

**Graduate Council Report to Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee**  
**October 12, 2015**

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Graduate Council has started the year with several efforts to improve communication and become more active partners for graduate education.

We are working with Heather Huntley, Director of University Accreditation and Program Review, to support faculty in creating robust syllabi for graduate courses. We now have a link in the curriculum tracking system to the syllabus resources provided by the University Teaching Center. We also discussed a syllabus process for dissertations, theses, and projects. Unlike typical courses, students work on these individually with their advisor across several semesters. The idea is to create, within programs, a master syllabus that then can be used to extract components to construct agreements with students each semester. This will provide students and faculty with clear descriptions for student learning outcomes and streamline the process of writing agreements.

We have launched what will be an ongoing conversation this year to define the role of Graduate Council in the program review process.

Funding for graduate students is another topic we are examining. Steve Schissler, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services and Financial Aid, joined us for a conversation about financial aid for graduate students. This was helpful for both us and his office to better understand the issues for graduate students. Bill Messer, Vice President for Research, talked with us about including funding for graduate students when proposing budgets for external funding.

International students are an important and growing population of graduate students. The needs of international students will be a future topic for conversation.

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) has expressed interest in working with Graduate Council to improve the connection between our undergraduate and graduate programs. Eric Pritchard, GSA president, was inspired by President Gaber's call to create pipeline programs and is very interested in supporting that effort. GSA is thinking about other ways to bridge undergraduate students into graduate education such as providing informational sessions on preparing for and life in graduate school, and inviting honors students to participate in the Midwest Graduate Research Symposium that is hosted by GSA each spring.

We will welcome President Gaber to Graduate Council on October 20<sup>th</sup>. We are looking forward to hearing more about her vision for the future of The University of Toledo. We are particularly interested in discussing ideas for growing graduate education and reinvigorating scholarship. I have been collecting faculty ideas so that the Executive Committee can prepare a description of interests and questions for President Gaber. I anticipate topics will include: student and research funding, supporting interdisciplinary collaboration, developing a healthy intellectual culture, and partnering with the President's office.

We will welcome Interim Provost Barrett to Graduate Council on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

To increase communication we will email approved minutes and meeting agendas to all graduate faculty members in addition to posting these on our website. Graduate Council's reports to the Academic and Student Affairs committee will also be posted on our website. We continue to encourage everyone with an interest in graduate education to bring their ideas and questions to Graduate Council.

Respectfully,

Rebecca M. Schneider, Ph.D.

University of Toledo Graduate Council Chair