Minutes of the Graduate Council Meeting
Friday, September 17, 2021 – 3:00 PM
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Chair – Kameelah Martin, Dean of the Graduate School

Members Present: Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL), Mike Braswell (ACCY), Mark Del Mastro (AA), Raúl Carrillo-Arciniega (HISP/LCWA), Grant Gilmore (CPAD), Alex Kasman (MASC), Kate Keeney (ARCM), Brian Lanahan (EDEL), Jiexiang Li (MASC), Mike Lee (MCOM), Judy Millesen (MPA), Shawn Morrison (CGE), mutindi ndunda (TEDU/EHHP), John Peters (SMFE), Craig Plante (MBIO), Emily Rosko (MFA), Susan Simonian (MSCL), Jacob Steere-Williams (HIST), Alan Strand (BIOL/SSM), Rafael Teixeira (SCIM/SOB), Laura Turner (EDPA), Anton Vander Zee (ENGL), Annette Watson (ENSS), Kelley White (EDEC)

Guests Present: Divya Bhati (OIE), Seaton Brown (MBA), Lisa Chestney (RO), Lucy Davis (ENSS), Ed Hart (SOTA), Nancy Muller (LGC), Antonio Pérez-Núñez (HISP), Norma Salcedo (MBIO)

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

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

II. Approval of the Minutes April 23, 2021 Meeting – unanimous approval

III. Curriculum Proposals – Shawn Morrison, CGE

A. Mathematical Sciences, MS
   i. Admissions requirements: remove summer as admission term

      Alex Kasman (MASC) described that the program seeks to remove summer as an admission term since the program does not offer summer courses and it is misleading to prospective students.

      The proposal passed unanimously.

B. Public Administration, MPA
   i. PUBA 623: course deactivation

      Judy Millesen (MPA) described that the faculty with this content expertise is no longer at the College. The course has not been offered for several years and is not planned to be taught again.

      The proposal passed unanimously without discussion.

C. Languages, MED
   i. SPAN 614: course description change, make repeatable
   ii. SPAN 615: course description change, make repeatable
   iii. SPAN 655: course deactivation
   iv. SPAN 671: course deactivation

      Emily Beck (LALE/ESOL) described these changes as minor adjustments to meet the current demands of the program’s offerings. She also noted that courses being
deactivated have not been taught for several years and the faculty is no longer at the College.

The proposals passed unanimously without discussion.

IV. Holistic Admissions Presentation: Feedback and Discussion – Kameelah Martin, GSO

Martin (GSO) challenged program directors to create rubrics for their admissions process after the holistic admissions presentation during the program directors retreat in August; she wanted to provide some time for feedback and discussion now that attendees had time to reflect. Mike Lee (MCOM) asked if the presenters were from ETS (the company that offers the GRE exam) and noted that seemed like a conflict of interest. Anton Vander Zee (ENGL) said that the presentation was useful, but it might be more relevant for competitive programs instead of those that are not as selective. Martin (GSO) said she can share this feedback with the presenters. Emily Rosko (MFA) asked if the Graduate School will reinstate the requirement for a standardized test to be considered for fellowships. Robyn Olejniczak (GSO) responded that a final decision has not yet been made but will be discussed soon.

Kelley White (EDEC) asked if a formal proposal would be needed to add some prompt questions to the personal statement admission requirement. Olejniczak (GSO) responded yes if this will need to be reflected in the catalog. Mark Del Mastro (AA) countered that if this is just guidance and clarification, it would not need a proposal. Seaton Brown (MBA) suggested adding this language to the program website; Susan Hallatt (GSO) added that a link to this website could be added to the online application.

