

**Graduate Council Minutes
October 1, 2019
Main Campus, Rocket Hall 1530**

Present: Wissam AbbouAlaiwi, Brian Ashburner, Defne Apul, Tomer Avidor-Reiss, Terry Bigioni, John Bossenbroek, Timothy Brakel, Amanda Bryant-Friedrich, Frank Calzonetti, Ritu Chakravarti [for Saurabh Chattopadhyay], Wendy Cochrane, Heather Conti, Raina Dawson (GSA), Daniel Georgiev, Cyndee Gruden, Daniel Hammel, Samir Hefzy, Andrea Kalinoski, Ananda Kunnathur, Abraham Lee, Song-Tao Liu, Sara Lundquist, Michael Mallin, Marcia McInerney, Nagalakshmi Nadiminty, Alisa Nammavong (GSA), Penny Poplin Gosetti, Barry Scheuermann, Beth Schlemper, Rebecca Schneider, Martha Sexton, Ozcan Sezer, Ruslan Slutsky, Susan Sochacki, Megan Stewart, Varun Vaidya, Jerry Van Hoy.

Absent: Christina Fitzgerald, Ken Kilbert, Geoffrey Rapp, Patricia Relue, James Willey, Kandace Williams.

Excused: Robert Topp.

Guests: Karen Bjorkman (Interim Provost), Sharon Gaber (President), Quatez Scott (COGS Dean's Scholar/Fellow).

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order and the roll called. The Minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of September 17, 2019 were approved.

Dr. Song-Tao Liu, Chair, thanked President Sharon Gaber and Provost Karen Bjorkman for attending Graduate Council to share their plans for the new academic year and for their guidance and support of graduate education.

Information and Discussion Items

Discussion with Dr. Sharon Gaber, President and Dr. Karen Bjorkman, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

President Gaber thanked Council for inviting her. Her discussion centered on responses to the following four questions provided to her from the Graduate Council:

Question 1: What is your vision for graduate education at UToledo?

Question 2. Graduate students are often in different positions and have different needs than undergraduate students. For example, graduate students generally face significant stress as it relates to school/life/work satisfaction. Is the University planning more initiatives to provide support for the health and wellness of graduate students?

Question 3. Several recent changes in policies and procedures that affected graduate education and students have been enacted without engagement with Graduate Council or COGS. How do you think we can facilitate communication between university units and our constituencies to promote student success and relieve angst?

Question 4. Do you anticipate a cut to the university budget this year and how would the cut affect graduate education at UToledo?

President Gaber stated that her vision for UT is to continue what we're doing, but more and better. Based on its prior questions sent to the President, Council seems to want to know how the administration is communicating and what our resources are.

Fall 2019 enrollment is down slightly compared with 2018, and that has consequence. We are hoping to not to have to require a mid-year give-back. Finance and Administration office is looking at options. The bottom line is we have to figure out and be fiscally conservative. In meeting with the Vice President for Enrollment today, the discussion centered around what colleges think about what we need to do so that we are not losing students, which creates a budget shortfall. We could proactively decide to be a smaller institution, because you cannot eat the same budget and have fewer students. How do we stake some of market share of other universities in our market area? It takes us all thinking what we can to do to address this.

Enrollment has consistently gone down in the past several years, except for 2016, when there was a slight uptick. If we want remain strong, we have to receive funds from tuition and SSI, which is a pie that is shared relative to everyone else. While pleased with UT increased retention rates, which is part of the formula for SSI, more students are still necessary to increase funding. SSI is not predictable, because you have to know how other institutions are doing since they receive a portion of the same fund. It is possible to not garner greater SSI even with increased enrollment. We have to keep doing well with retention and recruit more students in a better and different way from the other 13 public institutions in our state.

While there are a number of fiscal concerns, we hope to not have to do a mid-year budget adjustment. Finance and Administration has to be able to absorb a lot. It's like hoping we can continue to juggle all. Some of your questions are still up in the air.

