I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:00pm. Everyone present also introduced themselves.

II. Approval of the Minutes April 24, 2020 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Graduate Career Preparation for the Job Market – Elizabeth Wilkins, Northern Illinois University

Elizabeth Wilkins (NIU) presented to the group about her university’s career preparation for graduate students. This prep is driven by labor market data so that advising and curriculum are adapting in real time. NIU did about a year of information gathering around its graduate programs and conducted alumni surveys to get a sense of what was being offered at the program level. Wilkins (NIU) found that not much was happening and there was an opportunity for the Graduate School to do more. The Graduate School used Burning Glass data to develop a career pathways dashboard for students to navigate on their own; the data reflect skills, salaries, employers across different industries and locations. Wilkins (NIU) found graduate students began asking if their courses were in alignment with the labor market data they were finding on the dashboard. This prompted the Graduate School to develop two professional development courses, UNIV 601 and 602. Ron Magnuson (MBA) asked if these courses were required for graduate students. Wilkins (NIU) responded no, but programs find value in them so they strongly encourage their students to enroll. Higher education has been disrupted by third-party providers like Coursera, EdX, and LinkedIn Learning so there is a strong motivation to demonstrate the value of graduate education.

Gibbison (GSO) asked program directors if they would find this type of programming and data analysis useful to their students. Several responded that they are interested and already find their students asking for career information and advising earlier in their graduate careers.

IV. Lowcountry Graduate Center Opportunity Funds – Nancy Muller, Director

Nancy Muller (LGC) gave her annual presentation of the funding available through the Lowcountry Graduate Center. She provided an overview of the LGC, its member and partner institutions, and the Center’s strategic priorities. These priorities include manufacturing, engineering services,
software/IT development, k-12 education and leadership, and healthcare management and community wellness. Proposals for these funds should be for new programs or substantial change to existing programs that focus on workforce development.

V. Moratorium on Standardized Test Scores – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) shared the language developed by the Graduate School to communicate the temporary waiver of standardized test scores that was discussed during the program directors retreat in August. This waiver would apply to the spring 2021, summer 2021, and fall 2021 admission terms. A test score would still be required for nominating applicants for Graduate School Fellowships; the Old Glebe scholarship does not require a test score. A few program directors asked that the test score be removed as a requirement for the Graduate School fellowships, but that was not agreed to by the Graduate School. Gibbison (GSO) continued that programs should consider other ways they could reach an admissions decision without a test score. He asked that programs share with the Graduate School the additional items that could be requested from an applicant that are not currently listed as an admission requirement. Programs could also have an option of requesting scores from an applicant they feel to be borderline. Application files will be considered complete if they are only missing a test score. Seaton Brown (MBA) asked if clarifying language will be added to the online application; Susan Hallatt (GSO) responded yes. She also reminded program directors that they have access to all admissions documents in TargetX and SharePoint. Jon Hakkila (GSO) closed by emphasizing that holistic admissions means that the applicant evaluation is based on multiple data points; the test score should not be removed as a data point without replacing it with another requirement.

VI. Combined Bachelor’s/Master’s Programs – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) reported that the Graduate School has created some uniform guidelines and requirements for graduate programs that seek to develop a combined bachelor’s and master’s option. These programs, sometimes referred to as 4+1 or accelerated programs, offer current undergraduates the option to begin taking graduate courses and applying the credit towards their bachelor’s degree as well as their master’s degree. The task force worked from the spring semester through early in the fall researching peer institution practices, as well as the requirements for the two existing programs on campus. The task force established a minimum GPA requirement of a 3.2, 90 earned hours, and only 12 credit hours may be double-counted towards the undergraduate and graduate degrees. Students must earn at least 150 hours between both levels, with 30 hours at the graduate level. Programs that develop this combined option may establish their own criteria, such as desired undergraduate major, a GPA that exceeds the Graduate School’s minimum, and a major GPA minimum. Gibbison (GSO) continued that this option is more of a change to admissions requirements than a new, distinct program offering requiring full curricular review. These programs are meant to attract top performing undergraduates and provide a fluid path to pursuing a graduate degree at the College. William Veal (EDMG) noted that there could be consequences if a student was approved for this option, enrolled in and then failed the graduate course. Gibbison (GSO) responded that that would be true even if they were not pursuing a combined program option. These guidelines and minimum requirements were approved.

VII. Academic Dismissal Policy – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) reported that the Graduate School proposed a small edit to the Appeal section of the Academic Dismissal policy. This new language will prevent students from accessing the Grievance Policy if they are appealing academic dismissal. If a student seeks additional review of their appeal, the final decision will rest with the Provost. This change was approved.
VIII. **Graduate Student Association** – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) reported that the Graduate School is taking a more proactive role in the organization this year because the GSA has struggled for several years under their student leadership. Student Affairs committed to funding the executive leadership compensation so those funds do not come directly out of the GSA’s budget. All executive leadership positions are up for election, which is currently underway. The Graduate School hopes to have good engagement this year, even though their abilities will be limited due to the pandemic.

IX. **Announcements, Updates and Reminders** – GSO Staff

A. Update on dean search

Gibbison (GSO) reported that there will not be a search for a permanent dean of the Graduate School this academic year. This decision was made by the Provost, as she wants to get to know current academic leaders. This decision was also financial due to the severe constraints on the budget due to the pandemic. He continued that all campus entities had to make permanent budget cuts; the Graduate School was asked to cut approximately $17,000 from its operating budget.

B. Hakkila (GSO) asked for volunteers for the assessment committee.

X. **For the Good of the Order**

Annette Watson (ENSS) asked if the Graduate School would be extending the deadline for thesis submissions for fall graduates as they did during the spring semester.

Judy Millesen (MPA) asked about the status of the inquiry regarding adding minus grades to the graduate grading scale.

