

**Graduate Council Minutes  
November 13, 2018  
Health Science Campus, Collier 1000A**

Present: Wissam AbbouAlaiwi, Brian Ashburner, Sahar Atshan, Tomer Avidor-Reiss, Christine Fitzgerald, Bashar Gammoh, Cyndee Gruden, Jason Huntley, Edward Janak, Jyl Matson, Nikolai Modyanov, Daryl Moorhead, Nagalakshmi, Alisa Nammavong (GSA), Douglas Nims, Lori Pakulski, Penny Poplin Gosetti, Patricia Relue, Jennifer Reynolds Constance Schall, Barry Scheuermann, Beth Schlemper, Martha Sexton, Ozcan Sezer, Zahoor Shah, Lirim Shemshedini, Susan Sochacki, Megan Stewart, Robert Topp, Jerry Van Hoy.

Absent: Terry Bigioni, Timothy Brakel, Patricia Case, Anthony Edgington, Daniel Georgiev, Sara Lundquist, Marcia McInerney, Kandace Williams.

Excused: Frank Calzonetti, Ben Davis, Rodney Gabel, Hassan Hassab-Elnaby, Lee Heritage, Geoffrey Rapp, Rebecca Schneider, James Willey.

Guests: Graduate students: Cara DeAngelis, Pranav Patel, Jessica Swan.

***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 October 2, 2018 were approved.

***Executive Reports***

**Report of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council**

On behalf of Graduate Council, Chair, Dr. Jerry Van Hoy reported that the Executive Committee discussed the possibility of changing GC meeting time and will collect times when college councils meet to avoid schedule conflicts. The EC discussed with Provost Hsu the possibility of a GA parental leave policy. He was not opposed to such a policy. We shared an example policy from Ohio University that offered six 6 weeks of paid leave to GAs. As information is collected from other universities, it will be shared with GC and discussed with the Provost.

**Report of the Graduate Student Association**

Ms. Alisa Nammavong, President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) provided a brief report since graduate student health insurance will be discussed today as an information and discussion item:

- o *General Assembly Meeting*  
Tuesday, November 13, 2018, 6–8 pm, Health Science Campus, Health Education Bldg., room 105.
  - GSA Constitution  
A review and discussion will occur at tonight's GSA General Assembly meeting.

- Special Interest Committee on Health (SICH)  
Presentation and discussion of graduate student health insurance issues.

### ***Information and Discussion Items***

#### GSA Graduate Student Insurance Update

Ms. Nammavong along with members of the GSA's special committee on health (SICH) who she introduced, provided a graduate student insurance update along with distributing a GSA created fact sheet.

- Cara DeAngelis - Ph.D. in Medical Microbiology and Immunology (domestic student)
- Pranav Patel –MSPS in Pharmaceutical Sciences, Health and Socioeconomic Outcomes (international student)
- Jessica Swan - Ph.D. in Education of foundations and Leadership, Ed. Psychology (domestic student)

#### *Purpose of SICH and First-hand Experience*

Ms. Cara DeAngelis provided an overview of the purpose of SICH (see attached PPT) which serves to communicate with Executive Board of the GSA, COGS, and UT administration concerns and other relevant information gathered and advocate to improve the graduate student experience regarding health and insurance.

She relayed student issues with health insurance, noting in particular, a student with a chronic health issue had to enroll in the gold plan at a cost of 50% of her income. UT health insurance switched providers and the student was not notified;

- This led to her drug treatment being canceled
- Her medication requires prior authorization from insurance
- She had no assurance that a different provider would cover her medicine
- She had to wait for pre-authorization and did not know if BCBS would cover it.
- Website did not make it clear.

Why did insurance increase so much? Some students had to get loans. Once they learned about a new provider, they couldn't get new cards. Some regretted choosing UT because of that.

#### *Life of a Graduate Student – Living Wage*

Mr. Pranav Patel reviewed the living wage calculations for Lucas County, OH that shows that health insurance premiums can amount to 21 -50% of a GA's income. UT stipend of \$14,000 average is \$6.73 per hour.

#### *Need for Health Insurance*

Mr. Patel reviewed the need for affordable student health insurance and discussed it an opportunity for the University to be student-centered by securing quality graduate students who contribute to quality research.