Interim Provost Bjorkman stated that she values graduate education. Graduate students are involved in the research of the university which meshes with our undergraduate education and work in labs. She expressed her appreciation to the Graduate Council for helping to keep graduate education alive and flourishing. The role of Provost has given her a broader view of the university. There truly are great things going on at UT. Our breadth in working together across disciplines and colleges is remarkable. We live in an interdisciplinary climate, so our ability to prepare students for a world that will support the careers that they will have, not what we have had, is necessary. We want to make sure we provide a robust educational experience. Having competitive students, in some fields, depends on competitive stipends. Interim Provost Bjorkman is eager to continue working with Dean Bryant-Friedrich and the Graduate Council to navigate these challenges and still give graduate students the best tools and experience. We know we are doing well because our alums are doing amazing things. Again, she thanked the Council for all the work they do for graduate education and graduate students.

Dr. Abraham Lee asked how UT compares in enrollment with other institutions in Ohio.

President Gaber stated the demographics for Ohio and Michigan have both declined. In Ohio, OSU, Miami, and a couple other universities saw increases in enrollment. Almost all of other institutions saw declines, most notably, Akron. Those with stronger reputations were up. How do we continue to get a better share of the market? We have to keep doing the things we are doing well and get the word out to tell our story better. We are doing better in retention in graduation rates. Graduate students want to work with faculty, so we can talk about that. You rarely cut your way to success. In the media, BGSU announced that their enrollment up, however, that was due in large part to the college credit plus (high school students). They get SSI, not tuition. We track that too. At UT, graduate enrollment was down slightly, by 25 students. Graduate programs generally held their own. Think about what we're doing in graduate education: 30% are graduating from medical school, MBA, Law, and other professional programs.

Interim Provost Bjorkman stated that the university will be holding a graduate and professional fair on October 30th so that our own undergraduate students are aware of our graduate programs. We want to showcase what we're doing by inviting students from around the region so that they know what we have to offer and they can begin to think about continuing their education here too.

Dr. Tomer Avidor-Reiss asked how the university is planning ahead, whether from the top down or by faculty upward or working together. There will be different ideas.

President Gaber noted that every college should be engaging in that conversation.

Interim Provost Bjorkman added that deans and chairs should be engaging with faculty to bring ideas. We have to think about where we have strengths in niche areas and online programming and put marketing behind it. We also have to think creatively about how we can package certifications with graduate programs. Can we package things we offer anyway? She noted that policies are run through Faculty Senate and Graduate Council at the same time. She encouraged Council to reach out to her or President Gaber. They would be happy to speak with Graduate Council anytime.

President Gaber added that colleges should be having these conversations. Jim Anderson, VP for Enrollment is receiving broad based input from the Strategic Enrollment Committee. There are a lot of things we have to do. She pointed out that she is not driving enrollment conversations, but that it is at the grassroots and with people whose full time jobs are charged with enrollment. Colleges can have different approaches depending on disciplines.

Dr. John Bossenbroek stated that he is fortunate to see first-hand some of the cool research being done. However, he questioned ways for faculty to break out of insular modes to build strengths in interdisciplinary work.

Interim Provost Bjorkman stated that a common concern of interdisciplinary work is often who gets credit. We are talking about how to work through some of these issues that has resulted in an ability to work with a few colleges on collaborative programs. We would definitely like to see a greater ability to do this. She added that as Provost she brings an academic perspective to conversations with Matt Schroeder, who brings the financial perspective to her. We have to work through breaking down silos.

President Gaber pointed out that college deans determine how to allocate their funding. Your role is to tell us. Everything is a zero sum game. Money directed in particular areas means it is not going somewhere else.

Dr. Abraham Lee stated that the Physical Therapy program is set on how many students it can take, so there is not much else it can do.

President Gaber responded that she would be happy to expand that program if the demand is there.

Dr. Abraham Lee suggested that programs be surveyed to determine whether they are growing or declining and if there is demand.

President Gaber agreed that programs should be reviewed to determine if they are growing or declining and indicated that the Provost and Deans have those conversations. She stressed her support to grow programs where there is demand. Areas that have declined would see the money shift accordingly.

Interim Provost Bjorkman added that we do look at data to get a picture of how the program is doing and strategically determine where to invest.

Dr. Defne Apul stated that faculty need to see the benefits of having more students in the classrooms.

