



Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Agenda
3:00 to 5:00 – Wednesday November 17, 2021
Virtual meeting via WebEx

Date: Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Location: WebEx
Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) minutes

Attendees: Abigail Campbell (*Ex-Officio*, recording secretary), Kathleen Segerson (*Ex-Officio*) Kent Holsinger(*Ex-Officio*) , Alaina (Captioner), Jennefer Dineen, Ron Squibbs, Charles Mahoney, Joel Salisbury, Julianna Herman (*Ex-Officio*, GSS Representative), Magdalena Kaufmann, Matthew Stuber, Moustapha Diaby, Penny Vlahos, Preston Britner, Christopher Blesso, David Pierce, Janet Barnes-Farrell, Thomas Hayes, David Atkin, Rahul Kapadia, Victoria Smith, Xinyu Zhao, Christine Tocchi, Valeria Duffy, Jose Cruz, Alexander Russell, Betsy McCoach, Royce Mohan, Tammie Spaulding, Eugene Pinkhassik, Marina Astitha, Neal Glaviano, David Embrick, Helena Silva, Kurt Schwenk, Machael O'Neill, Ovidiu Munteanu, Jacqueline Loss, Deborah Bolnick, Talie Bar, Megan Feely, Alexander Woodward, Yuping Zhang, Karen Bresciano, Travis Grosser, Barbara Kream (*Ex-Officio*), Heather Battaly, Suzanne Wilson, Elizabeth Maverson, Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Diane Quinn, Diana Rios, Monty Escabi, Hannah Dostal, Andrew Wiemer, Kelly Burke, Ovidiu Munteanu, Suzanne Wilson, Julia Kuzovkina

Absent: Molly Waring, Todd Kravet, Amy Dunbar, Yongku Cho, Jessica Rouge, Timothy Vadas, Kristie Cope-Farrar, Amir Herzberg, John Settlage, , Christina Bullard, Min Seong Kim, Jenny Nienhusser, Sandra Chafouleas, Fakhreddin Azimi, Zeljko Boskovic, Victoria Robinson, Judith Thorpe

1. The November meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council was called to order at 3:02PM on Wednesday November 17th, 2021.
2. Presented for voting: Approval of the Minutes from the Wednesday October 27th, 2021 meeting. Minutes approved unanimously.
3. Report from Graduate Student Senate – The GSS has sent out a survey for the academic integrity task force and will be holding meetings moving forward.
4. Announcements
 - a. The Academic Integrity taskforce is requesting all those who received the survey distributed fill it out and return it. The Academic Integrity taskforce is working on resources for faculty members for academic integrity and the procedures surrounding academic misconduct. The last day to fill out the survey for the academic integrity taskforce is November 29th, 2021.

- b. A process is underway to streamline forms for master's students who want to receive a "master's along the way". The Graduate School is also working with the Registrar's Office to revise the PhD Plan of Study form to reflect the fact that The Graduate School no longer has a foreign language.
- c. The final announcement was a reminder to about the Spring Timely Topics presentations, as well as the past materials and recordings from those sessions had in the Fall of 2021.

5. Old Business

- a. **Proposed By-laws change regarding P/F grades for graduate students.** Current By-laws language state that "*Graduate Students are not permitted to take any course, undergraduate or graduate, on a Pass/Fail basis.*" Proposed change in By-laws language would allow students to take courses on a Pass/Fail basis, but not to include it on their final plan of study. After some discussion, a proposal was made to change the by-laws language to read: *With permission of their major advisor graduate students are permitted to take any course, undergraduate or graduate, on a Pass/Fail basis, but the course cannot be included on their final plan of study.* A motion was made to pass the proposed language changes and was seconded by a member of the GFC. Members of the GFC discussed the changes to the language in the context of course grades and what qualifies as a passing grade and a failing grade in a graduate level course. Members of the GFC discussed concerns. The proposal was not brought to a vote and will be revised and then discussed again in the upcoming meeting.
- b. **Proposed By-laws change regarding continuation of retired faculty as advisors.** Current language only speaks to a retired faculty member being appointed as an advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student.

GFC By-laws, Section VIII.A.i

Current Language:

A member of the University of Connecticut's Graduate Faculty who has retired from active service may be considered for appointment as major advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student. Application is made to the Executive Committee of The Graduate School and requires the endorsement of the appropriate department or program head based on substantial evidence of ongoing research and scholarly activity in the field. Separate application is required for each newly-admitted student for whom a retired faculty member wishes to serve as major advisor. Such appointments are made by the Dean of The Graduate School with the advice of the Executive Committee.

The language does not include clarification regarding a current advisor who retires while advising a graduate student. A proposal was put forth to allow faculty who have recently retired from active service, to continue to serve on the student's

advisory committee as a major, or associate advisor with the endorsement of the appropriate department head or program director.