#### *Inclusion and Social Justice*

Ms. Jessica Swan pointed out that the doctoral stipend in the College of Education is \$12,000. The bronze health insurance plan would constitute 25% of that stipend.

She equated unaffordable health insurance with determining who belongs and who does not. If you can't live on this, you don't belong here. It is not as much of a struggle for those who come from wealthy families or have support from a spouse. Diversity is not just race, but is a socio-economic issue. Graduate assistants offer a lot campus in terms of culture and through experiences with teachers, researchers and students. We want to make sure we work with Dr. McKether's office on the de facto impact.

#### *Issues with Current Plan*

Affordability, unclear information on benefits, lack of continuity in providers, lack of communications with students and lump sum payment are some of the overarching issues. In comparison to our competition, we are not doing well. BGSU's insurance is more affordable.

#### *Solution: Short Term and Long Term Goals*

Suggested solutions include:

- User friendly website.
- Health Insurance Committee comprised of stakeholders and communicators.
- Education seminars on student health insurance.
- Communicate with students regarding options for open enrollment deadline at ACA Marketplace which is December 15<sup>th</sup>. This information has not been communicated to students.
- Hire a care navigator for student health insurance. There are only two staff who work with insurance. Extra help in the beginning of the semester.
- Support of faculty is important.

#### *Discussion:*

Ms. Nammavong stated that although it is desired to include student health insurance in grants, that is not always possible and some faculty do not have grants to include them.

Dr. Connie Schall indicated that not all sponsors allow health insurance including some state sponsors. Faculty may not be aware that international students are eligible for the ACA. Guidance to the graduate directors would be helpful.

Dean Gruden replied that this topic will be discussed at the GSA's general assembly meeting and COGS will help distribute information to graduate students.

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

Dr. Cyndee Gruden, Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies provided the following updates:

- *Enrollment – Spring 2019*  
Encourage continuing students to enroll.
- *GA Budget*  
Data collected from colleges including:
  - 1) Continuing students.
  - 2) New student justification.
  - 3) Stipend benchmark. Requested increase require justification.

- 4) Overall strategies for increasing enrollment in your programs. Some programs do, some don't. There are different methods in different areas. If you have capacity, please let us know. We requested mid-October with data due no later than November 21<sup>st</sup>. COGS plans to announce budget before end of this calendar year, which hopefully, results in earlier offers.

*Discussion:*

Dean Gruden stated that there is typically more tuition waiver money than stipend money at end of the academic year. Colleges do not always track tuition waiver usage, including tracking in-state vs. out-of-state cost differences. Our strategy is to allocate the money and the colleges should spend all of it. Dean Gruden has been encouraged to over allocate both tuition and stipend. We will need final numbers approved before the allocations can be distributed. Colleges are encouraged to utilize the funds effectively. It is understandable that stipend money will be spent for more and higher quality students and compete with other institutions more effectively.

\$2.5 million in tuition waivers went unused last year. The central administration sweeps it and uses for other things. This year, we allocated everything – did not hold anything back. Although our policy has been that we provide tuition waivers to match grants, we never know how much or when that will be. Holding back results in money sitting around. We have matched \$2.5 - \$5 million in grant money over the past several years, so the amount varies as well.

Tuition waivers have different account numbers. And we trade between colleges, sometimes. Mary Main is planning to sit down with IR to figure out way to better track. There is a screen in Banner where we can track offers (not acceptances).

Dr. Patty Relue inquired about the possibility of tuition in budgets being known and shared with new RSP software.

Dr. Connie replied that IRB manager software was the first implemented and INFO ED will come online sometime next calendar year. This is down the line. We understand that COGS and the colleges would like to track this information.

Research and Sponsored Programs Update

None.

***Information and Discussion Items***

COGS Strategic Plan: Area 4, Goal 3: Increasing Enrollment and Improving/Maintaining Quality of Students

Dr. Cyndee Gruden, Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies reviewed GC survey input and plans/progress of Goal 3. Although the title includes increasing enrollment, she pointed out that not all programs want more students.