President Gaber agreed that is important and indicated that is also part of dean's role. She noted that Engineering enrollment is down.

Dr. Defne Apul indicated that enrollment in Engineering has been steady and is only down this year.

Interim Provost Bjorkman noted that Engineering Technology is being shored up because it had been short staffed and that the benefits should help. Goes to the earlier questions regarding making decisions on data and the amount of resources available to spread around. Investment comes in many forms, including lines and new labs or capital or people.

Dr. Samir Hefzy thanked the President and Provost for making decisions based on data.

President Gaber expressed her appreciation to Dr. Bjorkman for stepping into the role of Provost. She has a long history with this university and moving it forward. We have been making terrific progress and moving forward. She understands what is going on and has the best interest of faculty and the colleges in mind.

Dr. Terry Bigioni noted that although UT has increased its retention and graduation rates, BGSU graduation rates are higher. He asked about fundamental differences.

President Gaber stated that BGSU's incoming class was not much stronger with an average GPA of 3.5 and UT at 3.48. She stated that since arriving at UT, we are at the 6-year data point. There was a time period in which most applicants were accepted, and now we want to make sure they will succeed.

If an applicant has a 14 ACT, maybe they would be better served by attending a two-year institution first to make sure they can do college work. We are just cycling out of that period. We had nearly a 10% increase in graduation rates in the last four years.

Interim Provost Bjorkman added that as an institution we are concerned with understanding the issues students face so that we can help them succeed at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

It is a different world and we understand that mental health is important. A task force is looking at putting a 24-hour hotline in place and additional people are being added in the Counseling Center to create a comprehensive approach. Students face many issues beyond academics that include finances, complicated lives and mental stress.

Dr. Ritu Chakravarti suggested that improving enrollment should include targeting local schools.

President Gaber affirmed that UT has recruiters assigned to TPS, the Catholic high schools, Ottawa Hills and other school districts and will soon have someone based in Columbus. We need to be doing more there to have a presence in districts locally and in the state.

Dr. Sara Lundquist stated that the College Credit Plus program is valuable and that Toledo Early College High School students come to UT with one or two years of higher education credits earned which increases our graduation rate.

President Gaber responded that 30-35% come on to be full-time university students. Toledo Early College High School is our largest feeder institution. They do complete some college credit plus courses with 80% coming to UT. We do not receive tuition for CCP credits but incoming juniors do support enrollment.

Interim Provost Bjorkman added that summer programs have an influence by getting visitors to campus and giving them information about our classrooms.

Dr. Tomer Avidor-Reiss questioned whether UT is trying to be like any other university or different.

President Gaber replied that the Strategic Enrollment Plan addresses this. We are not like BGSU because our mix of courses and student population, both undergraduate and graduate are different. The recent family day at UT saw 400 students with their parents on campus. Parents appreciate knowing that their children can start their undergraduate at UT and go into a graduate or professional degree program in their senior year. We market our local area and tell that regularly.

Dr. Dan Hamell agreed that parents are impressed by 4+1 or 3+ and joint programs. They see this as a positive.

President Gaber added that parents see it as an opportunity that other schools may not have.

Song-Tao Liu expressed appreciation for faculty to be able to tell their stories.

President Gaber mentioned that she had recently sent an email to the President's Advisory Council requesting that leaders share within their areas to help explain the content seeking good ideas. She stated that faculty and staff tell her they have good ideas and she wants people to feel open to share. She will forward that communication to share with the Graduate Council. She is asking people what are the great things we can do. Since staff see issues regularly, they often think of ways to implement resource efficiency.

Dr. Terry Bigioni was curious whether the uptick in enrollment in 2016 was related to the 2015 football ranking.

President Gaber said that she has been at universities that have won championships and their applications and enrollment went up. Big games drive people to check out that school. People like the national attention. When you are out and about and hear about UT, it is cool. Concerning enrollment, our marketing is looking at web traffic. We don't want to be the best kept secret!

Mr. Quatez Scott, doctoral student, asked President Gaber her perspective vision for a typical graduate student at UT.

President Gaber replied that UT has great graduate students who have the opportunity to work with faculty and explore the field they choose. UT will continue to support and seek even better ways to provide graduate students with the education and provide the resources they need.

