FHSU Graduate Council

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Attendance: Dr. Phillip Olt, Dr. Jerrie Brooks, Ms. Rhonda Weimer, Dr. Kim Chappell, Dr. Brian Weber, Dr. Valerie Yu, Dr. Brent Goertzen, Dr. Gary Andersen, Ms. Misty Koonse, Dr. Janelle Harding, Dr. Jian Sun, Dr. Angela Walters, Dr. Eric Gillock, Dr. Kim Perez, Dr. Pauline Scott, Dr. David Fitzhugh, Dr. Suzanne Becking, Dr. Tom Schaffer, Dr. Dharma Jairam, Dr. Karmen Porter

Absent: Mr. Brett Bieberle, Dr. Yuxiang Du, Ms. Linda Ganstrom

Guest: Ms. Sarah Patterson

**Meeting Start 3:04pm**

Old Business & Updates

1. Graduate School personnel updates

The Graduate School is losing four staff members through this semester: Scott, Christy, and Staci are moving to the Academic Advising positions, and Katie is attending graduate school starting the spring semester. Positions are available to apply for Academic Program Specialists, and Degree Analysts. We should have more information during the next month’s meeting. .

1. Strategic goals for the Graduate School
2. Engagement/retention ([Goal 2](https://www.fhsu.edu/president/strategic-plan/untapped-potential/goals#goal2): Student Success)
3. Virtual Lunch & Learn series (simulcast on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/FHSUGraduateSchool))

Our last session was with the library on their resources available to students. While only a few people were on the call live, we have received a high amount of views since it is on the Graduate School Facebook page. Forsyth Library also shared the video on their Facebook page, which has led to increased views. The next session is a pre-recorded video with the Writing Center on October 21, at 12pm CST.

1. Marketing/recruitment ([Goal 3](https://www.fhsu.edu/president/strategic-plan/untapped-potential/goals#goal3): Strategic Growth)
2. Grad/career fairs

The Graduate School attended the Majors and Graduate Programs fair today, and while it is marketed towards undergrads, we were able to speak to some undergraduates about graduate school to let them know it is an option. This is the last anticipated career fair/graduate fair for the semester.

1. E-newsletter (brag points requested)

The current goal is to get this finished by the end of October, please send any brag points or graduate alumni stories to get published.

1. External funding ([Goal 4](https://www.fhsu.edu/president/strategic-plan/untapped-potential/goals#goal4): Resources & Infrastructure)
2. OSSP report

For FY22, we have 14 submissions totally $5.3 million. We have received 8 awards totaling $2.95 million. OSSP is working on 12 more submissions. The Graduate Scholarly Experience for fall had 35 applications, we were able to fund 18 applications. The range of awards was between $500-$700. The deadline for spring 2022 will be in late January, the actual date is TBD. Please let your students know there is a second application window for spring.

1. Graduate School Endowed Scholarship fund update

The new initiative for a Endowed Scholarship brought up last month has gone live. The website is hosted on Just Giving, which is used by the Foundation for crowdfunding. To endow a scholarship at FHSU needs $10,000. We have a $5,000 matching gift, so we will need to raise $5,000 to create an Endowed Scholarship. This will fill a need since we do not have any scholarships for graduate students, and we are hoping to report back to the Graduate Council in spring 2022 that this has been completed. It is expected to take one year from the amount being collected before we can start issuing the scholarship. The current expectation is fall of 2023 as the projected first award. The website is <https://justgiving.com/campaign/graduate-school-endowed-scholarship>.

New Business

1. Curriculum Committee
2. Update: Courses reviewed and tabled by Committee
   * 1. CSCI 612G Fundamentals of Research
     2. CSCI 663G Intro to Cryptography

There were two courses for approval. These classes were for Computer Science; however, there were difficulties so they were not approved. The 600 undergraduate level courses were sent to Academic Affairs and were not approved. The primary difficulty was in the syllabus: “Undergrad and grad coursework is the same, but graduate will do more difficult assignments.” These courses are tabled until they have been revised. Two other courses were tabled since they were too similar to current Informatics courses. We should have more courses for the next session.