XI. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 5:10pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, October 23, 2020 – 3:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Godfrey Gibbison, Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Brooke Blosser (GSA), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Gerald Gordon (URBP), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP/LCWA), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (CREW), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Sandy Slater (CGE), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIE), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Julie Dahl (RO)

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

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

II. Approval of the Minutes September 18, 2020 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. Creative Writing, MFA
   i. ENGL 564: description change
   ii. ENGL 565: description change
   iii. ENGL 706: description change

   These course description changes include small word changes and removal of the journal name Crazyhorse, as the journal’s name is in the process of being updated.

   The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

B. Ad hoc discussion of Accelerated Programs

   Alex Kasman (MASC) reported that the Math department’s current BS/MS program is updating its eligibility requirements to align with the new requirements recently accepted by Graduate Council. This includes updates the cumulative GPA minimum and earned credit hours. Anton Vander Zee (ENGL) asked if the accelerated program proposal was accepted by Faculty Senate. Godfrey Gibbison (GSO) responded yes, he presented the proposal to Senate as information from the Graduate School. The Graduate School also had a meeting with Financial Aid, the Registrar, Honors, Academic Advising, and Undergraduate Admissions to discuss communication; implementation will be worked out with the Registrar and Academic Affairs.

   Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA) asked if existing accelerated programs are required to update their eligibility requirements? The Computer Science department’s current program does not want to update for fear of dissuading prospective students. Gibbison (GSO) responded yes, the intent of the accelerate programs task force was to develop uniform standards for
these programs. He added that programs can create their own standards outside of the GPA and earned hours requirement. McCauley (CSIS/DATA) followed up that if the College’s program adheres to the new standards, that may create different requirements from the Citadel since they also have an accelerated program.

Gibbison (GSO) closed by saying that students would need to submit an admissions application to the graduate program to establish their graduate matriculation once they have earned their bachelor’s degree. Susan Hallatt (GSO) added that it is possible to develop an online application specific to accelerated students. Judy Millesen (MPA) asked whether undergraduates could still enroll in graduate courses outside of an approved accelerated program. Gibbison (GSO) responded yes, as long as they meet the criteria and receive permission.

IV. 3MT 2020 – Jon Hakkila, Graduate School

Jon Hakkila (GSO) announced the annual 3MT competition is being held virtually this year due to the restrictions on events and gatherings. The event will still be live in the sense that students will make their presentations in real time, as opposed to submitting a pre-recorded video. He asked program directors to encourage their students to participate.

V. Assessment – Jon Hakkila, Graduate School

Hakkila (GSO) provided another update on the assessment requirements this year. He reported that using COVID-19 is an acceptable explanation for either uncollected or unanalyzed data. The assessment committee is working through current submissions, and programs should be receiving their feedback soon. The committee will send along a rubric that program directors can review and request changes if needed.

Hakkila (GSO) also thanked the thesis awards committee for their work. The winners from this year’s categories will soon be submitted as the College’s nominees to the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools.

VI. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) introduced herself as the new GSA president and noted her excitement to be involved. She asked that program directors encourage their students to engage with GSA; delegates are needed from each program to keep a program and its students in good standing and eligible for funding. She acknowledges that GSA will have to get creative about their events and opportunities given the COVID-19 restrictions in place. Gibbison (GSO) added that the makeup of the Graduate Student Council has changed as of this year. Delegates now come directly from each graduate program instead of from the sub-organization. This should help students in programs without sub-organizations engage in GSA. He also thanked program directors who already submitted the names of their delegates.

VII. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. Duolingo as an accepted test of English proficiency

Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) reported that the Director of International Admissions submitted a proposal to include Duolingo as a new option for a test of English language proficiency. Compared to the current tests, TOEFL and IELTS, it is a more accessible option due to its...
lower price and home-testing availability. Many schools have moved to accept this test since the onset of the pandemic and its impact on international students. The proposal will be voted on at the November meeting of the Faculty Senate.

B. Upcoming Events

Olejniczak (GSO) let the group know of a series of upcoming events held by the Graduate School. Due to the 3MT competition being held virtually, the Graduate School is hosting two workshops to describe the format change and answer any questions. The Graduate School’s thesis workshop will also be moved to a virtual format and be offered twice.

Olejniczak (GSO) continued that December’s Commencement ceremony has been canceled due to the pandemic, but fall graduates will be eligible to participate in the May Commencement ceremony in 2021. The President and Board of Trustees decided that it was unsafe to have students and families return to campus for the ceremony since the College is returning to remote learning after Thanksgiving.

C. Miscellaneous

Gibbison (GSO) reminded program directors to consider applying for the opportunity funds offered by the Lowcountry Graduate Center. Programs are still considered new and eligible for funding if they are less than three years old.

Gibbison (GSO) continued that the Graduate School is aware of its low level of diverse students. It has obtained a list of McNair scholars to target for recruitment.

Hallatt (GSO) announced that she has updated the dashboards in TargetX to help programs track their applications. The Graduate School will also continue with its annual free application period, which will be from December 1 through January 15.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

Craig Plante (MBIO) asked if the Graduate School is considering extending the thesis submission deadline similar to the spring 2020 semester. Olejniczak (GSO) answered yes, but a new deadline has not yet been decided.

Millesen (MPA) asked for an update on the requested change to the graduate grading scale to include minus grades. Mark Del Mastro (AA) and Mary Bergstrom (RO) asked if a formal proposal had been submitted and reviewed by any/all relevant committees. Bergstrom (RO) asked what prompted the proposal. Millesen (MPA) responded that she finds there to be grade compression between a “B+” and “A.” Bergstrom (RO) added that changes to the grading scale require a long planning and implementation period; the earliest this change could take effect is Fall 2022. This timeline would also need a signal from the Provost that this item is a priority as the Registrar Office is already managing several big projects with limited staff. Gibbison (GSO) asked for Millesen (MPA) and Ron Magnuson (MBA) to polish the proposal, include some peer research, and resubmit to the Graduate School. The proposers also have keep in mind the impact on joint programs. Del Mastro (AA) added that this type of proposal would at least need approval from the committees on Academic Standards, Academic Planning, and Graduate Education; final approval would be needed by the Faculty Senate.
Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS) let the group know that he is the faculty athletics representative, and as such he suggested that the Graduate School should consider developing a commercial that would air during basketball games. It would allow the Graduate School to advertise outside of the Charleston media market. Gibbison (GSO) said it is a good idea and he will follow up on whether it would be possible.

