

The University of Alabama in Huntsville  
Graduate Council Minutes

September 18, 2020  
2:00 PM Via Zoom

x	Ellise Adams, NUR		Robert Griffin, SCI Assoc Dean
x	Michael Anderson, ENG Assoc Dean	x	Wafa Hakim Orman, BUS Assoc Dean*
x	Jennifer Bail, NUR	x	Phillip Ligrani, MAE
x	Yeqing Bao, Int'l Srvs Assoc Dean*	x	Matthew Niemiller, BIO
x	Dylan Baun, HIS	x	David Moore, Library*
x	David Berkowitz, Grad Dean*	x	Jason O'Brien, EDU
	Joseph Conway, EH	x	Tingting Que, FIN
x	Eric Fong, MGT	x	Janet Waller, Registrar*
x	Karen Frith, NUR	x	DongSheng Wu, MAT
x	Junpeng Guo, ECE		

x Present

\* Non-voting member

Proxy:

Dylan Baun is proxy for Joseph Conway

Visitors Present:

None Present

Committee Rotation/New Members:

Jennifer Bail replaces Lenora Smith

OLD BUSINESS

August's Minutes

- A motion was made by Michael Anderson to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Karen Frith and the vote was unanimous to accept.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Thesis/Dissertation/Scholarly Project Deadlines

- Dylan Baun noted some of the department's history students may have issues with resources to complete their thesis by the November 6th deadline and wanted to know if other colleges were having similar issues.
- David Berkowitz established what are the current regulations regarding registration/graduation requirements. Currently, students have until the first day of classes of the upcoming semester to complete their project without having to pay for an additional semester. If a student has already defended, that student may register for one credit hour to complete corrections. If the student has not defended, the student must be registered for three hours in the semester they defend.
- The floor was open for discussion. Faculty members indicated some student's research was affected by the pandemic, lengthening their time to completion. Some issues were access to individuals for research or the limited numbers of students that are now allowed in labs. Other faculty members indicated their students have been able to complete their research without issue.
- Janet Waller indicated a printed program is still required even if an in-person graduation is not held. Because of this, the November 16th deadline was established so there was enough time to print the program.
- David indicated departments should work closely with their students to help them meet deadlines.

### Decreasing Time for an Admission Decision

- David Berkowitz noted the time a potential student submits their application to the time the applicant receives a decision sometimes exceeds 21 days.
- The floor was open to discuss what is a reasonable amount for a department to return an application decision.
- A few departments indicated they returned applications within days and 21 days is reasonable.
- It was requested when a student is denied admission, a note should be included to document the reason for denial, especially when the applicant's grades may indicate they are eligible.
- No faculty indicated the 21-day application window was unreasonable.

### Doctoral Candidates

- It was asked, What support do departments need in order to increase doctoral candidates.

- Philip Ligrani noted he has many bright undergraduate and masters students that he has encouraged to apply for a PhD program but most have declined because they opted to find a job and start earning income.
- Michael Anderson commented stipends for assistantships has not changed in many years and recruiting students at the current level makes it difficult to recruit when other schools are offering a better package.
- Rates for graduate students are voted on by graduate council and typically the vote is split so nothing is done.
- David Berkowitz indicated departments can increase the individual rates but colleges indicated their budget cannot support additional funding for assistantships due to circumstances unique to each college.
- A current requirement for an assistantship student is to not work outside of UAH on top of their coursework and assistantship hours because this is considered a “fulltime” commitment when you count attendance in class, studying, and working the assistantship hours. Michael requested to change this and allow a student to work off campus when holding an assistantship. David indicated this would be a larger discussion that could be held.
- Another request for support was advertising programs to attract doctoral students.
- The push to increase doctoral candidates is because it directly affects our research reputation/ranking and will help to improve our Carnegie research ranking.
- The current climate in some colleges is faculty are focused on teaching classes and writing less proposals to fund GRAs because there is no incentive, recognition, or benefit to mentoring a doctoral student.
- Funding for assistantships should be reviewed and perhaps new opportunities to fund GRAs may need to be found, as well as providing incentives for faculty to participate in hiring doctoral students.
- A concern was mentioned that students have complained they have been asked to work more than the contracted 20 hours. David mentioned this has been addressed in the past, and again, students should not be required to work beyond the 20 hours. Junpeng Guo mentioned the 20 hours is research hours to support faculty, but a student may need to have additional hours for their own research. Overall, graduate council agreed it was not ethical to ask the student to work more than 20 hours, but some students may decide to work additional hours based on their personal incentives.

Meeting adjourned at 3:18.