



Date: Wednesday, January 26, 2022
Location: WebEx
Subject: Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) minutes

Attendees: Abigail Campbell (*Ex-Officio, Recording Secretary*), Charles Mahoney, Elizabeth Mayerson, Kathleen Segerson (*Ex-Officio*), Penny Vlahos, Andrew Wiemer, Jose Cruz, Kent Holsinger (*Ex-Officio*), Magdalena Kaufmann, Christopher Blesso, Fakhreddin Azimi, Chadwick Rittenhouse, Kurt Schwenk, Talia Bar, Thomas Craemer, Barbara Kream (*Ex-Officio*), David Pierce, Janet Barnes-Farrell, Matthew Stuber, Royce Mohan, Valeria Duffy, Victoria Robinson, Victoria Smith, David Embrick, Julia Kuzovkina, Julianna Herman (*Graduate Student Senate Representative*), Michael O'Neill, Tammie Spaulding, Thomas Hayes, Timothy Vadas, Kirstie Farrar, Helena Silva, Suzanne Wilson, H. Kenny Nienhuser, Judith Thorpe, Deborah Bolnick, Kimberly Dodge-Kafka, Todd Kravet, Kelly Burke, Neal Glaviano, David Atkin, Jacqueline Loss, Monty Escabi, Ron Squibbs, John Settlage, Ovidiu Munteanu, Alexander Woodward, Alexander Russell, Betsy McCoach, Xinyu Zhao, Joel Salisbury, Preston Britner, Hannah Dostal, Megan Feely

Guests: Cinnamon Adams, Karen Bresciano, Anne Lanzit

1. The January 2022 meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council was called to order at 3:02PM.
2. Presented for voting: Approval of the Minutes from the November 17th, 2021 meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. The minutes passed unanimously.
3. Report from Graduate Student Senate. No news from the Graduate Student Senate.
4. 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. The proposed By-laws change regarding P/F grades for graduate students was brought to the Graduate Faculty Council for voting. A motion was made to open discussion regarding the proposal. The motion was seconded. A motion was made to vote on the proposal. The motion was seconded. The proposal passed with 43 members in favor, 1 opposed.

- b. 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. 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.

A motion was made to pass the proposed language changes to the graduate catalog. The motion was seconded. A motion to vote on the proposal was made. The motion was seconded. A vote was placed and the motion was passed with 37 members in favor and 3 opposed.

5. New Business

- a. Proposed By-laws change regarding minimum GPA requirements for admission (for discussion). A motion to discuss the proposal was made. The motion was seconded. The GFC discussed a change to the language regarding current by-laws of minimum GPA requirement (Section III.D.c). The current by-laws language is as follows: **Current by-laws language:**

Except in exceptional circumstances, to be considered for admission to a degree or certificate program, prior coursework must be of at least the following quality: a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 for the entire undergraduate record, or 3.0 for the last two years of full-time coursework, or 3.5 GPA or higher in the entire final year of coursework prior to application to The Graduate School, where the grade point average is computed using the following scale: "A" = 4.0, "B" = 3.0, "C" = 2.0, "D" = 1.0, "F" = 0. Applicants from international colleges and universities must meet equivalent standards of eligibility and submit official transcripts showing all work completed.

The proposed language would be as follows:

Proposed new by-laws language:

Except in exceptional circumstances, to be considered for admission to a graduate degree or certificate program, a student's prior coursework must meet one of the following criteria:

- *A cumulative GPA for their most recent degree of 3.0 or higher for the entire degree, or*
- *If the most recent degree is an undergraduate degree:*
 - *A 3.0 GPA or higher for the last two years of full-time coursework, or*
 - *A 3.5 GPA or higher in the entire final year of coursework for the undergraduate degree, or*
- *A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for the most recent coursework equivalent to at least one semester of full-time study taken following the completion of the most recent degree.*

The grade point average is computed using the following scale: "A" = 4.0, "B" = 3.0, "C" = 2.0, "D" = 1.0, "F" = 0. Applicants from international colleges and universities must meet equivalent standards of eligibility and submit official transcripts showing all work completed.

Members of the GFC were asked to bring the language changes back to their departments for further discussion at the next GFC meeting.

- b. A motion was made to discuss the proposal of changing by-laws language for Provisional Status of Certificate Students (Section III.E.a). The motion was seconded. The current by-laws language is as follows: **Current by-laws language:**

*Occasionally, students who hold the baccalaureate but do not qualify fully for admission to regular status may give sufficient evidence of ability in their chosen field to warrant their provisional admission **to a master's degree program only**. Applicants cannot be admitted provisionally to a doctoral*

program. In addition, students who require F-1 or J-1 visa sponsorship are not eligible for provisional admission.

