

**Graduate Council Minutes
September 9, 2021
Webex**

Present: Wissam AbouAlaiwi, Hossein Abedsoltan (GSA), Serhan Guner (for Defne Apul), Brian Ashburner, Larissa Barclay, Sharon Barnes, Jonathan Bossenbroek, Frank Calzonetti, Saurabh Chattopadhyay, Madeline Clark, Wendy Cochrane, Heather Conti, Jim Ferris, Bashar Gammoh, David Giovannucci, Daniel Hammel, Mohamed Samir Hefzy, Marthe Howard, Ali Imami (GSA), Gary Insch, Andrea Kalinoski, Kenneth Kilbert, John Laux, Abraham Lee, Linda Lewin, Michael Mallin, Bindu Menon, Geoffrey Rapp, Jeanine Refsnider, Patty Relue, Connie Schall, Beth Schlemper, Rebecca Schneider, Martha Sexton, Ekaterina Shemyakova, Snejana Slantcheva-Durst, Jami Taylor, Amy Thompson, Varun Vaidya, Jerry Van Hoy, Kandace Williams.

Absent: Zahoor Shah.

Excused: Ruslan Slutsky.

Guests: Svetlana Beltyukova, Adam Bohland -COGS, Elissa Falcone.

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order, the roll called and the requested either a motion to approve as a batch or motion for more time to review-defer. Minutes of February 9, February 23, March 9, and March 23, 2021 we approved. Moved to approve. No discussion. Second. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Executive Reports

Report of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council

On behalf of Graduate Council, Chair Dr. David Giovannucci, provided the following report:

○ *Introduction of 2021-2022 Executive Committee Members*

Chair	Dr. David Giovannucci
Vice Chair	Dr. Wissam AbouAlaiwi
At Large	Dr. Jerry Van Hoy
At Large	Dr. Andrea Kalinoski
At Large	Dr. Mohamed Samir Hefzy
Past Chair	Dr. Wendy Cochrane
Research VP	Dr. Frank Calzonetti
COGS Dean	Dr. Amy Thompson
GSA President	Dr. Ali Imami

○ *COGS Structure Status Update*

In May 2021, Chair Giovannucci provided the *Reimagining COGS* document to President Postel and Provost Bjorkman for their consideration at the Graduate Council's recommendation for the College of Graduate Studies. Restructuring in the context of the developing RCM (responsibility centered management) budget model for the university. The taskforce comprised of faculty from various colleges, chaired by Dr. Jerry Van Hoy. They did a heavy lift in a short period of time producing a well thought through document at the end of May. In June 2021, I provided an update of the Graduate Council's activities since the previous board meeting.

○ *GCEC Summer 2021 Activities*

▪ RCM and COGS

Met in June and August to discuss RCM and its impact on COGS, to get updates on COGS staffing and activities. A couple of additional meetings were scheduled with Provost, but were canceled because scheduling conflicts or that there was no information on RCM. This has been rescheduled to September 15th, so hopefully, there is more to discuss. Part of the issue is that the consultants have not met with COGS. Dean Thompson will speak to this in her report today.

▪ Interviewed candidates for Vice Provost Academic Administration & Faculty Affairs position. Dr. Lafleur Small was selected.

▪ Curriculum

GCEC was not empowered to conduct curriculum review or approval over the summer. Since that time, there were submissions so there are some proposals in the queue. No report today.

▪ Membership

Did review applications over the summer and will report today.

○ *Standing Committees*

Vice Chair, Dr. Wissam AbouAlaiwi is presently populating the GC Standing Committees.

GCEC has endorsed the following appointments to Research Council:

Dr. Celia Williamson	College of Health and Human Services
Dr. Dan Hammel	College of Arts and Letters
Dr. Svetlana Beltyukova	Judith Herb College of Education
Dr. Tomer Avidor-Reiss	College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Dr. Ali Imami	GSA President, representing graduate students
tbd	College of Business and Innovation

A representative is needed from the College of Business and Innovation. Chair Giovannucci asked Council to consider volunteering or to provide a recommendation to Dr. AbouAlaiwi.