President Gaber noted that even with a lot of leadership changes this year: Provost, Enrollment, Finance and Marketing, most people on campus should not have felt a massive shift of people. There were a lot of moving parts without turmoil. Here we are nine months later growing into these changes and striving for improved communication.

Interim Provost Bjorkman stated that she wants graduate students to have a fantastic experience working with faculty in meaningful ways so when they leave UToledo, they know they will be successful because of what UToledo gave them.

President Gaber stressed that our best asset is our people -- faculty and staff. Our faculty to continue to get grants and external funds and go on to help change the world.

Dr. Ozcan Sezer asked for an update on UT's fundraising initiatives.

President Gaber stated that endowments are getting good returns, generally 8-9%. Payout from endowments is at 4% so that when the markets are down, we can we continue at same payout rate. In terms of fundraising, we are in the silent phase of a comprehensive campaign goal of \$250 million. The single largest campaign to date at UT was \$110 million. We are at approximately \$107 million already, which is nearly equal to the largest campaign this university's previous \$100 million. This institution does not have the history or infrastructure for a \$500 million campaign yet, which is what President Gaber like to see. If our faculty do not feel the benefits of a comprehensive campaign, you may want to see infrastructure increases. We will be successful and will go public in next one to two years after reaching 60-70% of where we need to be.

President Gaber and Interim Provost Bjorkman thanked Council.

Executive Reports

Report of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council

On behalf of Graduate Council, Chair, Dr. Song-Tao Liu reported that he presented his report on behalf of GC to the Board of Trustees at is September 16th meeting. Presentations reported at Council meetings are posted on the GC website

<http://www.utoledo.edu/graduate/facultystaff/gradcouncil/agendasandminutes2019-20.html>.

At the October 15th GC meeting, the Provost Office will talk about the Curriculum Inventory Management (CIM) system and Career Services to discuss their services and support of graduate students.

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

Dean Amanda Bryant-Friedrich announced that a graduate and professional student fair is slated for October 30th, 2:00 -6:00 pm in the Student Union Auditorium. We are in planning stage. There will be food, giveaways, and prizes. We have the support of Honors and the Library, so visitors will see potential we have here. We do have registrations from some programs already. Some programs have begun to schedule their own fairs, and we encourage you to do so, but please let COGS know so that we are aware and be helpful. There is no charge, just register. It is covered by the Provost's Office. MARCOM is doing marketing for COGS and the primary audience is our own undergraduate students. We are also reaching out to undergraduates at other Ohio institutions that make sense, such our competing institutions and some of the smaller liberal arts colleges like Wooster and Oberlin, and those where I have personal relationships with. We will be reaching out to you with a toolbox for your use.

Report of the Vice President for Research

Dr. Frank Calzonetti reminded Council that National Lab Day is next week, October 10 and 11 on Main Campus in the Engineering Complex. UT is pleased to host this unique and special event. He encouraged Council members to register and bring their graduate students. Presently there are 372 registrations. The agenda is powerful with high level people from national labs. They are really serious about develop collaborative projects with us. There are lot of resources at national labs and assets. Supercomputing facilities and opportunities for graduate students.

Report of the Graduate Student Association

On behalf of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), Ms. Alisa Nammavong, President reported:

- *Special Election Process for Communication Specialist*
COGS will administer the nomination and election processes. The announcement for nominations will go out this week with nominations open for a two week period, followed by voting for a period of no less than two days and no more than seven days. The vacancy was announced formally at the September General Assembly.

- *Representatives Needed, opening portal for these colleges:*
 - College of Engineering: Need 1
 - College of Law: Need 1
 - College of Natural Science and Mathematics: Need 1

- *Student Health Insurance*
 - Meeting with Leanna Glick, Student Insurance Program Administrator, on October 2. Student Government President and Vice President were invited to attend.
 - Discussion with Brian Pack regarding the ad hoc committee RFP Team.
 - SICH Meeting
Creating a presentation for GCEC that will include student requests, real student experiences, background info, and other supportive data. Will use as our platform to advocate for ourselves and achieve faculty and administrative report as we go to bid for a plan administrator.

