

# The University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC)

Monday, November 18, 2019

3 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

Lubar N130

## Meeting Minutes

### I. **Call to Order**

At 3:09 p.m., while waiting for the meeting attendance to reach quorum, Aaron Schutz recommended that the meeting proceed informally until quorum is reached. Discussion followed of the Qualtrics survey of Grad Reps and Department Chairs. Topics in the survey included:

- Request for an online process for graduation approvals, which is in progress;
- Changing name of “Coordinated Degree” to “Dual Degree”: research on other universities indicates that they do tend to use “dual degree” or “joint degree”;
- Allowing dissertators to take additional courses for credit: this is currently prevented by system policy, though students can complete an RFE to take coursework;
- Degree credits not listed on transcript as graded credits;
- Speeding up announcement of Chancellor’s Awards: process is changing entirely under new budget model;
- Comments on recruitment funding: this is the responsibility of deans;
- Constant cancellations and threats to cancel classes, which is alluded to in the gradSERU survey;
- Concerns from Freshwater Science that students do not have easy access to campus services that they pay for; and
- A request to stop reviewing programs because recommendations for change are not always carried out.

At 3:23 p.m. the meeting reached quorum, and the meeting was called to order by Aaron Schutz.

### II. **Roll Call**

**Present:** (Committee Members): Monna Arvinen-Barrow, Jennifer Balogh, David DiValerio, Peninnah Kako, Bonita Klein-Tasman, Wilkistar Otieno, Stefanie Pinnow, Aaron Schutz, Jason Sherman, Dietmar Wolfram

(Non-Committee Members): Erin Fox (Ex Officio), Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska (Ex Officio), Alessandra Gillen, Jason Puskar (Ex Officio)

**Absent:** Marcus Britton, Garry Davis, Peter Dunn, Reed Heintzkill, Tiffany Nation, Mark Schwartz, Ellen Velie, Stephen Wetzel

**Guests:** Shane Haensgen (Graduate School)

**III. Announcements**

None.

**IV. Automatic Consent**

The following item was approved as distributed:

- a. Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Committee Meeting of October 21, 2019

**V. New Business**

- a. Results of Grad Reps and Dept Chairs Survey about issues GFC could address  
The discussion of the Qualtrics survey of Grad Reps and Dept Chairs continued. Topics included:
  - i. A lack of clarity about the appeals process, though that may be a specific case.
  - ii. An additional question was raised about co-advising across departments, which is allowed, though one advisor must agree to be the administrative lead.
  - iii. For the second question in the survey, the overwhelming topic was the problem of low stipends for assistantships. Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska discussed the recent history of graduate assistantship stipends. Gajdardziska-Josifovska also discussed bringing the results of the R1 Graduate Outstanding Learning Environment Plan (R1-GOLE) to GFC, to see what the Schools and Colleges project as their TA/RA/PA headcounts. Schutz asked for the report on the competitiveness of TA stipends to be brought to the Committee.
- b. Discussion of committee roles of departed and retired faculty (Faculty Doc. 3134/GFC Doc. 1173)
  - i. Aaron Schutz stated what the policy currently says.
  - ii. Shane Haensgen gave the policy practice: For two years after departure, faculty can be listed as a UWM faculty member instead of as an external member, as either a chair or a committee member.
  - iii. Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska stated that a major professor right gives all the other rights.
  - iv. Schutz suggested adding another line under "Other Doctoral Committee Members" to clarify that retired and departed faculty can serve for two years. Schutz also asked if programs can add a retired committee member.
  - v. Haensgen stated that students can complete a Request for Exception to have more than one external committee member.
  - vi. Jason Puskar recommended clarifying the policy and practice on the Grad School website.
  - vii. Schutz recommended adding item "g" to the "Other Doctoral Committee Members" section: "However, upon retirement or resignation, an individual who has been serving as a committee member for a particular doctoral student may continue in that role for up to two years. After two years, they may be permitted to serve as a member." This will be brought back to GFC.

**VI. Adjournment**

- a. At 4 p.m., the meeting lost quorum.

An informal meeting started.

Bonita Klein-Tasman reported as chair of the Graduate Student Fellowships Committee that graduate students are in the process of submitting applications for fellowships, guidelines are largely unchanged, this year the committee is larger which will be better for reviewing applications, and there's coordination of the timeline with AOP fellowships.

Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska showed the slides for Graduate Student Survey (gradSERU) for the topics Health & Well-Being and Obstacles to Completion. Gajdardziska-Josifovska discussed the data for anxiety-related symptoms and depressive symptoms, showing that both are an issue for MA and PhD students. Aaron Schutz stated that GFC won't be identifying individual schools and colleges. Gajdardziska-Josifovska said that a Graduate Wellness Week is being considered for spring. Wilkistar Otieno asked about support for students who have families. Gajdardziska-Josifovska said that the data can be looked at with different demographic identifiers. Monna Arvinen-Barrow said that the percentage of awareness of where to get help on campus for physical and mental health was encouraging. For Obstacles to Completion, Gajdardziska-Josifovska discussed the top obstacles. The top two were Course Load and Course Availability. Monna Arvinen-Barrow was interested in the correlation between the obstacle "Emotional health problems" with the health & well being topics of anxiety symptoms and depressive symptoms. Gajdardziska-Josifovska said that other schools in the gradSERU comparison group were looking to hire analysts to look at the data. She suggested getting faculty and students to help with the data. Jason Puskar said that Deans and Associate Deans have the schools/colleges data. The topic of Climate will be covered at the next GFC meeting.

David DiValerio asked about the use of the GRE in fellowships and admissions. Alessandra Gillen stated that the GRE is not asked for on fellowship applications, and it's only one of several options to show evidence of ability to succeed for Grad School applicants with undergrad GPAs below 2.75. Gajdardziska-Josifovska said if a program makes the GRE optional for applicants, they should describe in what cases the scores will be used.

The informal meeting ended at 4:34 p.m.