Report of the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

Dr. Amy Thompson, Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs and Acting Dean, College of Graduate Studies provided the following updates:

Excited to be named as Acting Dean of COGS and with the opportunity to speak with Graduate Council about what has been happening over the summer.

Thanked Dr. Jerry Van Hoy for chairing the taskforce on Reimagining COGS resulting from upcoming RCM budget model and the group for the work they have done. It has been helpful to hone in on some of the issues that we need to focus on moving COGS forward. Additionally, the Provost and myself asked Dave Cutri in the Office of Compliance to conduct an audit of the college, where staff in COGS were interviewed along with deans and other stakeholders, resulting in a comprehensive report.

Dean Thompson was appointed on July 1st to serve as Acting Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. In reviewing both the Taskforce document and Audit report, she created a two-year plan with nine priority areas. It is not an exhaustive list, however, it prioritizes important items to be focused on to move us forward and take us forward in processes. She shared the goals and priorities noting that she is not re-inventing the wheel as the audit and taskforce did the work. She stressed the importance in serving as an effective leader and transparent communicator who welcomes feedback on these priorities. These priorities have been mentioned recently to the GCEC and Associate Deans. She indicated that is important to build positive relationships with Graduate Council, the Associate Deans and the Graduate Student Association. She stressed the importance of being a strong supporter and resource for building programs and curriculum, and of course promoting student success, and partnering with colleges and enrollment management to increase enrollment and retention. She mentioned that she serves on a presidential appointed committee that looks at areas that we can improve on and graduate education, and of courses that is one of the areas she will continue to advocate for.

Dean Thompson discussed the priority areas for COGS 2021-2023, accomplishments to date and future work. Excerpts below (see full attached presentation). She was pleased to be able to share some exciting news in terms of how COGS is starting to integrate partnerships with Dave Meredith in his enrollment management group. And, of course, to make significant progress on the various priority areas.

COGS Priority Areas for 2021-2023

1) *Admissions*

Slate will modernize our admissions process – a game-changer. It is a wonderful tool that will provide better outreach to students and improve upon an application process sitting incomplete for weeks for missing documents. The team overseeing this project is: Julie Quinonez, Elissa Falcone and Cody Henderson to start leading the implementation that we hope to have completed by early spring.

2) *GA Allocation under RCM Model*

Dean Thompson has been pushing for more information from Huron Consulting on what RCM will look like for COGS. The fact that she has not had a single meeting with them has focused on our budget has been brought to the attention of the President and Provost. None of the four cost centers have had meetings with Huron about their budgets. A half-day retreat is scheduled with Huron tomorrow that hopefully will result in some answers and a better timeline. Regarding COGS and moving forward is you have my word on that I will continue to advocate for increased funding for graduate assistantships. In fact, I recently requested an additional \$2 million for reinvestment funds. That will, of course, be looked at for spring, when those will be potentially awarded. This is something that is absolutely at my core.

3) *Staffing Updates*

Working toward becoming fully staffed. I can't say enough about the staffing. The staff in COGS are wonderful, hard-working individuals who have really done the work of two and three people. When I took over, we had basically, four vacancies, many of the staff were trying to cover these positions. Some staff because of budget cuts were reduced to 30 hours. A big priority is to make sure that we are fully staffed in the college, filling those positions and looking at what our staffing needs are.

4) *Processes and Workflow*

In terms of forms and workflow, we are looking at modernizing and improving some of our forms and processes. Elissa Falcone, using an area of her expertise, is assisting in this effort. We do not have a lot of bandwidth in terms of staffing, so we cannot afford to have redundancy in terms of forms and workflow. That was repeatedly mentioned in audit.

5) *Increase Awareness about the Role of COGS and its services and resources*

It is important to share what our role is and how we can provide support to our students.