IX. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 4:09pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, November 20, 2020 – 3:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Godfrey Gibbison, Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Brooke Blosser (GSA), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), Jiexiang Li (MASC), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP/LCWA), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Sandy Slater (CGE), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), William Veal (EDMG), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIE), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Julie Dahl (RO), Gibbs Knotts (HSS), Nancy Muller (LGC), Normal Salcedo (MBIO)

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

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

II. Approval of the Minutes October 23, 2020 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Fall 2020 Enrollments – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Godfrey Gibbison (GSO) shared the official program enrollments from the Office of Institutional Research. He noted that enrollments are slightly up universally, and he thanked program directors for their outreach work. Ron Magnuson (MBA) noted that these enrollments do not distinguish between full-time and part-time students.

IV. 2021-2022 Graduate School Fellowships – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) announced that the Graduate School’s merit fellowships will not require the GRE this nomination cycle given the temporary waiver of standardized tests. Only the nominee’s GPA and the program director’s nomination letter will be used to select recipients. Given the loss of an assessment data point, the Graduate School developed a mechanism to use a school’s national ranking in correlation to the student’s GPA. The office used data from previous years to test this method, and it does seem to work in that students who received fellowships were ranked higher. Jon Hakkila (GSO) acknowledged that this is challenging given the loss of the GRE as a universal data point, and it is better to have more information than less when making admissions and funding decisions. But the Graduate School worked on this temporary method to accommodate program directors who raised the issue of test scores being waived for the year. Gibbison (GSO) hopes this will encourage all programs to submit nominations for this fellowship cycle. Several programs do not require a standardized test score and therefore do not submit nominations. Susan Simonian (MSCL) inquired about whether GRE scores would still be considered if a student submits them as her program still required the test be submitted. Gibbison (GSO) asked if other programs were finding that applicants are still submitting test scores. Susan Hallatt (GSO) noted that graduate admissions is not actively collecting GRE scores or reminding applicants to provide them. Anton Vander Zee (ENGL) asked when this change to fellowship criteria was made. Gibbison (GSO) responded that the Graduate School is trying to accommodate program directors like himself who raised the issue of fellowships requiring scores given the Graduate School’s universal waiver.
V. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) reported that the GSA sponsored a professional headshot opportunity for graduate students with good turnout. The College is also designating one of the upcoming Cougar Night Lights events for graduate students and undergraduate seniors. She will make some remarks alongside the President and EVP for Student Affairs. She announced that the GSA will distribute a student experience survey around Thanksgiving with hopes to share results in January. Gibbison (GSO) complimented the executive team for the newsletter they have developed and thanked program directors for submitted the names of students who will serve as delegates to the GSA.

VI. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. PS/NS Option

   The Provost announced the PS/NS option would not be available for the fall 2020 semester. However, the withdrawal deadline has been extended by approximately six weeks. Students will also have the opportunity to use the PS/NS option for one course during the spring 2021 semester. Ron Magnuson (MBA) reported that a few of his students were disappointed that this was not an option.

B. Award Announcements – 3MT® & Thesis Awards

   Hakkila (GSO) announced the winners of the Graduate School’s annual 3MT competition. Even though participation was lower due to the pandemic, the projects were interesting and students did a great job given the circumstances.

   Hakkila (GSO) also announced the winners of the annual thesis awards, of which there were three given the rotating categories. The thanked the members of the review committees.

C. Program External Reviews

   Each program is peer-reviewed on a seven-year cycle and Hakkila (GSO) reminded the group that several programs are up this academic year. They should being putting together their preliminary report and also start soliciting external reviewers. These reviews should be completed by the end of the spring semester.

D. End of Semester Social Event

   The Graduate School transitioned its fellowship reception to a more general end-of-semester social event. There are hopes that an in-person reception could happen during the spring semester. The Graduate School, however, still wanted to provide a virtual event open to all students to celebrate the end of a unique semester.

E. Miscellaneous

   Gibbison (GSO) announced that the Graduate School would continue to offer a free application period to encourage applications. Because the priority deadline was moved from March 1 to January 15, the fee waiver period will be from December 1 through January 15. The Graduate School will also be running radio ads to advertise.
Gibbison (GSO) asked that programs that require summer enrollment contact Robyn Olejniczak soon to better plan for possible summer funding for students. Last summer, there were several program directors that reached out at the last minute with requests when funds had already been distributed to other programs. The Graduate School already adjusted the abatement model to now offer partial abatements instead of automatic full abatements for all non-resident students, which leaves additional funds available for the summer. However, programs should still reach out proactively to help the Graduate School better prepare the summer funding budget. Gibbison (GSO) also requested the 21-22 abatement budget from the CFO given the priority application deadline is earlier; programs will need to know what funding is available now that admissions decisions will be made sooner.

Magnuson (MBA) asked for an update on the proposed plan to update the tuition model for graduate programs. Gibbison (GSO) responded that any changes to tuition require approval from the Board of Trustees, and they did not take up the issue this year given the immediate concerns about the College’s finances. He has discussed the proposal with the new CFO; he acknowledged the conversation needs to continue. The adjustment to the abatement model should provide some useful data as to how graduate tuition can be modified and correctly set.

VII. For the Good of the Order

Nancy Muller (LGC) reminded the group that the deadline to submit applications for the LGC opportunity funds is February 1, 2021.

Several members of Graduate Council thanked Dean Gibbison for his service and wished him well in his next role at Cal State – San Marcos.

VIII. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:22pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, December 18, 2020 – 2:45 PM
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Godfrey Gibbison, Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Mike Lee (MCOM), Jiexiang Li (MASC), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (MFA), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Sandy Slater (CGE), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), William Veal (EDMG), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Suzanne Austin (AA), Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIE), Julie Dahl (RO), Gibbs Knotts (HSS), Nancy Muller (LGC), Norma Salcedo (MBIO), Fran Welch (EHHP)

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

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 2:45pm.