*Recruiting Graduate Students*

The primary issue indicated to recruiting graduate students is stipend. A number of folks have said they would rather have better students than more students. Digital marketing was second issue. COGS is working with MARCOM for general digital marketing. COGS utilizes Twitter and Facebook to

connect with students. We have been told Twitter has a high click rate and people look further.

- Digital Marketing

Digital marketing for graduate education will be rolling out the end of this year. Some programs have it rolling out for their programs already. It is not cheap, but can be effective, especially in conjunction with discipline-specific marketing. Individual programs should be marketed with different ads and geographical attributes with ranges that vary by field. COGS website landing page/admissions revamp is in progress.

- Tuition Waivers

Additional tuition waiver funding is listed, which might help professional programs too.

- Recruitment Days

COGS has done some reorganization to lend support for recruitment. COGS staff member, Cody Henderson, has been assigned to recruitment and marketing. He recently attended Sienna Heights Graduate School Fair on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

The colleges of Engineering and Natural Sciences and Mathematics held recruitment days this semester and COGS was happy to participate promoting these events.

Dr. Brian Ashburner said that 17 people signed up, with about 15 attendees UT'S NSM graduate program recruitment day. Advertising covered a 250-mile radius. Bringing these folks to campus requires a lot of help and support from the college. The Department of Chemistry has a list of schools including Canada and emailed the program chairs and directors information about our event. We did not email students directly.

Dr. Patty Relue noted that the College of Engineering heavily recruited its own engineering undergraduate students for its graduate program day (80 registrants and 55 attendees – 12 were external and the rest were UT undergraduates). We sent a lot of emails invites within Michigan, Indiana and Pennsylvania. We encourage our students to take advantage of participating in undergraduate coop research opportunities to get them interested. We had a student panel and Dean Gruden, lunch, a poster session and tours of research labs. We are anxious to learn how many people from outside UT will apply. We received good feedback. COGS agreed to waive application fee if they apply by end of the year.

- Health Insurance

Dean Gruden mentioned that graduate student health insurance is listed as a concern to recruiting. This issue has come up again.

- Recruitment Materials

We have a small budget for recruiting materials and Ms. Debbie Andrews has reached out to the colleges.

### *Highly Qualified Graduate Students Attributes*

Graduate Council attributes the number factor as motivation among the array of comments.

How can we attract quality students? What does that mean to you and how can you and how can

COGS help you assist in that process? If you have quality students, how did you get them?

Dr. Tomer Avidor-Reiss noted his program has good students from Nepal that could be attributed to that area not having a lot of other options for graduate education.

Dean Gruden asked Council to look first at developing relationships for quality perspective when considering pipeline programs.

*Improve/Maintain Quality of New Graduate Students.*

Providing more competitive offers to applicants was the number one response.

Another suggestion was to offer early admission incentives. Such as?

Dr. Jason Huntley suggested a refund of application fees or a type of bonus. Students have mentioned being offered a contract at other schools for early admission.

Other suggestions were to offer innovative programs and delivery methods.

A survey response was to eliminate barriers for admission and registration. Dean Gruden asked Council to let COGS know what these are.

Dr. Jerry Van Hoy stated that some students are confused by the application system.

Dean Gruden responded that a centralized application system (CAS) costs more, looks better and may be better experience. Nursing, PharmD, Speech Language Pathology and Physician Assistant programs use a CAS. The main challenge is also getting the CAS systems to communicate effectively with Banner (and paying for the IT work required).

*Diversity in Graduate Programs and Graduate Students*

Half think their programs are diverse.

In addition to hiring more diverse faculty and staff, we can continue to revisit by developing best practices. We should have an open process and ask universal questions to obtain a diverse pool. We can discuss with Dr. McKether's office.

Another response to this survey question was to advertise our graduate programs at diversity-based conferences, e.g., NSBE, ABRCMS). We have then consider how we can support them as students so they want to stay. If they are happy, they will encourage others to come.

Dr. Avidor-Reiss suggested speaking directly with students and encouraging communication with the GSA.

Dean Gruden responded that Ms. Alisa Nammavong, GSA President, has communicated with Graduate Council, in particular this year with student health insurance as a top issue. Ms. Nammavong said students know GSA is a strong organization and that they feel like they can come and talk to us.