6) *Partner with Human Resources to perform background checks and other employment related functions.*

Some of things that we can partner with HR to take some of that work off of COGS, are the background checks needed to hire GAs.

7) *Develop Strategic Growth and Enrollment Marketing Plan*

Dave Meredith, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management, is committed to partnering with us to in developing a strategic growth and marketing plan. With Debbie Andrews' retirement, I am excited to announce that we have hired Adam Bohland, who has extensive background in admissions and growing enrollment, and enrollment management. We are entering into a new partnership, where Adam will oversee admissions for undergraduate and graduate students, working together from admissions standpoint and to develop strategic enrollment growth and marketing plans to move us forward in our approaches in graduate enrollment.

We are also working closely with Victor Finch, Director of International Admissions in Enrollment Management on a recent proposal that I put in for reinvestment money to secure international recruiters to recruit international students for us and encompass marketing our programs internationally, a piece that has been missing for our programs.

9) *Explore transitioning of Degree Awarding to the various colleges*

As mentioned in the Reimagining COGS document, was to explore the transitioning of degree awards back to the individual colleges. This is an area that people wanted explored. This may take some work from the colleges in helping to clear individuals for graduation.

For example, when you graduate from the College of Medicine, having your degree say that was suggested. However, this might be a little further down on our priority list as we are trying to get everything restructured and positions hired.

These do not encompass an exhaustive list, but represent some of the focused areas.

○ *Graduate Student Orientation*

Was customized in a cohesive, simple navigation platform. Many thanks to Teri Green in COGS for taking this to the finish line. Dr. Denise Bartell launched two live Webex training sessions for new Teaching Assistants, providing best practices in teaching that were archived on Blackboard, so that students could go back to material for reference.

○ *Marketing*

Dean Thompson submitted a proposal for \$150K reinvestment funds that would help colleges create marketing materials for graduate programs. The university often focuses on direct from high school marketing. We want to help market graduate programs by developing high quality content, including having materials to recruit attending conferences. She submitted a proposal for \$2M proposal to increase funding for graduate assistantships. Allocations have dwindled over time and we want to have enough funding to support labs and teaching assistantships, classes, etc.

○ *Future Work*

- Graduate dashboard (persistence, graduation rate, etc.)
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work (awarding of assistantships, equity gaps, new GA position)
- Discuss opportunities for a “graduate navigator” to assist with student success.
- Developing a Graduate Strategic Growth and Marketing Plan

Discussion:

Dr. Marthe Howard asked whether any funds are directed at the medical school and whether any consideration has been given to recruiting new faculty to provide new laboratories and creation of new courses for graduate students?

Dean Thompson replied that the request was general and that funds would be utilized based on college needs. She agreed that faculty play into the equation and will continue to advocate.

Dr. Kandace Williams pointed out that COMLS is hiring two new well-funded faculty and getting more funded labs. There were more people who wanted students than we could recruit. The biomedical graduate executive committee and college dean approved stipend raises for graduate students and payment for health insurance. Our college is set up on a ratio system. We are hopeful this will lead to the increased recruitment of quality graduate students.

Dr. Howard added that there is a need for new graduate courses in the medical school.

Dr. Williams agreed adding that as a result of the T32 grant proposal that she submitted, two new courses have been submitted in CIM and are awaiting approval.

Dr. Dan Hammel noted that in his college's conversations with Huron Consulting, they clearly view graduate tuition waivers, especially waivers without stipends (graduate scholarships) as being different than undergraduate discounting, and they seem to understand how and why those are different. They are not a tuition giveaway as some may view. Dr. Hammel suggested stressing this point in conversations with Huron Consulting.

Dr. David Giovannucci echoed that sentiment. He will send Taskforce findings to GC again thanked Dean Thompson for her report. The concern is how will RCM impact your two year plan. He offered support from Graduate Council in advocating. Additionally, he looks forward to receiving information from the consulting firm, who do not tell us what we're going to do, but rather, provide information and best practices to the President, Provost and Deans, correct?