II. The next Graduate Dean – Suzanne Austin, Provost

Suzanne Austin (AA) thanked Fran Welch for chairing the search committee and Gibbs Knotts for serving as interim dean. The search committee has a representative from each school, the Graduate School office, students, and Faculty Senate. The goal is to have a new dean in place by March 1 with the search being fully internal. She continued that graduate education is one of the biggest areas of opportunity on campus; there should be growth in online programs in strategic areas as well as increased visibility among our own undergraduates. The next dean will need to implement the new strategic plan.

III. Approval of the Minutes November 20, 2020 Meeting – unanimous approval

IV. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. Public Administration
   i. Admissions reqs: remove GRE; reduce letters of recommendation from 3 to 2; remove knowledge of undergraduate statistics
      The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

B. Public Administration
   i. Executive Program termination – informational

Gibbs Knotts (HSS) said that it was decided to terminate the MPA’s executive format due to its high cost of faculty and the College’s current budget environment. The school supported this program and it was a difficult decision to make. Nancy Muller (LGC) reminded Knotts that the program received grant funding to develop and launch this program; the three-year report will still need to be submitted. Judy Millesen (MPA) said she was very disappointed with this decision since the
executive format was barely off the ground. Instead of terminating the program, she prefers to reassess the format’s viability each year. Godfrey Gibbison (GSO) suggested that instead of declaring the program terminated, could a program hiatus be more appropriate. It was agreed that the website and prospective student communications would be updated to reflect that the program is not accepted applications at this time. Knotts (HSS) said that students would still have the traditional format available. He added that Judy did a lot of work to develop the program and put funding agreements in place based on an RCM model. Gibbison (GSO) closed by saying that this should not discourage programs from being innovative, this was just beyond the program and College’s control.

V. 2021-2022 Funding Allocation – Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) shared the Graduate School’s funding allocation for the 2021-2022 admissions cycle. These funds, which include scholarships and graduate assistantships, are intended to be used to recruit new students. Gibbison (GSO) reminded program directors that this allocation is based on the program’s three-year enrollment average as well as Graduate School staff ensuring a program does not sway too heavily in either direction – too few funds or too many funds. The Graduate School also remains cognizant of programs that are growing, programs with enrollment caps, and programs that need additional support. Gibbison (GSO) also added that the Graduate School will continue with the partial abatement model that is being piloted this year.

VI. New Foundation Scholarship(s) - Godfrey Gibbison, Graduate School

Gibbison (GSO) announced that some of the North Campus’s foundation funds will be transferred to the Graduate School with the intent of creating scholarships to recruit URM students. Nothing has been finalized, but he has been working on this since the North Campus’s closure. Gibbison (GSO) also plans to create a scholarship model where the funds are matched by the Graduate School and academic school. There will also be a new $5,000/year graduate scholarship offered by Chick-Fil-A; there will be a preference for students in business or science programs.

VII. Approval of the Fall 2020 Master’s and Graduate Certificate Candidates – unanimous approval

VIII. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser was not present at the meeting.

IX. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. Graduate School Fellowship timeline

Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) said that the Graduate School plans to make fellowship announcements much earlier this admissions cycle since the priority deadline is about six weeks earlier than the previous cycle. This means that program directors will need to submit nominations earlier, as well.

Susan Hallatt (GSO) reminded everyone that she has created numerous dashboards in TargetX meant to help programs understand and manage their applicant pool. The Graduate School is constantly communicating with applicants, but prospective students are more likely to remember communicating directly with a program director.
Laura Everett (GSO) reminded everyone that the Graduate School will continue to highlight an alum each month and encouraged program directors to keep submitting names.

X. **For the Good of the Order**

Muller (LGC) reminded the group that the deadline to submit applications for the LGC opportunity funds is February 1, 2021.

Millesen (MPA) thanked Dean Gibbison for his work and leadership, and appreciated his efforts of inclusivity.

XI. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 3:33pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, January 22, 2021 – 3:00 PM
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Gibbs Knotts, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Brooke Blosser (GSA), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Mike Lee (MCOM), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP/LCWA), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (MFA), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Sandy Slater (CGE), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIE), Seaton Brown (MBA), Franklin Czwazka (RO), Julie Dahl (RO), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Tim Johnson (LCWA), Jerry Mackeldon (RO), Nancy Muller (LGC), Fran Welch (EHHP)

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

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

Gibbs Knotts (HSS/GSO) said that he has liked spending time in the Graduate School office and meeting with graduate students. He acknowledged that the Graduate School faces challenges and the success of the new Graduate Dean will be reliant on partnerships and collaborations. Knotts (HSS/GSO) asked Annette Watson (ENSS) as a search committee member to give an update on the search. Watson (ENSS) said there were 15 applications submitted by the deadline, and the committee is meeting in the next week to discuss the first round of interviews. Fran Welch (EHHP) added that she is keeping the Provost informed and thanked the committee for their work. She added that Mark Del Mastro (AA) developed the interview questions.