- *Provost Meeting*
 - Discussion of Graduate and Professional Fair.
GSA will have a table.
Dean Bryant-Friedrich has indicated that GSA will have an active role in the event and assist with set-up and clean-up volunteers.
 - Discussion about student health insurance and inviting SG to participate.
 - Discussion about wellness and mindfulness initiatives on campus.

- Review of General Assembly Meeting September 18, 2019
 - Great turn out with about 60 students.
 - Dr. Daryl Moorhead's presentation was well received.
Students seem interested in discussing faculty mentorship, their experiences, and what they feel will help improve.
 - Several opportunities for graduate students to reach active status!

Information and Discussion Items –continued

COGS Strategic Plan 2017-2022

Dean Bryant-Friedrich sought to focus on the student success plan portion, Area 1, Goals 2 and 3, of the COGS Strategic Plan 2017-2022 approved by Graduate Council in January 2018.

AREA 1 Continue graduate student success and academic excellence

Identify and implement the use of software to facilitate graduate student onboarding and tracking.			
Require graduate faculty professional development in the area of graduate student mentoring and diversity and inclusion.			
Slowly increase standards for graduate student admission.			
OUTCOMES	BASELINE 2016	TARGET 2022	RESPONSIBILITY
Two-year graduation rate of full-time master's degree students	80%	82%	Provost, COGS, All Colleges
Five-year graduation rate of full-time PhD students	47%	50%	Provost, COGS, All Colleges

- Baseline for two-year graduation rate of full-time master's degree students. We are not sure if 80% is the correct baseline, so we are getting solid data.
- Identify and implement the use of software to facilitate Graduate Student Onboarding and Tracking
 The software has been a chore going on for a long time. We all know the eGAPA system has had a lot of issues. We are still looking for a reasonable process. Problems are barriers. It is in purview of COGS and the Provost.
- Require Graduate Faculty Professional Development in the Area of Graduate Student Mentoring and Diversity and Inclusion
 Inclusion – We have a Provost Fellow in the Provost's Office developing modules for graduate faculty. Students think mentors are inconsistent. There should be baseline expectations. By making a requirement, graduate faculty would have to complete the training modules to retain Graduate Faculty Membership. Not sure when this would be due but would not start until at least next academic year.
- Graduation Rates
 Graduation rates are separate for masters and Ph.D. Doctoral students have a higher graduation rate. Our language should include professional students.
- Slowly Increase Standards for Graduate Admission
 COGS is considering removing the requirement for GRE for admission to COGS. That does not mean programs cannot continue to use that. We have to ask with 170+ grad programs, why are we requiring the GRE but not a score? Should this be something COGS continues to require, remove or let programs determine a GRE requirement?

Different admission software/CAS systems are used on campus. For example, CAS is used for PharmD but not masters and Ph.D. Speech Language Pathology will start using CAS. They are not uniform and we interface with all of them. GradCAS is a system we have looked at. There are plusses and minuses, but we like to see more uniformity.

There is a \$25 fee per CAS per application in addition to our application fee. Should that be waived? There are considerations. A lot of considerations.

Discussion:

Dr. Jerry Van Hoy noted that all accredited law schools use LSAT.

Since diversity training is required at the University, it was questioned whether all faculty have completed.

Dean Bryant-Friedrich noted that there is a distinction between advising and mentoring. Mentors should help their students develop soft skills in addition to assisting with conferences and obtaining positions.

Dr. Dan Hammel suggested starting with Full Graduate Faculty Members.

- Language Proficiency
When we talked about this, we recommended slowly increasing standards. What is the definition of standards? She noted that most institutions around us are dropping GRE.
- Offer master's programs in formats that are responsive to student needs as it relates to timing (summer only, evening, UG/G hybrids, online, blended, etc.), cost (tuition scholarships, differential pricing, etc.), and outcomes (non-thesis, graduate certificates, badges, PSM, curricular considerations, etc.).

As an example, the Executive Masters in Sales Leadership, a new degree program brought online with differential pricing that is responsive to the market. This university knows how to develop sought after programs and Dr. Gruden has helped to make this process easier. Looking at when programs are offered: summer, evening, online or package classes and develop certificates.