Dean Thompson replied that the non-cost center colleges have been receiving actual budget data, but the cost-centers, such as COGS, have not. Not receiving granular data has made it challenging.

Dr. David Giovannucci asked for GC to receive a copy of the COGS audit, if possible. The expertise of GC could be an additional resource to help move some of your ideas forward.

Dean Thompson will check with David Cutri if okay to release and she will gladly do so.

Report of the Vice President for Research

Dr. Frank Calzonetti gave an overview of research funding numbers for the end of FY 21, research award dollars over three years and research awards by college over three years, FY 19, FY 20 and FY 21 (see attached presentation).

- *FY 21 Funding*

FY 21 will be finalized in a few days, September 10, 2021. These awards saw an overall increase of 15.6% and federal awards increased by 20.9%. Will be reported to BOT in September. 85% of our awards were federal, which is good, but they also bring in more indirect than state awards, which have caps much lower than that. Partly a reflection of our collaborations with the national labs which we have followed up with very aggressively. Faculty members have done a great job looking at opportunities to work with them. Research Office is in almost daily contact

with the national labs. These collaborations present opportunities to utilize their supercomputers, laboratories and infrastructure.

○ *Research Award Dollars over Three Years*

We are seeing positive signs that we are positively situated moving forward particularly on the federal side. A number of research areas align very well with the President's initiatives and we are building very strong groups, nationally competitive. I couldn't be happier with the strengths of our research programs.

○ *Research Awards by College over Three Years*

With respect to the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, they had a fantastic year FY 21 with some big awards in photovoltaics, chemistry and environmental sciences. COMLS fell back a little but they made some nice hires and come with funding. Engineering has been growing and aligned with some national initiatives.

○ *Staffing*

Our staff have been getting poached by the University of Michigan at higher salaries. We only have two grants coordinators presently but are working diligently with Human Resources to fill these positions as soon as possible. There are upcoming deadlines for proposals in October and November. We are cross-training some of our other people. Grants coordinators touch every proposal going out the door. They know the requirements for the agencies and are responsible for making sure the certifications, budgets and commitments are in order. These positions require an in-depth level of training and understanding of federal granting agencies. These are critical in that they commit the university. Let us know, me, Connie Schall and Anne Izze, in advance of your upcoming proposals and deadlines. This is a top priority for us.

Discussion:

Dr. Marthe Howard inquired whether UToledo has made the critical decision to increase the salary of Grants Coordinators to at least be equivalent if not a few dollars more than UofM? There are multiple reasons why people are leaving. But 1 is it's a huge job with a lot of work and they feel they are not adequately paid.

Dr. Calzonetti agreed that the UofM salaries are ~\$20K higher. These are positions in the collective bargaining unit. It's a process of working through those collective bargaining agreements that creates another layer of complexity. These are technical positions and it is hard to see them leave.

Chair Giovannucci asked if the Office of Research is considered a cost-center?

Dr. Calzonetti replied, yes it is.

Chair Giovannucci stressed that as conversations and budgets are developed with RCM that the GC would certainly support Research and Sponsored Programs.

Dr. Calzonetti would endorse that as UToledo is on a positive trajectory building research and could use more resources. In high level conversations with Huron, we have received preliminary recommendations to either enhance revenue or reduce costs. We communicated with them to ensure the recommendations are based on solid data and are working through that process. We sent them information so that we can at least agree on the data moving forward with recommendations.

Dr. Howard suggested have three colleges who bring in federal dollars and hire someone for each college, approved by HR, but in a way to make their salary competitive. The people in these positions work hard as grants are filled with problems so it is important to have capable and enough people to deal with the load.