II. Approval of the Minutes December 18, 2020 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. Arts and Cultural Management Certificate
   i. Admissions requirements: add resume, add 1 letter of recommendation, update letter of intent to statement of professional goals, update min. 3.0 GPA to preferred, remove spring and summer as admission terms, create truncated path for admission for current CoC graduate students
   ii. ARCM 570: renumber, title change, description change
   iii. ARCM 571: renumber, description change, course frequency
   iv. ARCM 572: renumber, title change, description change, course frequency
   v. ARCM 573: renumber, description change
   vi. ARCM 574: renumber, description change, course frequency

The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.
B. Creative Writing, MFA
   i. ENGL 569: new course – ST in creative writing
   ii. ENGL 708: new course – MFA thesis
   iii. Program change: add new courses, update required and elective courses for Studio emphasis

   The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

C. Computer and Information Sciences, MS
   i. Admissions requirements: simplify language about pathways into program, update language on necessary pre-req knowledge
   ii. CSIS 698: pre-req change
   iii. CSIS 699: pre-req change, update from 6 hours to 3 hours repeatable twice, update from letter grade to P/F
   iv. Program change: reduce required hours in each emphasis area from 12 to 9, add independent study and special topics as options to complete an emphasis area, increase required elective hours from 9 to 12

   The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

D. Cybersecurity Certificate
   i. Admissions requirements: simplify language about pathways into program, update language on necessary pre-req knowledge

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

E. Software Engineering Certificate
   i. Admissions requirements: simplify language about pathways into program, update language on necessary pre-req knowledge

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

F. Data Science and Analytics, MS
   i. DATA 510: pre-req change
   ii. DATA 534: pre-req change

   The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

G. Mathematical Sciences, MS
   i. MATH 561: pre-req change

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

H. Science and Math for Teachers, MED
   i. Program change: change program name to Science and Math Education, reduce degree hours from 32 to 30, update required and elective courses, add new courses
   ii. SMFT 514: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from 4 to 3
   iii. SMFT 523: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from 4 to 3
   iv. SMFT 524: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from 4 to 3
   v. SMFT 529: new course - coastal and marine science for educators; renumbered from 640
vi. SMFT 535: new course - topics in ecology and conserv. biology; renumbered from 635
vii. SMFT 537: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from 4 to 3
eviii. SMFT 538: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from 4 to 3, pre-req change
ix. SMFT 540: description change
x. SMFT 570: new course – intro to environmental and sustainability education
xi. SMFT 611: title change, description change, renumbered from 511
xii. SMFT 618: title change, description change, renumbered from 518, reduce credits hours from 4 to 3
xiii. SMFT 639: title change, description change, pre-req change
xiv. SMFT 645: title change, description change
xv. SMFT 697: title change, description change, reduce credit hours from variable hours 1-4 to 1-3, repeatable change
xvi. SMFT 698: reduce credit hours from variable hours 1-6 to 1-3, repeatable change

The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

Sandy Slater (CGE) thanked everyone for their work on their curriculum. She reminded program directors to keep an eye on changing their admissions requirements, emphasizing that there should be a balance of quantitative and qualitative measures for reaching an admission decision.

IV. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) provided an update on the results of the graduate student experience survey that was distributed during the fall semester; there were 61 responses. She will ask Dean Knotts to share her summary and the survey results. Blosser (GSA) announced several upcoming events including a new-student mixer and a professional development workshop on financial literacy. The Career Center also offers these services and can record the virtual presentations so they can be shared. She closed by asking program directors to keep sharing student highlights so they can be featured in the GSA newsletter.

V. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) asked that as programs review applications and make admissions decisions to keep track of their non-resident students as qualifying these students for abatement funds will likely play a large role in whether they choose the College. She also reminded program directors of the Council of Graduate School April 15 Resolution regarding offers of financial aid and funding. As a signatory of that resolution, graduate programs cannot ask students to make funding decisions prior to April 15. It might be beneficial to align both the admissions decision deadline and the funding decision deadline to be April 15. Information regarding May Commencement is still unknown; Olejniczak (GSO) asked program directors to let their spring and summer graduates know that final decisions at the Provost and President levels are still forthcoming.

Susan Hallatt (GSO) said the Graduate School office is very busy working on finalizing and packaging applications, and she appreciates the patience of the program directors. She reported that generally speaking, application numbers look high and there are a good number of international applicants. Grant Gilmore (CPAD) asked if there are any different requirements for Iranian applicants. Hallatt (GSO) suggested staying in contact with the Center for International Education.
VI. **For the Good of the Order**

Nancy Muller (LGC) announced that the LGC awarded opportunity grants to both the Elementary Education program and the Data Science and Analytics program. Elementary Education will receive $10,000 and Data Science and Analytics will receive $25,000 for marketing. Muller (LGC) added that these funds cannot support scholarships or abatements so those should not be included in the grant request. The next deadline for opportunity grants is February 1, but the review committee can be flexible if more time is needed. Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA) added that the proposal and review process was very reasonable.

Emily Rosko (MFA) raised an issue regarding a student COVID accommodation. The student is enrolled in a Citadel course, but wants to request accommodation for remote learning; the Citadel is not guaranteeing it will be approved. Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST) added that he knew of some students who opted not to take classes at the Citadel since most courses were being offered face-to-face.

Craig Plante (MBIO) asked if the Graduate School was considering extending the thesis submission deadline for spring graduates. Knotts (HSS/GSO) said that yes, the office is discussing this option and will likely grant an extension similar to the one granted for spring and fall 2020 graduates. He noted that circumstances created by the pandemic have not changed.

Anton Vander Zee (ENGL) asked for an update on the process for proposing an accelerated bachelor's/master's program. Olejniczak (GSO) responded that a Curriculog form is being created and should be ready soon. Divya Bhati (OIE) noted that SACS approval will be needed if the undergraduate or graduate program is making curricular changes at the same time as launching an accelerated program.

VII. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 3:57pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, February 19, 2021 – 3:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Gibbs Knotts, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Brooke Blosser (GSA), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Gerald Gordon (URBP), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Seaton Brown (MBA), Franklin Czwazka (RO), Julie Dahl (RO), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Jerry Mackeldon (RO), Nancy Muller (LGC), Norma Salcedo (MBIO), Fran Welch (EHHP)

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

I. Welcome – the meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

Gibbs Knotts (HSS/GSO) reported that in his role as Interim Dean, he submitted estimated enrollment growth of 10% to Business Affairs upon their request. Fran Welch (EHHP) provided an update on the internal search for a new dean. She stated that the committee interviewed five candidates and selected three as finalists. The survey responses and forum participation data will be shared with the Provost, who is scheduling interviews with the finalists.