The proposed new by-laws language would be as follows:

Proposed new by-laws language:

*Occasionally, students who hold the baccalaureate but do not qualify fully for admission to regular status may give sufficient evidence of ability in their chosen field to warrant their provisional admission **to a master's degree or certificate program only**. Applicants cannot be admitted provisionally to a doctoral program. In addition, students who require F-1 or J-1 visa sponsorship are not eligible for provisional admission.*

Members of the GFC were asked to bring this information back to their departments for further consideration at the next meeting of the GFC.

- c. A proposal was made to consider new language for Retiring Faculty continuing as Advisors. The motion for discussion was seconded. The adopted new language is as follows:

Recently adopted New Language:

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.

The new language updates to the above language is as follows:

Proposed additional change to recently adopted new language:

A member of the University of Connecticut faculty who has recently retired from active service or left the University without retiring 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, based on a reasonable expectation that the person will be able and willing to remain actively engaged in advising the student through the remainder of the student's program. 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.

Members of the GFC were asked to bring this proposed language to their departments for further consideration at the next GFC meeting.

6. The Academic and Scholarly Integrity Task Force provided an update to the Graduate Faculty Council. The update was summarized as follows:
 - a. **Purpose of Effort:**
 - i. Ensure University's commitment to academic, scholarly, and professional integrity
 - ii. Reaffirm shared responsibility of students, faculty, staff and administration to uphold commitment
 - iii. Have a single policy to ensure consistent application across all students, including across undergraduate/graduate students and across schools/colleges
 - iv. (Foster greater compliance among instructors with reporting and other related requirements)
 - b. **Three parts:**
 - i. **Policy** on Academic, Scholarly and Professional Integrity and Misconduct
 1. **Summary of Sections**
 - a. **Purpose**
 - b. **Applies to**
 - c. Contexts (courses, non-course assessments, research, study abroad, professional events, submissions of information)
 - d. Students (undergrad, graduate, all schools/colleges except Medical School, Dental School, and Law School)
 2. **Definitions**
 - a. Academic, Scholarly, and Professional Integrity Misconduct
 - b. Cheating
 - c. Plagiarizing
 - d. Misrepresenting
 - e. Non-compliance
 3. **Policy Statement**

- a. “All members of the university community, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students, have a shared responsibility to uphold the highest ethical standards of academic, scholarly, and professional integrity and to report any violations of the Academic, Scholarly, and Professional Integrity Policy for which they have knowledge.”
 - b. **Instructor Expectations**
 - i. Communicate expectations
 - ii. Engage in practices to mitigate violations
 - c. **Student Expectations**
 - i. Be responsible for their own work and actions
 - ii. Understand and abide by standards, etc.
 - d. **Enforcement**
 - i. Violations may result in appropriate disciplinary measures
- ii. **Procedures for Addressing Alleged Violations of the Policy**
1. **Summary of Sections:**
 - a. Applies to (same as Policy)
 - b. Definitions
 - i. Instructor = any person providing educational services
 - ii. (Creation of Office of Academic and Scholarly Integrity – Provost’s level)
 - iii. Academic and Scholarly Integrity Committee (standing committee with faculty from all schools and colleges, graduate and undergraduate students)
 2. Procedures following suspected misconduct
 - a. Initial conversation between instructor and student (to gather additional information)
 - b. Reporting requirements for allegations of misconduct (allegation and academic consequences, using standardized form)
 - c. Informational meeting (regarding process, rights, etc.)
 - d. Appeal process (which suspends, at least temporarily, academic consequences)
 - e. Assignment of Hearing Panel and Chair (from Committee)
 - f. Hearing Procedures
 - g. Appeals of Hearing Panel Decisions (by student or instructor)
 - h. Record of Action
 - i. Possible Administrative Review (for additional sanctions, due, e.g., to repeat offender)
 3. **Changes from existing processes:**

- a. **Centralized office** housed with in an academic unit focusing on prevention, marketing, and adjudication around academic integrity (raise profile)
 - i. No longer handled separately by Community Standards and The Graduate School
 - b. **Consistent definitions, policies, and procedures**
 - c. **Clearer expectations** about what faculty should do (initial conversations, reporting requirements)
 - d. Clearer/**easier reporting** process
 - e. Relative to current graduate procedures for hearings:
 - i. Hearing Panel chair would come from standing committee (not associate dean of TGS).
 - ii. **Full hearings would be the norm** (as they are for undergraduate cases), rather than having hearing office determine if available information suggests an appeal “has merit” and should proceed to a full hearing.
- iii. Proposed by-laws language regarding **governance** (changes in policy and procedures)