*Discussion:*

Dr. Jason Huntley suggested bringing students to campus for interviews when possible, creates a better connection to attend UT. Most institutions contribute toward the cost. Visitors have the opportunity to hang out with other students.

Dean Gruden said that some programs do campus interviews and that works well for undergraduates with high conversion rates. An assessment to benefit might be useful.

Dr. Avidor-Reiss added that campus visits have high impact and serve as a mechanism to overcome perceptions/reputation.

Dr. Lori Pakulski noted that her program has hosted a visit day for the past fifteen years. Visitors pay to get here and the program pays for lunch. May be able to use foundation funds. Those who reside out of state have the option to do a telephone interview. We take survey information. It takes one day time and not a lot of cost.

There was discussion about potential students who want to join UT but receive better offers at other institutions and how best to support them. Suggestions to support them included possible use of endowment funds for scholarships.

Dean Gruden indicated that would entail a discussion with Ms. Cheryl Zwyer, Senior Associate Vice President for Development. Our pillars for success should like the University Strategic Plan. The challenge for COGS is that we do not have an identity to the greater role. Our job is to work with you to facilitate your interactions and help you raise funds for graduate students in your areas.

Ongoing action items:

Messaging – emails from COGS and programs have to look good.

Participation in recruiting events.

Creating recruiting materials

Building relationships.

Supporting each other's efforts.

These items should be included in college plans. The capital plan is broad reaching for big donors and big ticket items first.

Dr. Patty Relue inquired about converting unspent tuition funds to health insurance.

Dean Gruden said that she will continue conversation with the administration. The University will need to improve its bid process and/or consider other options, such as self-insured. The cost is still a factor. Dr. Flapp Cockrell has requested the PowerPoint on student health insurance presented at the last GC meeting. She asked that additional input be sent to her or Terri Hayes.

***Standing Committee Reports***

**Report of the Curriculum Committee**

On behalf of the Graduate Council Membership Committee (GCCC), Dr. Jerry Van Hoy, GC Chair presented their report:

Proposal number 15 was approved unanimously.

Proposal numbers 16 -22 were approved unanimously. Dr. Sochacki noted that the prerequisite changes were made so that if a student was not successful in a course, it is not as lock-step as to exclude them.

Proposal number 23 -28 are credit hour reductions in BSMP courses. The numbering is listed incorrectly and request for syllabi still outstanding in some cases. GC would like clarification. Dr. Relue moved to approve #23 - #28 pending the requested clarifications. Council approved unanimously pending requested clarifications.

**Graduate Curriculum - Review Tuesday 30 Oct 2018, Vote Tuesday 06 Nov 2018**

No.	Proposal Type	College	Department/Program	Title	Course Number	Summary
15	ECM	PH	Pharmacy Practice	Advanced Self Care	PHPR 6250	Course title/curriculum requirement change
16	ECM	NU	Nursing	Advanced Communication Skills and Group Dynamics	NURS 6070	Prerequisite change
17	ECM	NU	Nursing	Pharmacology	NURS 5670	Prerequisite change
18	ECM	NU	Nursing	Professional Socialization II	NURS 5160	Prerequisite change
19	ECM	NU	Nursing	Population Focused Nursing Care	NURS 5440	Prerequisite change
20	ECM	NU	Nursing	Health Sciences II	NURS 5250	Prerequisite change
21	ECM	NU	Nursing	Designing Nursing Systems for Compromised Health States	NURS 5240	Prerequisite change
22	ECM	NU	Nursing	Designing Nursing Systems to Promote Self Care	NURS 5140	Prerequisite change
23	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Cell Membranes	BMSP 6360	Credit hour change
24	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Cell Membranes	BMSP 8360	Credit hour change
25	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Genes and Genomes	BMSP 6340	Credit hour change
26	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Genes and Genomes	BMSP 8340	Credit hour change
27	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Genes and Genomes	BMSP 6320	Credit hour change
28	ECM	MD	Biomedical Science	Current Problems and Research Approaches in Genes and Genomes	BMSP 8320	Credit hour change

**Report of the Membership Committee**

None.

***Old Business***

None.

***New Business***

None.

***Adjournment***

There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 2:01 pm.