

Graduate Council Report to Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee February 18, 2019

This report includes the activities of Graduate Council (GC) since our last report on December 17, 2018. We are pleased that steps are being taken to resolve the problems with graduate student health insurance. A new plan administrator has been contracted, student health insurance has been moved into the benefits office and the Graduate Student Association and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies are being included in future planning discussions. We are hopeful that these steps will lead to better experiences for graduate students and help with recruiting and retaining new students.

The Graduate Council Executive Committee (GCEC) has been working on revisions to the Graduate Academic Grievance Policy. This policy governs how academic grievances (such as disputes about grades or academic dismissals) filed by graduate students are handled by the College of Graduate Studies and Graduate Council. We received extensive feedback from our Academic Standing Committee and the policy revisions are now being reviewed by the Academic Programs and Regulations Committee.

At our January 22 GC meeting we had presentations about creating a university-wide course evaluation system and the new curriculum inventory system. Vice Provost Amy Thompson and Dr. Christine Fox reported on the work of the UT Course Evaluation Ad-Hoc Committee. The committee has been studying best practices for creating and delivering a university-wide course evaluation system. The committee is proposing twelve questions that would be common to all course evaluations at UT and is recommending that course evaluations be delivered to students online. The presentation developed into a productive discussion about the purpose of course evaluations. GC endorsed piloting the new evaluation questions and the online format this semester and during the summer sessions.

Cathy Zimmer, Director of Academic and Curricular Initiatives, gave GC a demonstration of the new course inventory management system that will replace the current curriculum tracking system. The new system will make the management of proposals for curricular change more efficient and easier to track.

In consultation with Faculty Senate (FS) and the Provost's office, GC has set March 12 as the deadline for when curricular proposals need to reach our Curriculum Committee to be approved for the Fall 2019 course catalog. This deadline will help the Provost's office update the course catalog for Rocket Launch. It will also help us transition to the new course inventory management system from the current curriculum tracking system. Proposals remaining in the curriculum tracking system will work their way through that workflow system in Fall 2019.

At the February 5 GC meeting we were pleased to have Provost Karen Bjorkman speak and to have Dean Cyndee Gruden lead a discussion about improving the admission and enrollment experience for graduate students at UT. Provost Bjorkman introduced herself to GC, explained

her long experience with graduate education and gave an update on initiatives from the Provost's office. GC looks forward to having a positive relationship with Provost Bjorkman.

Dean Gruden presented the results of a survey about current admission and enrollment practices and suggestions for improving these processes. The survey was completed by GC representatives and was the basis for an informative discussion about topics such as the types of admission materials (standardized test scores, GPA, letters of recommendation, writing samples, etc.) that graduate programs find useful when evaluating applicants and how to motivate continuing graduate students to enroll in classes earlier. In March Jim Anderson, Vice President for Enrollment Management, will visit GC to continue the discussion of recruiting, admitting and enrolling graduate students.

Graduate Council looks forward to continuing partnerships with the College of Graduate Studies, the Provost's office, the Research office, the Graduate Student Association, and UT faculty, staff and students in supporting our graduate and professional programs.

Respectfully,
Jerry Van Hoy, Ph.D.
University of Toledo Graduate Council Chair