V. Assessment Committee Formation – Kameelah Martin, GSO

Martin (GSO) announced that she is taking over this area of responsibility now that Associate Dean Jon Hakkila has left the College. She added that the Graduate School will need to form a committee this year; there was no committee last year due to the disruption caused by the pandemic. Martin (GSO) announced that May 15, 2021 was the deadline to submit assessment report data and results in Compliance Assist, and that November 1, 2021 is the deadline to submit changes to assessment plans for the coming year. She also posed the question whether assessment of graduate programs should occur in the academic schools instead of the Graduate School and asked if the data being collected is benefiting graduate programs. Beck (LALE/ESOL) stated that when a committee seeks representatives from each school, it places an undue burden on faculty who are the only graduate program representative from their school. Martin (GSO) asked for volunteers to serve on the assessment committee; Laura Turner (EDPA), Lee (MCOM), Susan Simonian (MSCL), and Shawn Morrison (CGE) volunteered. Kate Keeney (ARCM) and Brian Lanahan (EDEL) asked if a template for the assessment plans and reports was available. Martin (GSO) responded yes and asked new graduate program directors to ensure they have access to the Compliance Assist platform.

VI. Announcements, Updates, and Reminders – GSO Staff

Olejniczak (GSO) announced that the Graduate School is looking for a graduate assistant and shared the link to apply with the group.

Susan Hallatt (GSO) announced that edits to the online application are completed. Going forward, she hopes to identify a specific timeframe for edits so that they are not ongoing. Hallatt (GSO) also provided an update on the decision process currently being built within the TargetX platform. She
believes it will be ready for use by admissions committees for the summer and fall 2022 admission terms.

Erica Shirley (GSO) announced that elections for the Graduate Student Association will be held in the coming week, and that the Graduate School is planning to host this year’s 3MT competition online. She also announced that the Graduate School has been asked to host the President’s box during a home basketball game on November 11 and wanted to know if there was interest in attending given the current pandemic. Martin (GSO) noted that in working with the Institutional Advancement, this event is meant to foster interest in graduate education and connect with potential donors. To that end, the Graduate School would like several program directors and graduate students to attend in addition to members of the Graduate School’s advisory board. Brown (MBA) suggested that an advisory board member be paired with the graduate program most closely aligned to their interest or background; programs also have their own advisor boards and alums whose members might be good to invite. Brown (MBA) which fundraising officer was assigned to the Graduate School.

Olejniczak (GSO) responded that the Graduate School has never had a dedicated officer, but several staff have helped over the years.

VII. For the Good of the Order

Annette Watson (ENSS) asked if the Graduate School would continue to offer thesis workshops. Martin (GSO) responded yes, but that program directors and thesis advisors need to ensure they are reviewing for formatting and general organization as the Graduate School has seen a decline in the state of theses submitted for review. Millesen (MPA) said that advisors cannot take on the work of reviewing and suggested that students consider providing this as a service for hire or seek out free resources like the Writing Lab. Martin (GSO) does not expect thesis advisors to edit line by line, but more attention needs to be paid as submissions is poor shape will cause a student to miss graduation deadlines.

Brown (MBA) shared that the MBA program was ranked in the top 100 MBA programs by Bloomberg/Business Week, and that the program is also one of few where the majority of the cohort is women and non-binary students.

Vander Zee (ENGL) asked when annual reports are due and which program are due for peer-review. Martin (GSO) responded that annual reports were not required this year as the Provost is reconsidering how these reports are collected and disseminated. She continued that several self-studies were delayed due to the pandemic, but she will share the review calendar.

Kasman (MASC) asked if the Graduate School is considering implementing a time limit in which College of Charleston graduate courses could count towards degree requirements; the program had a student seek readmission with coursework over 10 years old. Olejniczak (GSO) said that she is also curious about this so plans to do peer research to find if other graduate schools have a regulation or policy on this topic. Allan Strand (BIOL/SSM) noted that a policy should not be implemented that might disadvantage a nontraditional student making slow degree progress. Millesen (MPA) asked if the issue varied by discipline, and used the MPA as an example of a program with a large population of working professionals. Simonian (MSCL) asked if a policy is necessary and could course age be considered case by case. Olejniczak (GSO) clarified that there are three categories of coursework: College of Charleston courses, transfer courses, and undergraduate courses reviewed for admissions purposes; this question relates to College of Charleston courses. Del Mastro (AA) said that if the rule will vary program to program, it will need to be reflected in the catalog. Craig Plante (MBIO) added that the degree time limit is also important to keep in mind. He also made a procedural note
regarding the approval of the minutes and said that action required a vote. The group voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

VIII. **Adjournment** – the meeting adjourned at 3:58pm