II. Approval of the Minutes January 22, 2021 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. New course: INFM 530 – business analytics fundamentals
B. New course: INFM 532 – business analytics applications

Sandy Slater (CGE) clarified that these courses belong to a program proposal which is not yet approved. The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

IV. Accelerated Programs – Gibbs Knotts and Robyn Olejniczak, GSO

Knotts (HSS/GSO) updated the group that the Curriculog form to propose an accelerated program was launched, though he recognized that the deadline to submit this cycle was very short. One program did manage to submit a proposal within that window, and it is moving through the curricular process. Some other programs expressed interest but were not able to make the deadline. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) encouraged those interested in putting together a proposal should reach out to the Graduate School as staff can provide guidance and answer questions.

V. Graduate Education Week – Laura Everett, GSO

Laura Everett (GSO) announced that the Graduate School will again host its Graduate Education Week during the week of March 29. There will be three events during this week: a student and
alumni panel on Tuesday, a program director and graduate faculty panel on Wednesday, and the poster session on Thursday. All these events will be conducted virtually as in-person events are still restricted due to the pandemic. Everett (GSO) encouraged individual programs to develop and host their own events during this week. She also emphasized that this program is marketed to our current undergraduates to recruit them into our graduate programs.

VI. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) reported that the GSA will offer several professional development opportunities during the semester, as well as a social trip to the SC Aquarium. She asked that program directors continue to submit students to be highlighted in the GSA newsletter. Knotts (HSS/GSO) noted that Blosser is serving as one of two graduate students on strategic plan committees.

VII. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

Jon Hakkila (GSO) provided a short update on the Perseverance vehicle that landed on Mars. There were no updates from the Graduate School staff.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

Laura Turner (EDPA) asked about the status of the College’s new website design since Marketing presented at a Graduate Council meeting last academic year. Everett (GSO) responded that the Wordpress site has been scraped and the College will stick with the Cascade software currently being used. There are still plans to update much of the content and provide an engaging interface.

IX. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 3:29pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  
Friday, March 19, 2021 – 3:00 PM  
Virtual Zoom Meeting  

Chair – Gibbs Knotts, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Roger Daniels (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARTM/SOTA), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP/LCWA), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (CREW), Emily Skinner (MTLA), Sandy Slater (CGE), Kelly White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Franklin Czwazka (RO), Julie Dahl (RO), Anne Gutshall (TEDU), Jerry Mackeldon (RO), Nancy Muller (LGC)

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

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

Gibbs Knotts (HSS/GSO) acknowledged the announcement of the new dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Kameelah Martin. He thanked the applicants who applied and the committee for its work. Knotts (HSS/GSO) also provided a brief admission update by noting that applications are up and reminded the group that Graduate Education Week is coming up. Ron Magnuson (MBA), who serves on one of the strategic planning committees, reported that his group has met several times and formed four sub-committees focusing on experiential learning and academics, enrolling intellectually curious students, signature programs, and innovative teaching. He hopes to seek input from Graduate Council on how to identify and develop signature graduate programs. Knotts (GSO/HSS) solicited feedback from attendees about what the role they believe Graduate Council should sever. Sandy Slater (CGE) responded that polling members for issues and ideas for the agenda in advance could be useful. Magnuson (MBA) suggested developing sub-committees to review specific issues raised during meetings and then report back on their findings. Grant Gilmore (CPAD) noted his support for efficient and succinct meetings. Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST) suggested Graduate Council consider topics of significance and relevance to all programs, like recruitment and retention. Judy Millesen (MPA) agreed that meetings should cover big questions in graduate education. Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS) noted that there is only Graduate Council representative on any of the strategic planning steering committees, which may be indicative of the Graduate School’s and graduate education’s presence on campus.

II. Approval of the Minutes February 19, 2021 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Sandy Slater, CGE

A. Accountancy, MS

i. Admissions requirements: remove GMAT, but may be submitted if applicant does not meet other standards; add statement of goals, add interview, waive letters of recommendation for CofC undergraduates, still required for non-CofC applicants; add spring admission term

ii. Accelerated Program: pathway for high-performing undergraduates
Susan Hallatt (GSO) asked how any applicant would know whether they need submit test scores or not. Roger Daniels (ACCY) responded that the program director will notify them and the Graduate School.

The proposals passed unanimously.

B. Business Administration, MBA
   i. Program change: new emphasis – Business Analytics, add courses; rename existing emphasis

   Magnuson (MBA) clarified that the name change is for branding purposes.

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

C. Community Planning, Policy, and Design, MA
   i. ARTH 535: course title and description change
   ii. ARTH 565: course title and description change

   The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

D. Data Science and Analytics, MS
   i. Program change: reduce degree hours from 36 to 30, change from summer to fall start, remove required courses, add electives

   Alex Kasman (MASC) asked whether the program’s boot camp courses will still be offered. Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA) responded that new admissions requirements will eliminate the need for these courses; these admissions changes will be submitted during the next curriculum cycle. Jon Hakkila (GSO) added that this change will mean that better prepared students are accepted into the program.

   The proposal passed unanimously.

E. Performing Arts, MAT
   i. Program change: reduce degree hours from 45 to 42, remove required course, add courses to core course options

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

F. Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy, MED
   i. Diverse Learners Concentration: add courses

   The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

IV. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) was not present at the meeting.
V. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. Graduate Education Week updates
Laura Everett (GSO) reminded the group about the upcoming events associated with Graduate Education Week: two panels with current and former students, and the annual poster session.

B. Final transcript registration holds for admitted students, reminder of admissions deadlines
Hallatt (GSO) announced that registration holds are being placed on newly admitted student accounts until all official and final transcripts are received. This is a proactive measure to ensure that all students earn their bachelor’s degree prior to formally matriculating into their graduate program. She also reminded program directors of the new admissions deadlines in effect this cycle – January 15 serving as the priority deadline, and July 1 serving as the final deadline. Programs should make sure these deadlines are reflected on their websites and any marketing materials. Brian Lanahan (EDEL) asked how the registration hold will impact students who start their programs in the summer. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) responded that those students can have their records reviewed individually for possible hold removal.