1. Action item: policy for the additional submission of the 600-undergraduate syllabus for all 600G new course applications (unanimously approved at Committee level)

This caused discussion in the Curriculum Committee. Previous syllabus had both undergraduate and graduate work. With the Workday change, the Curriculum Committee no longer has access to see the difference between undergrad and graduate level work in the syllabus with any submission of a 600G level course.

Motion to Approve Dr. Kim Perez

Second Ms. Misty Koonse

Approved 20-0

The Curriculum Committee is building a Teams site, which is to create a one-stop shop for best practices, KBOR policies, HLC policies, and information is required for submission. There was a lot of missing information, or information in multiple places with the change to SharePoint and the removal of Workday. Currently, it is difficult to see what is being requested for changes in Workday. There is a comment box and attachment box at the bottom of the SharePoint, please comment what was changed and attach a rationale for a change. Once this page is completed, we will share with Deans and Department Chairs to provide access when a faculty member is editing a course/program or creating a new course/program.

Dr. Angela Walters: Regarding 600 level courses, there was a process in place before. It would first go through Academic Affairs to be approved, and then Graduate Council for approval. Would this be a possible solution to have Academic Affairs approve the 600 level course before the 600G goes to Curriculum Committee and Graduate Council?

Dr. Gary Andersen: We would still want both syllabus would let us know how the two levels are different.

Dr. Angela Walters: We still want to see the syllabus, but does it matter if the undergrad level is being reviewed at the same time as the graduate level? Especially if one gets approved and the other side does not.

Dr. Kim Chappell: We will have to address this with Dr. Tim Crowley, it is on a separate workflow and to get this worked out.

Dr. Karmen Porter: This is what happening with the Core Courses. So, this should be possible. Dr. Tim Crowley should be able to help adjust the workflow to make this change.

Dr. Kim Chappell: This might not happen right away due to the backlog of current changes.

Dr. Brent Goertzen: Question regarding the Teams site. What is the purpose of the site?

Dr. Kim Chappell: This will be open to everyone with the link once it is completed. The current plan is once it is completed, to share with college deans and department chairs. This will be a document dumping place and organized for ease of use. It will be for courses and programs changes. In the future we will try to have video tutorials. The idea is that this will make it easier for everyone to be on the same page.

Dr. Brent Goertzen: The concern is information overload people are receiving with all the changes. There are lots of different places to look for information now.

Dr. Angela Pool-Funai: This page is supposed to fix that going forward. The intent is to get people in the know, and create a checklist with links for the appropriate task a person is wanting to do. This will hopefully make it easier to put all the information for creating/revising courses and programs all together and not have to search in separate locations.

1. Appeals Committee (nothing to report this month)
2. Action item: Proposed verbiage update to Requirements for Admission (specify *professional/academic* letters of reference)

*Background Information: The Graduate School received a letter of reference for a student from a parent. While this could be considered a professional reference since the applying student worked in a family business, it was felt that this was inappropriate. The student has objected, and we currently do not have a policy in place regarding what is an appropriate reference. We are looking to update the requirements for admission in the Graduate School Policy and Procedures to include verbiage that would specify who can serve as a reference.*

Dr. Olt: We can add “no family or immediate family”. This would also help Appeals Committee when reviewing admission appeals, since this is currently a grey area.

Dr Angela Pool-Funai: The idea is to discourage reference letters from family members or close friends, and to keep them as a professional/academic reference only.

Ms. Rhonda Weimer: MSW does not review letters from family members. However, if they are included we do not review those letters with the same rigor as an academic or professional reference.

Question at large: Should we police this at all, and should it be on the department or Graduate School to make this determination when reviewing?

Dr. Phillip Olt-The appeal process starts at the departmental level. This allows the department to use their professional judgment, departmental, and field standards when reviewing students.

This item has been tabled until next meeting to bring proposed verbiage.

1. Discussion: International students & ESL coursework

*Background Information: A scenario has occurred where a student applied to a program, but needs to complete ESL first. How does that work for graduate studies with time to completion, and if a student is admitted but is not ready? The current solution was to conditionally admit the student to complete ESL first, and then work on the graduate program upon successful completion of ESL.*

Dr. Phillip Olt: HESA has students complete ESL first at times, and the Visa was extended to cover the ESL coursework. Last year was the last time this occurred.

