admissions), Robyn Olejniczak (Student Records), Erica Shirley (Admissions & Support Services)

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm.

II. Approval of the Minutes October 15, 2021 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Shawn Morrison, CGE

A. English to Speakers of Other Languages Graduate Certificate
   i. Admissions change: add statement of goals, remove priority deadlines

   Shawn Morrison (CGE) described that the program seeks to update add a statement of goals in order to better advise admitted students.

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

B. Mathematical Sciences, MS
   i. MATH 700: change grade mode to P/F, add pre-reqs, require 6 total hours

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

C. Public Administration, MPA
   i. PUBA 554: course deactivation

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

IV. Fall 2021 Enrollments – Kameelah Martin, GSO

Kameelah Martin (GSO) shared official enrollment data for each graduate program with attendees and explained that this data is used primarily to determine each program’s funding allocation for the coming academic year. The Graduate School plans to share the 2022-2023 funding allocation information at the December Graduate Council meeting. Martin (GSO) acknowledged that the funding landscape is precarious and the Graduate School will do its best to take program concerns about this and abatement funding into consideration. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) clarified that this
enrollment data includes registered, degree-seeking and certificate-seeking students; it does not include non-degree students, students on approved Leave, or joint program students enrolled through the Citadel.

Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL) asked how this enrollment data will be used given that the forthcoming RCM budget model focuses on FTE. Martin (GSO) responded that the information received thus far regarding RCM is hypothetical, but the Graduate School has been designated as a cost center. There has been no clear information about how this designation will impact the funding the unit receives through the RCM system. There is also no clarity about how this model with impact student funding like assistantships, abatements, etc. Ron Magnuson (MBA) added that it may be beneficial to collect data on gross revenue generated by these enrollments; the Treasury does calculate the net revenue for each program. He continued that the institution collects much more data for undergraduate students than graduate students; it is important to collect all relevant data in a comparable way for graduate students for strategic planning purposes. Magnuson (MBA) noted that graduation and retention data will not be universal as each program will have its own benchmarks for success. He suggested that the Graduate Council, perhaps via sub-committee, also work on developing a definition for experiential learning / high-impact activities for each program since that is a metric currently used in one pillar of the strategic plan. Martin (GSO) agreed and shared that Institutional Research is currently building a data dashboard for graduate programs called Tableau.

V. TargetX Decision Review Demo – Susan Hallatt, Graduate School

Susan Hallatt (GSO) provided a demonstration of the new application review process that allows admission committee members to make decisions within the TargetX application system instead of via email and PDF forms. Anton Vander Zee (ENGL) provided a few comments regarding the design layout of the review portal; Emily Rosko (MFA) asked if training sessions would be offered. Vander Zee (ENGL) asked if admission committees should be reviewing applications using their holistic review rubrics and then log their decisions in the portal or if these steps should be occurring simultaneously. Hallatt (GSO) responded that the rubrics within the portal are somewhat generic as it is too difficult to create rubrics for each program, but they are meant to help the committee get started in their review. Seaton Brown (MBA) asked if review access will be limited to applications from only the necessary program to ensure data security and integrity. Hallatt (GSO) responded yes, security roles will be structured to limit reviewer access to their own program. Craig Plante (MBIO) asked if it is possible to bundle complete application notifications into one email instead of individual emails. Hallatt (GSO) is not sure the TargetX system has the technical capability to do that. Brown (MBA) asked if this new review process is currently live. Hallatt (GSO) responded no, but the goal is to launch in early 2022 so that the majority of fall 2022 admissions decisions will use this new review process. She also reminded program directors that they each have a folder in TargetX that holds several application status reports. John Peters (SMFE) asked how an accepted student will be notified of any funding they receive. Olejniczak (GSO) responded that this notice comes shortly after the acceptance letter in a different letter; there is a sentence in the acceptance letter to this effect. Rosko (MFA) asked if the Graduate School plans to use the same timeline for fellowship nomination and notification. Olejniczak (GSO) responded yes.

VI. Graduate Student Association – Sofia Troya, President

Sofia Troya (GSA) thanked program directors for their help in collecting delegate information for their programs. The GSA had a productive first meeting and most program were represented by their delegate. She then shared some concerns on behalf of other graduate students regarding assistantship and abatement eligibility; Troya (GSA) wanted the Graduate School to keep international students in mind if there are any policy changes. She plans to collect data on
international graduate students and would appreciate any qualitative data program directors can provide regarding recruiting and retaining this population. Troya (GSA) let everyone know that the GSA is hosting a headshot event on Tuesday, November 23 from 4-5pm. Martin (GSO) clarified that the Graduate School is not formally changing policies regarding funding eligibility, but suggests that programs encourage their students to review the requirements for in-state residency.

VII. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

Erica Shirley (GSO) reminded everyone about the upcoming spring application deadline of December 1. She also thanked everyone for their support of this year’s 3MT participants and winners.

Olejniczak (GSO) provided an update regarding the thesis submission deadline for fall semester; the deadline has again been extended to acknowledge any disruptions caused by the pandemic. The Graduate School has granted blanket extensions to the submission deadline since the onset of the pandemic. Olejniczak (GSO) said that the Graduate School will likely grant this kind of extension in the spring 2022 semester, but for the last time. After next semester, the thesis submission deadline will return to the last day of classes of the semester.

Olejniczak (GSO) provided an update on several of the Graduate School’s forms: undergraduate permission to enroll in a graduate course and the request for category b assistantship status. The Graduate School makes continual updates to its forms, but these two form updates were made to provide clarity to students and administrators. The undergraduate permission form now separates accelerated (4+1) students from non-accelerated students, which helps the Graduate School and Registrar manage these requests. The category b assistantship form now makes clear how a student becomes eligible for this status, which was previously a point of confusion for students and programs. Martin (GSO) noted that the previous policy regarding category b assistantship was not fully in practice and this update somewhat expands the eligibility criteria; it is also meant to curtail exceptions. She added that full-time enrollment is still required to be eligible for abatement funding.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

Nancy Muller (LGC) requested program directors complete their program information forms by the end of November so the Lowcountry Graduate Center can update its website.

Plante (MBIO) asked if the requirements and prioritization for abatement funding have changed. Martin (GSO) responded that full-time enrollment is priority funding is so limited; the Graduate School must prioritize students which means that second- and third-year students may not automatically be awarded. She also reiterated that program directors should encourage their students to review the in-state residency requirements so they can begin to move through that process. Rosko (MFA) noted that students with this intention faced obstacles, such as the DMV being closed due to the pandemic. Vander Zee (ENGL) emphasized that we need to honor our commitments to students. Laura Turner (EDPA) said that she has been encouraging her new students to move to Charleston sooner so they can begin the process earlier. Magnuson (MBA) added that correcting the graduate non-resident tuition rate would resolve this issue, but that likely will not be in place in time for incoming students. Martin (GSO) responded that the Provost and CFO are aware and willing to begin a review of graduate tuition with the goal of developing a new model, but it will take time. She closed by reiterating that non-resident students should be directed to the Office of Legal Residency to being the process of updating their residency status.

IX. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:48pm