Dr. Calzonetti responded that we did take a look at positions at other universities where we had PIQs done to evaluate compensation and job duties that came in at a higher level outside the union. We have advocated that there needs to be more support within the colleges connected with our office. Grants Accounting, after budget is set up, does not report to our office. We see a de-centralized model is very valuable, particularly with colleges that have a lot of volume. But we do have to deal with the situation at it is with positions in the union and trying to come up with additional budget and determining whether they need to be in the bargaining unit or not. I have discussed with the President and Provost so they understand what we are dealing with.

Report of the Graduate Student Association

Ali Imami, President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) gave a brief presentation:

- *Executive Board*
Administrative handoff from previous e-Board over the summer. There are 3 vacancies on our executive board that we will be filling over the next couple of months.
- *Student Involvement Fair – August 29, 2021*
GSA participated in this fair on August 29th. A lot of participation with questions from graduate students and undergraduate seniors wanting to know what is the GSA and how can they be involved. We utilized a QR to track. We had about 100 scans that allows them to connect to us on social media and our website.
- *College Representation*
actively working on make sure that we have graduate student representatives from all of the colleges. Presently 5 of 8 colleges are represented with 9 of the total 16 slots filled. We would prefer the colleges (associate deans) nominate representatives, rather than the GSA having to nominate the reps.
- *General Assembly Meeting – September 1, 2021*
Discussed the Involvement Fair

Dr. Shemyakova suggested contacting the GC faculty representatives for colleges that need graduate student representation. Ali Imami appreciated the suggestion.

Information and Discussion Items

Overview of Graduate Council functions and Standing Committees of the Graduate Council
 Dr. David Giovannucci and Dr. Wissam Aboualaiwi presented reviewed the Council functions and standing committees duties while seeking volunteers from Council to serve on them.

Standing Committee Reports

Report of the Curriculum Committee

None.

Report of the Membership Committee

On behalf of the Membership Committee, Dr. Svetlana Beltyukova, Chair, presented the committee's summary reports of Summer I and Summer II, 2021 groups of applications. The first review by June 18 were included (18 applications). Second review was for apps June 19 – August 20 (23 applications) The highlight indicates approved in a different category or pending. Chair Beltyukova indicated that she has included notes for those interested in understanding more what the decision was behind, improving some of the applications in different category. We tried to make those as explicit as possible. One application in which the applicant applied for Professional, but we approved as Associate as this individual was a new hire with some research, teaching and grant experience. The committee unanimously felt that it was appropriate to approve the associate status. In another application, the applicant applied for Full membership, but we approved at a special because the person was not tenure track and, request was to chair committees. Only two categories permit chairing of committees, full and special.

COLLEGE	Total Applications	Applications Rec'd/Approved by Category					# Approved as Applied	# Approved in Diff.	# Pending	# Apps Internal	# Apps External	# Apps -- Renewal	# Apps -- New	# Apps -- Change
		Full	Associate	Professional	Adjunct	Special								
Arts and Letters (AR)	3	3/3					3			3				
Business and Innovation (BU)	0													
Education (CE)	4	1/1				3/3	4		1	3	1	3		
Engineering (EN)	0													
Health and Human Services (HHS)	4		1/2	1/0	1/1	1/1	3	1	2	2		4		
Honors (HC)	0													
Law	0													
Libraries	0													
Medicine and Life Sciences (MD)	2	2/1				0/1	1	1	2			2		
Natural Sciences and Mathematics (SM)	2				1/1	1/1	2			2	1	1		
Nursing (NU)	3	3/3					3		3				3	
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (PH)	0													
TOTAL	18	9/8	1/2	1/0	2/2	5/6	16	2	11	7	5	10	3	

In the second batch, there were two applications pending where the college deans provided a signature but not an endorsement, so as soon as we receive these, we can release the committee's decisions. One applicant applied for Adjunct, but we approved for Special as the person was external and from academia but from an administrative position.

o *Late Submissions review requests*

We received a special request for to review an application in between review cycles during the summer. The situation involved a student defending a dissertation in a week, and the faculty member had let their membership lapse for several years.