Proposed New Language (with mark-up):

A member of the University of Connecticut's ~~Graduate Faculty~~ who has recently retired from active service may continue to serve on a student's advisory committee (as a major or associate advisor) with the endorsement of the appropriate department head or program director. In addition, a retired member of the Graduate Faculty may be considered for appointment as major advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student. Application for such an appointment is made to the Executive Committee of The Graduate School and requires the endorsement of the appropriate department or program head based on substantial evidence of ongoing research and scholarly activity in the field. Separate application is required for each newly-admitted student for whom a retired faculty member wishes to serve as major advisor. Such appointments are made by the Dean of The Graduate School with the advice of the Executive Committee.

A motion was made to pass the proposal, and it was seconded. The proposal moved to open discussion. The discussion resolved to vote on the proposal. The Graduate Faculty Council voted to approve the proposed language change. The new by-laws language in this section will read as follows:

New Language (clean):

A member of the University of Connecticut faculty who has recently retired from active service may continue to serve on a student's advisory committee (as a major or associate advisor) with the endorsement of the appropriate department head or program director. In addition, a retired member of the Graduate Faculty may be considered for appointment as major advisor for a newly-admitted master's or doctoral student. Application for such an appointment is made to the Executive Committee of The Graduate School and requires the endorsement of the appropriate department or program head based on substantial evidence of ongoing research and scholarly activity in the field. Separate application is required for each newly-admitted student for whom a retired faculty member wishes to serve as major advisor. Such appointments are made by the Dean of The Graduate School with the advice of the Executive Committee.

- c. **Proposed policy change regarding resignation of major advisors.** Under the current process, a major advisor notifies The Graduate School of a resignation and the student then has 30 days to find a new major advisor. It is the responsibility of the student to find a new major advisor. If the student does not find a new major, they are terminated, not dismissed. This process places all of the responsibility on the student and no responsibility on the program to support the student in finding a

new advisor. This language is in 2 places in the bylaws: Section 8 under the discussion about the advisory system, and Section 4, regarding termination of status.

Section VIII.A.f (Advisory System, General)

If a major advisor decides that it is not possible to continue as a student's major advisor and wishes to resign, The Graduate School must be notified in writing as soon as possible. The student is then provided with a reasonable opportunity to arrange for a new major advisor. If a new major advisor is not identified within 30 business days of the resignation of the former major advisor, the student's graduate degree program status is terminated (see Section IV.D).

Section IV.D (Termination of Status)

A student's major advisor may resign from the advisory committee by written notice to The Graduate School and the student. If the student does not identify a new major advisor within 30 business days of the resignation, the student's graduate degree program status is terminated. When the resignation occurs during a summer session or winter session, the 30 business days begin on the first day of classes of the next fall or spring semester.

Whenever a student's graduate degree program status is terminated, the student receives notice from The Graduate School. The student may appeal the termination under the provisions outlined in Section X below.

The Graduate School asked the GFC to consider the following changes to the by-laws:

Section VIII.A.f (Advisory System, General)

If a major advisor decides that it is not possible to continue as a student's major advisor and wishes to resign, the advisor must concurrently send a notification of the intent to resign to the student, the student's department head or program director, and The Graduate School. The notification should include a date when the resignation is expected to become effective and a brief explanation of the circumstances or reasons that have led to the intended resignation.

The department head or program director must then work with the student and the major advisor to identify a new major advisor, making all reasonable efforts to identify such a person, and report the outcome of this process to The Graduate School within 30 business days of the notification of intent to resign.

This outcome would normally be one of the following:

- (1) a suitable new major advisor has been found;*
- (2) the current major advisor has withdrawn the intention to resign and will remain as the student's major advisor;*
- (3) the department or program has determined that the student is not academically qualified to remain in the program and is therefore recommending dismissal of the student (see Section IV.E); or*

(4) the department or program has determined that the student is academically qualified to remain in the program but, despite reasonable efforts by all parties to find a new advisor, a new advisor cannot be found and therefore the department or program recommends termination of the student (see Section IV.).

When the intended resignation occurs during a summer session or winter session, the 30 business days begin on the first day of classes of the next fall or spring semester.

Section IV.D (Termination of Status)

A student's major advisor may resign from the advisory committee under the process described in Section VIII. If this process leads to termination of the student, the student may appeal the termination, but only on the grounds that the department or program did not make reasonable efforts to find a new major advisor for the student. Such an appeal would follow the process described in Section X.

The proposed language was returned to departments for consideration and further discussion during the January Graduate Faculty Council meeting to be held on Wednesday January 26th, 2022.

6. New Business: No new business.
7. A motion was made to conclude the November meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council. The motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:25PM on November 17th, 2021.