Dr. Angela Pool-Funai: There is no policy reason to not have conditional admittance for ESL. Currently it would have to be manually reviewed that ESL was completed.

1. Ad hoc committee for MAGS Excellence in Teaching Award

We have two thesis to submit for the Outstanding Thesis Award, and the annual conference is in the spring. The 2022 Excellence in Teaching Award is for one masters and one doctorate graduate assistant. Part of the criteria is a nomination from the University. This is due in January. Please put a call out for your programs to recommend a graduate assistant to be nominated, and we will create a committee to review. This can be done virtually.

Dr. Gary Andersen, Ms. Rhonda Weimer, and Dr. Brain Weber volunteered.

1. Discussion: Graduate Student Association (student group)

*Background Information: We are starting the possibility of creating a student organization for graduate students and gauging interest from the graduate student population. This would help to build relationships among students. The organization has to be at least five students, and two members need to be officers. This is more of a heads up notification for future plans.*

Dr. Phillip Olt: One selling point is the student group can request SGA for funding for trips and conferences.

1. Update: HLC Faculty Review form conversion to SharePoint

We are in the process of having the HLC faculty review form being converted to a SharePoint. This should make it easier to determine new, temporary, or renewal of graduate faculty. This should help in routing of the form, and to create less paper.

1. Reminder: Flag bearers & Marshals needed for Commencement

We need flag bearers and marshals. If your department hasn’t reached out, you can volunteer by emailing Cynthia Cline, or your college dean/administrative assistant. Different colleges might require different amounts of marshals depending on the size of the college. The Graduate School will need two volunteers as flag bearers. Preferably, a graduate faculty member from Robbins College of Business and Entrepreneurship, College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, or the Werth College of Science, Technology and Mathematics for the 8:30am ceremony. And graduate faculty from the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, or the College of Education for the ceremony at 11am.

Coming Up

* Athletics (basketball tickets & recognition opportunities)
* GTA Training: Wednesday, Nov. 3

Sent out a reminder to Graduate Assistants to sign up and notification. This session will be over Grant Writing and opportunities.

Important Deadlines

**Comprehensive Exams**

Final Date to Sign Up in the Graduate School: 10/04/21

Exam Results Due (written and/or oral): 11/29/21

**Master's Theses/Specialists’ Field Studies**

Final Title Due in the Graduate School: 11/08/21

Final Copy Due in the Graduate School: 11/29/21

Oral Examination Report over Theses or Field Studies:  11/29/21

Dr. Kim Chappell: Is it possible to change the Comprehensive Exam and the fact the Graduate School has to track the results? How necessary is it to submit to the Graduate School?

Dr. Phillip Olt: AEP currently does not do a comprehensive exam. It is a course project or e-portfolio.

Current questions and concerns regarding the comprehensive exam:

Is there a way for programs to communicate to the graduate school that exam/e-portfolio is a pass/fail that the advisor/instructor can click in Workday?

Is there a more efficient way to get this processed than submit the exams that is happening at the current time?

The assessment is occurring, but the current form and process is not matching what currently is happening.

A major concern for AEP is instructors/advisors have about a week to get licensure submitted and comprehensive ballots filled out for hundreds of students.

This is to figure out the best way to report comprehensive exam, not to do away with it completely. Also, the name of ballot does not match current learning outcomes. However, timing will matter since degrees will be cleared when grades are due.

Outcome: Dr. Angela Walters will lead an ad-hoc group consisting of Dr. Brent Goertzen, Dr. Kim Perez, Dr. Jerrie Brooks, Dr. Angela Pool-Funai will meet in January discuss the issue and recommendations to bring to the Graduate Council.

**Meeting end 4:18pm**

One announcement that I forgot to bring up during the Graduate Council meeting is the Capitol Graduate Research Summit call for abstracts should be going out around November 1. The anticipated deadline will come the week after Thanksgiving. Please let your students know this coming and to apply so we can show off the research being done at Fort Hays State University.