With 170 graduate programs, we need to do a review of these.

- Offer Ph.D. Funding Based on Fixed Times to Degree Completion which are Awarded to Students instead of Academic Units.

Ph.D. Funding is a complex issue. The funding packages have problems with students taking longer than they should. How does that impact the quality of programs, the student experience, and our budget? A standard Ph.D. program is 90 hours. Three examples were provided. Who should pay for these additional hours?

Discussion:

Dr. Jerry Van Hoy asked whether the examples are the norm or outliers?

Dean Bryant-Friedrich said while they are not the norm, most students have more hours than they need. 10 hours over has an impact on our budget.

Dr. Samir Hefzy said this is due to past practices over the years. If full-time enrollment is 9 hours and the student has completed the required hours, he/she should be supported for 1 hour.

Dean Bryant-Friedrich agreed that past practice is part of the issue. Full time enrollment was lowered from 12 hours to 9 several years ago. While she believes this is going to get better, we need a rule as to how to handle the support of students obtaining three degrees. She noted that SSI is not paid above 174 hours.

- Provide Psychological/Emotional Counseling, Career Development and Other Student Support Services Geared Toward Current and Future Success.

The Provost mentioned today that a taskforce is being developed to work on this.

Have you all met Audrey? COGS therapy dog. Ms. Debbie Andrews has trained her and she is a part of our staff and listed on our webpage.

- Increase Funding for Graduate Student Conference Participation and Other Activities.
An increase in funding for graduate student conference participation through GSA. Other professional activities are an issue. We may need a difference in process.

Masters placement and doctoral student placement rates would require that we have to know the baseline and have a way of tracking.

Dean Bryant-Friedrich welcomed suggestions that are supportive of our graduate students. She would like to see philanthropic support, and resources to assist students in finding hours and daycare.

- Mainstream Interdisciplinary Programs in the College of Graduate Studies.
In some areas students want to do specific training. Want to start to develop interdisciplinary programs to be housed in and oversite from COGS. Interdisciplinary programs are supported by Provost. Graduate Faculty have seen a decreased and we are starting to look at that.
- Facilitate Participation of Graduate Students in the Publication and Presentation of Graduate Projects Through Increase Resources Dedicated to Training in Writing, Communication and Professionalism. COGS holds the Three Minute Thesis competition.

Chair Liu asked Dean Bryant if she would like Graduate Council to vote on the removal of the GRE test for admission to COGS and Dean Bryant-Friedrich stated, yes.

Requirement of Standardized Graduate Admissions Scores for Admission into the College of Graduate Studies

See description above and further discussion to occur at next Council meeting, October 15, 2019.

Vote on Proposed Change of Meeting Dates and Times for 2020-2021 Graduate Council Meetings

Chair Liu explained that last year Council received a request to discuss altering the meeting date/time because some people have a conflict with Tuesdays 12:30 -2:00 pm, whether teaching or parking. Last year's Council determined that Thursdays at 4:00 – 5:30 would be a better time.

Because Council's meeting dates/times would need to be determined in fall for the following academic year, this issue is being brought at this time.

Discussion:

Dr. Andrea Kalinoski stated that the College of Medicine and Life Sciences has a program on Thursdays at 4:00 pm.

Some members that extending the meeting until 5:30 pm is a conflict for those with children.

It was noted that Faculty Senate holds its meetings on Tuesdays from 4:00 – 6:00 pm.

Dr. Abraham Lee suggested to avoid going past 5:00 pm, meetings could be held 3:30 – 5:00 pm.

Chair Liu asked Council if it would prefer more time to consider.

Graduate Council agreed as members would like an opportunity to look at their schedules.

Dr. Sara Lundquist asked whether 3:30 -5:00 pm is being considered as an amendment to 4:00 – 5:30 pm?

[Motion to amend consideration of GC meeting time to Thursdays, 3:30 -5:00 pm.] Seconded.

[Motion to postpone vote.] Seconded.

Chair Liu stated the vote will be postponed until the next GC meeting.

Standing Committee Reports

Report of the Curriculum Committee

None.

Report of the Membership Committee

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 2:04 p.m.