C. Thesis workshop: rebrand to communicate it’s for graduating students
Olejniczak (GSO) reported the Graduate School is considering making thesis workshop attendance a requirement for graduating students. This semester, the number of graduating students completing a thesis is extremely high yet very few attended either thesis workshop. Hakkila (GSO) and Olejniczak (GSO) find that students who attend the workshop are less likely to make common mistakes and require fewer copy edits to their submission. By making it required, graduating students would better understand the importance and benefit of the workshop as part of the graduation process. Annette Watson (ENSS) suggested that the Graduate School reject theses who do not meet the formatting and structure requirements. Hakkila (GSO) responded that almost every submission is rejected after its initial submission. Craig Plante (MBIO) asked that data be collected to know how many requests for copy edits occur for each student for each graduation cycle to understand the scope of the issue before making the workshop required. Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM) suggested the thesis manual be reviewed.

D. Spring commencement participation survey: March 26 deadline
Olejniczak (GSO) let program directors know that students eligible to participate in the spring graduation ceremony received a survey which must be submitted by March 26. Commencement details are slowly coming together, and it is very important that students make their participation choice by submitting the survey on time. Students who do not submit the survey by the deadline may not be allowed to participate in Commencement.

E. Program external reviews
Hakkila (GSO) provided another update on the external review process many programs are undergoing this academic year. He understands the pandemic may have delayed or disrupted a program’s ability to submit the necessary items and reports, but they should still plan to complete their review before the end of the summer.
VI. For the Good of the Order

Watson (ENSS) asked about the status of abatement funding for the coming year; programs are cognizant of limited funding and want to be proactive to student needs. Olejniczak (GSO) responded that the Graduate School can fund first-year students without much issue. However, funding will be much tighter for any student if programs enroll higher levels of non-resident students. Hakkila (GSO) reiterated that the real issue is the graduate tuition rate, which is unnecessarily high. Magnuson (MBA) added that former Dean Gibbison’s idea of programs being grouped into tuition tiers should be brought forward and possibly implemented.

Kasman (MASC) reminded program directors of the roommate finder application he developed last year, noting that it is still available if new and current students are interested. It can be found on the Graduate School’s website.

Gilmore (CPAD) asked if any programs have experience in admitting and funding an Iranian student.

VII. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 4:33pm
MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, April 23, 2021 – 3:00 PM
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Gibbs Knotts, Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS), Brooke Blosser (GSA), Karen Chandler (ARCM), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Melissa Hughes (BIOL/SSM), Alex Kasman (MASC), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Ron Magnuson (MBA), Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA), Judy Millesen (MPA), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP/LCWA), John Peters (SMFT), Craig Plante (MBIO), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Sandy Slater (CGE), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Mary Bergstrom (RO), Divya Bhati (OIE), Franklin Czwazka (RO), Julie Dahl (RO), Ed Hart (SOTA), Jerry Mackeldon (RO), Kameelah Martin (AAST), Nancy Muller (LGC), Fran Welch (EHHP)

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

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

Gibbs Knotts (HSS/GSO) shared the most recent information about the needed changes to spring commencement due to the pandemic. He then welcomed everyone to his last meeting as interim dean and thanked everyone for their help and input during his time in that role.

II. Approval of the Minutes March 19, 2021 Meeting – unanimous approval

I. Approval of Spring 2021 Master’s and Graduate Certificate candidates – unanimous approval

II. Incoming Graduate Dean – Kameelah Martin

Kameelah Martin (AAST) said she is in the process of transitioning and is attending the meeting to observe and learn. She is planning to schedule meetings with each program director during the summer so she can introduce herself and start to get to know the graduate programs.

III. Discussion of Standardized Test Moratorium – Gibbs Knotts, GSO

Knotts (HSS/GSO) reminded the group that the Graduate School decided to waive standardized test scores during the 2021 admissions cycle due to pandemic, but would reinstate the requirement for the 2022 admission cycle; he wanted to reopen that discussion to determine if that decision should stand. Craig Plante (MBIO) responded that a colleague in his field shared information that 66% of peer programs no longer require the GRE and those who do will be noncompetitive. Marine Biology is considering whether to keep it as an admission requirement. Ron Magnuson (MBA) agreed that many programs are deciding to remove the test requirement, and his program’s applications increased because of the Graduate School’s waiver. The MBA program is also considering whether to keep it, but if the program decides to do so, the new admission requirements will not go into effect until the next admissions cycle. Judy Millesen (MPA) further agreed that peer programs are removing the test requirement; the MPA program no longer requires the GRE, but remains aware that it is required for Graduate School fellowship consideration. Susan Hallatt (GSO) said that undergraduate admissions is remaining test optional for the coming two years. She reminded the
group that even if the test score requirement is reinstated, program directors can still request waivers to be considered on a case by case basis. Hallatt (GSO) is also conducting research on the relationship between an applicant’s GRE score and their subsequent graduate GPA. Susan Simonian (MSCL) said that Child Life was the only program that kept the GRE requirement and she did not see any indication that their applicant pool suffered. She continued that her program relies heavily on the verbal and writing scores as lower scores can indicate that an applicant can require additional mentorship. Jon Hakkila (GSO) said that this year’s Graduate School fellowships were awarded without test scores, but it was a challenge; he sees the merits in keeping and removing a standardized test as an admission requirement. Laura Turner (EDPA) said that she does find the writing score to be useful for her program, but acknowledges the claim of bias that has been made about standardized testing. Hallatt (GSO) added that the test is meant to demonstrate whether a student is ready for graduate education, not that they will be successful. She suggested that programs monitor this year’s new students since they can serve as a case study regarding the value of the test score. Plante (MBIO) suggested that an ad hoc committee be formed to gather and evaluate more data in order to report back to Graduate Council; he agreed to head the committee. Magnuson (MBA) suggested that the Graduate School keep the waiver in place for one more year since programs are different. Hakkila (GSO) reminded the group of holistic admission practices, if a program decides to remove a requirement, they should try to find another element that will be a better predictor; it is helpful to have more information for admissions review than less information. Renée McCauley (CSIS/DATA) added that we must be mindful of joint programs that are required to have the same admissions requirements. Hallatt (GSO) suggested programs that use qualitative measures should develop rubrics; the Child Life program has a robust rubric for their admissions interview. Knotts (HSS/GSO) closed by asking if any program wanted to reinstate the standardized test requirement; no one answered yes. However, a final decision was not made.