- During spring semester, college and department meetings could add this as an agenda item to remind graduate faculty to check their status, particularly when they have a student graduating in spring and summer semesters.

COLLEGE	Total Applications	Applications Rec'd/Approved by Category					# Approved as Applied	# Approved in Diff.	# Pending	# Apps Internal	# Apps External	# Apps -- Renewal	# Apps -- New	# Apps -- Change
		Full	Associate	Professional	Adjunct	Special								
Arts and Letters (AR)	2	1/1				1/1	2			2			2	
Business and Innovation (BU)	0													
Education (CE)	5			2/1		3/4	4	1		1	4		4	1
Engineering (EN)	4	1/1				3/3	4			2	2	1	2	1
Health and Human Services (HHS)	0													
Honors (HC)	0													
Law	0													
Libraries	0													
Medicine and Life Sciences (MD)	7	6/4				1/1	5	2		6	1		7	
Natural Sciences and Mathematics (SM)	4					4/4	4			1	3		4	
Nursing (NU)	1	1/1					1			1				1
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (PH)	0													
TOTAL	23	9/8	1/2	1/0	2/2	5/6	20	1	2	13	10	1	19	3

There will be two reviews for fall semester as poste on GC website <https://www.utoledo.edu/graduate/facultystaff/images/Fall21schedulegradfacmembershipcommittee.png>. Membership Rosters are also located on the website.

Chair Giovannucci noted that he had received notification from the College of Graduate Studies that his membership is due for renewal, so there are mechanisms in place.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Graduate Council Resolution on Covid-19 Vaccination

Chair Giovannucci presented GCEC’s draft resolution supporting the COVID-19 vaccination requirement in response to the University’s requirement for the COVID-19 vaccine, that was announced by the President recently. Both the UToledo Physicians and Faculty Senate have made resolutions endorsing a requirement for vaccinations. GCEC has developed a draft resolution in support of the vaccine for faculty, staff and students. The point is to add our support. Edits or amendments or concerns were welcomed.

Discussion:

Council discussed concerns about push to get vaccine mandated but also significant portion of campus not vaccinated, and not because they are aware or educated on the vaccine for the past 18 months, but because they are concerned with long-term safety implications of the vaccine and there are indications of people having poor reactions or have already been infected by the virus. The university is now looking at mandate to remain employed. this just looks like a complete discount of, of the collective knowledge of that group of minority people on campus. Especially considering that, this vaccine does not seem to be sterilizing, it does not block transmission. Some staff members are considering retiring or leaving because they do not want the vaccine.

There were also comments that new reports coming out that fewer people have any issues with the vaccines, ~ 1 in 10,000. Millions of people who have received this vaccine, and actually the very small proportion of people who have gotten ill from it. Conversely, some people are concerned that they want to come to a safe work environment. They can't come here if they're surrounded by unvaccinated and/or people who refuse to wear their masks. And so you have people on both ends of the spectrum so it is difficult to accommodate everyone.

Chair Giovannucci stated that the president's message was not a mandate per se, but rather get vaccinated or get tested weekly, noting that there are exemptions.

Dean Amy Thompson pointed out that exemptions can be applied for (personal, religious, or philosophical reasons) and you would enter into weekly testing. It is not meant to be punitive policy or corrective action.

Chair Giovannucci indicated that this discussion will be tabled until the next meeting.

September 7, 2021

"Draft" Graduate Council Resolution

Whereas, maintaining a safe campus during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic remains a top priority;

Whereas, we continue to follow the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Ohio Department of Health and the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department;

Whereas, following the first COVID-19 vaccine receiving full approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the University of Toledo has implemented a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all students and employees;

The Graduate Council hereby expresses its strong support of the vaccine requirement for all students, staff, and faculty at the University of Toledo, consistent with recommendations of medical advisory committees and endorsements by the University of Toledo Physicians group and the University of Toledo Faculty Senate.