1. **Current by-laws language (Section XI.A)**

- a. Scholarly activity at the graduate and postdoctoral level takes many forms, including, but not limited to, classroom activity, laboratory or field experience, writing for publication, presentation, and forms of artistic expression. Integrity in all of these activities is of paramount importance, and The Graduate School of the University of Connecticut requires that the highest ethical standards in teaching, learning, research, and service be maintained.
- b. Scholarly integrity encompasses “both research integrity and the ethical understanding and skill required of researchers/scholars in domestic, international, and multicultural contexts.” It also addresses “ethical aspects of scholarship that influence the next generation of researchers as teachers, mentors, supervisors, and successful stewards of grant funds” (Council of Graduate Schools, Research and Scholarly Integrity in Graduate Education: A Comprehensive Approach, 2012).
- c. Members of the Graduate Faculty have primary responsibility to foster an environment in which the highest ethical standards prevail. All members of the University community have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of scholarship, which encompasses activities of teaching, research, and service, and to report any violation of scholarly integrity of which they have knowledge.

Instructors have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent scholarly misconduct in their courses and to inform students of course-specific requirements.

- d. The Dean of The Graduate School shall coordinate the reporting, investigation, and determination of alleged breaches of scholarly integrity by graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in accordance with this policy.
- e. Student misconduct other than scholarly misconduct, as defined herein, is governed by the Student Code. Enforcement of its provisions is the responsibility of the Director of Community Standards. At the Health Center, student misconduct other than scholarly misconduct is governed by the Health Center Rules of Conduct.
- f. If a graduate student accused of scholarly misconduct is part of a combined degree program, the appropriate Associate Dean of the Graduate School (whether for Storrs and the regional campuses or UConn Health) and the academic leader of the other degree program will determine whether the complaint will be addressed in accordance with these procedures or in accordance with those of the other degree program, using the procedures of the program to which the alleged misconduct is more germane.
- g. Cases involving allegations of research misconduct on a sponsored project by graduate students or postdoctoral scholars enrolled at Storrs or regional campuses will be referred to the Vice President for Research for review under the Policy on Alleged Misconduct in Research. Cases involving allegations of research misconduct by students enrolled at the Health Center will be referred to the Research Integrity Officer for action under the Policy on Review of Alleged Misconduct of Research.
- h. Cases involving alleged violation of standards governing the codes of conduct for students in professional fields (e.g., pharmacy, nursing, education, counseling, and therapy) may be subject to additional review by other entities inside or outside the University (e.g., professional organizations or credentialing boards).

2. **Proposed replacement language for Section XI.A.d:**

- a. *Issues related to academic and scholarly integrity at the University of Connecticut are governed by the Academic, Scholarly, and Professional Integrity and Misconduct Policy (DATE). This policy, together with procedures for implementing it, were developed by a committee including representatives from the University Senate and Graduate Faculty Council, as well as professional staff from the*

divisions tasked with administering the policy (Community Standards and The Graduate School). _

- b. ***To recommend changes to the policy or make changes to the implementing procedures, a committee must be convened that brings together all the above relevant stakeholders, including University Senate and Graduate Faculty Council. The committee must then bring those changes to the University Senate and Graduate Faculty Council, and each body must vote to approve any changes before they can be recommended to the President Cabinet (for policy changes) or implemented (for procedure changes).***
- c. Note: Requires related changes to Section X and Section XI.B-D.

Members of the GFC were asked to solicit input and feedback from their departments/units on (1) slight revisions of the proposed changes to the GFC by-laws that were presented at the meeting (see below), and (2) the three attached documents from the Academic Integrity Task Force that were also discussed at our meeting. These include:

- the proposed new policy on Academic, Scholarly, and Professional Misconduct,
 - the proposed Procedures for implementing the proposed policy, and
 - the proposed changes to the GFC by-laws that would be needed to implement a single policy that would apply to all students, both undergraduate and graduate. As mentioned at the GFC meeting, this requires a change in governance structure to one under which the GFC and Senate would together govern academic misconduct (rather than having graduate student misconduct governed solely by the GFC by-laws) and changes to the policy would require approval by both the Senate and the GFC.
7. A motion was made to end the January, 26th 2022 meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council. The motion was seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:40PM. The next meeting of the GFC will be held on Wednesday February 23rd, 2022.