IV. Update on Strategic Plan – Ron Magnuson, MBA

Magnuson (MBA) currently serves on the strategic plan’s pillar 2 steering committee on academic distinction. He reported that the committee is still in the input gathering phase of their work and held a forum on experiential learning. The committee is developing an inventory of existing majors and programs in order to develop a definition of a “signature program” as the Provost wants to develop new signature programs. Magnuson (MBA) noted that the committee created sub-committees which are working independently as the whole committee meets infrequently. He added that committee’s progress is likely to plateau over the summer.

V. Graduate Student Association – Brooke Blosser, President

Brooke Blosser (GSA) thanked the group for allowing her to participate in these meetings as she found it rewarding to be included in the process. Blosser (GSA) reported that the GSA had a successful year despite the challenges produced by the pandemic. The student satisfaction survey stands out as a key accomplishment. She went on to announce several upcoming events including a tour of the SC Aquarium and a meet-up at Revelry Brewery. However, as of now, there is no GSA president for the coming year since no one declared their candidacy during the spring election window. Blosser (GSA) closed by stating her excitement for the incoming dean.

VI. Role of Program Director – Gibbs Knotts, GSO

Knotts (HSS/GSO) opened the discussion by stating the need for clarification regarding the role of a graduate program director – how are they evaluated, who do they report to, what is the relationship to the Graduate School, the academic School, the department, etc. Magnuson (MBA) responded that it is not one-size-fits-all across graduate programs; MBA programs, for example, are
typically managed by staff and not faculty. Watson (ENSS) responded that interdisciplinary programs are challenging since they can report to more than one school or department. She added that students notice this as well in their classes, but that she does not review course evaluations since she does not evaluate the faculty. Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL) responded that she has no ability to hire or staff her programs, which makes her dependent on other departments. Hakkila (GSO) said that the most critical problem is that the Graduate School is not a line school with the ability to hire faculty directly. Knotts (HSS/GSO) asked Dean Welch (EHHP) how program directors are selected in the School of Education, Health, and Human Performance. Welch (EHHP) responded that the Teacher Education department chair appoints program directors for the MAT programs in teacher education (Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education) with dean approval. The other education programs are interdisciplinary (MAT and MED) require input from the relevant school deans; the faculty also come from multiple departments for these programs, which adds another layer of complexity. Knotts (HSS/GSO) asked if she as dean evaluated these program directors; she responded no. Beck (LALE/ESOL) and Turner (EDPA) both said that their department chairs do not seem to have a sense of their graduate program director responsibilities. Hakkila (GSO) said that he inquired about program director evaluations from the previous two interim deans and neither knew about an existing process. Plante (MBIO) said that his understanding was that the Graduate School was supposed to be conducting evaluations and recalled having one with former dean Amy McCandless. Welch (EHHP) suggested a task force to determine the role of the Graduate school in program director evaluations and develop guidelines. Knotts (HSS/GSO) added that the Graduate School should be involved or consulted in program director appointments.

VII. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

A. PS/NS option for Spring 2021
Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) reminded everyone that students have the option to use the PS/NS designation for one course this semester. Students received this information from the Registrar, and the Graduate School will send follow up information specific to how PS/NS will impact graduate students.

B. 21-22 assistantship paperwork – due to GSO by July 15
Olejniczak (GSO) requested that hiring paperwork for the coming academic year be submitted to the Graduate School by July 15. This is to help with workload issues for the other offices that process this paperwork as they receive an extremely high volume of student employment contracts.

C. Program review update
Hakkila (GSO) reported that the program reviews underway this year are still quite delayed or incomplete; any program who wishes to have reviewers travel to conduct their peer-review in person will need to do so after July 1. These programs should contact Academic Affairs for arrangements. Vince Benigni (COMM/HSS) said he found the program review to be very helpful and wondered if the guidelines and process could be clearer. Hakkila (GSO) noted that he is surprised undergraduate programs do not do these reviews and he is happy to make the process as easy and optimal as possible.

D. Program assessment update
Hakkila (GSO) updated everyone that the deadline for assessment reports was adjusted due to the pandemic and the difficulty in gathering data. He encouraged program directors to include any notes that explain this challenge when they submit their reports.

E. Program directors rotating out; new program directors
Karen Chandler is stepping down as program director for the Arts and Cultural Management certificate; Kate Keeney is assuming that role. Renée McCauley is stepping down as program director for the Computer and Information Sciences and Data Science and Analytics masters, and for the Cybersecurity and Software Engineering certificates. Jonathan Sun will serve as program director for the Computer and Information Sciences, Cybersecurity, and Software Engineering programs. Navid Hashemi will serve as program director for Data Science and Analytics.

VIII. For the Good of the Order

Craig Plante (MBIO) asked for clarification regarding the discussion about tuition tiers versus abatement tiers from the March 19 meeting as reflected in the minutes. Magnuson (MBA) stated that previous dean Godfrey Gibbison proposed an idea to group programs for the purpose of creating different tuition rates for each. However, that idea was never formally proposed or implemented. Olejniczak (GSO) added that this tier idea was implemented for abatements; programs are now in one of three categories which determines the amount of abatement funding their students receive. The Graduate School is no longer awarding abatement funds at 100% of the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition for all students. Simonian (MSCL) said that the College needs to be transparent to students about the cost of their programs, and campus units or departments with assistantships should be required to use those funds for that purpose and not for other operational needs. Watson (ENSS) noted the challenge programs face to recruit international students who need funding, especially in the summer. Turner (EDPA) and several other program directors closed by thanking interim dean Knotts for his work this semester.

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