

Graduate College

**University Graduate Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 16, 2020
3:00-5:00 - Online Via Zoom**

Members Present: Dawn Clifford, Chair (Public Health), Rebecca Best (Earth and Sustainability), Viacheslav Fofanov (Informatics & Computer Science), Corina Kellner (Anthropology), Sandy Stewart (Clinical Speech-Language Pathology), Gayle Blanchard (Educational Leadership), Lena Gaddis (Educational Psychology), Anne Medill (Social Work), Laura Sujo-Montes (Educational Specialties), Colleen Byron (Administration), Catherine Gehring (Biology), Mohamed Mohamed (Applied Sociology), Halit Tagma (Political Science), Bettie Coplan (Physician Assisting), Matthew Gidley (Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences), Truong Nghiem (Informatics & Computer Science), Kerry Thompson (Anthropology), Vedran Dronjic (Applied Linguistics), Michael Gowanlock (Computer Science), Brettania O'Connor (Public Health), Jon Torn (Communication), Paul Dutton (History), Ron Gray (Science Teaching), Michelle Parsons (Interdisciplinary Health), Franklin Vernon (Parks & Recreation), Emery Eaves (Anthropology), John Heick (Physical Therapy & Athletic Training), Nicole Price (Spanish), Ann Vert (Nursing & PL), John Fegyveresi (Climate Sciences), Emily Hoppe (Music), Tyler Robinson (Astronomy & Planetary Science), Kristen Waring (Forestry), Heidi Feigenbaum (Engineering-Mechanical), Chelsey Johnson (English-Creative Writing), Brendan Russo (Engineering-Civil), Nancy Wonders (Criminology & Criminal Justice), Rebecca Frantz (Educational Specialties), Mahendra Joshi (Business Administration), Calinda Shely (English-Literature), Bahattin Yildiz (Mathematics & Statistics).

Karina Collentine (Ex-officio: Graduate College Associate Dean), Melinda Treml (Ex Officio: Curriculum and Assessment Director), Maribeth Watwood (Ex Officio: Graduate College Dean), and Sneha Vissa, Vice President of Academic Affairs, for GSG President, Savannah Berry.

Members Absent:

Robert Goodman (Psychological Sciences), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry) – login issue, John Gibbs (Applied Physics), Erika Konrad (English-Professional Writing), Gretchen McAllister (Elementary Education), Katsuya Oi (Applied Sociology), Vicki Ross (Secondary Education), Erik Schiefer (Geography, Planning & Recreation), Lara Taggart (Occupational Therapy)-login in issue, Meghan Warren (Interdisciplinary Health).

UGC Chair, Dawn Clifford, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of AY2020-2021, and the meeting came to order at 3:02pm MST.

1. Dawn Clifford, UGC Chair, facilitated brief introductions in alphabetical order and requested those in attendance to type their name and department in the chat box for attendance.

2. **UGC April 2020 meeting minutes – ACTION:** Dawn asked for changes to the UGC April 2020 meeting minutes as distributed, and, seeing that there were none, she approved them.
3. **UGC Charge** - Dawn briefly reviewed the UGC Charge as outlined by the committee: <https://nau.edu/graduate-college/charge-and-bylaws/>.
4. **UGC task descriptions** - Dawn explained that she will be emailing the UGC task descriptions and the link to the sign-up spreadsheet on Thursday, September 17, 2020. She reminded committee members that, in addition to serving as the UGC representative for their department, each member is required to choose one (1) additional committee/task to serve on for the current academic year. Laura Sujo-Montes expressed that she thinks that there are some tasks that require training, such as the Program Review Committee. Associate Dean Collentine reported that Melinda Trembl completes the curriculum training for the Program Review Committee and that training is held at the beginning of specific tasks, like judging the 3MRP.
5. **Chair-elect voting – ACTION:** Motion to approve John Heick (Physical Therapy and Athletic Training) to serve as AY 2020-2021 UGC Chair-elect was motioned by Emily Hoppe and seconded by Laura Sujo-Montes; it was approved unanimously (0 ‘no’ votes and 0 abstentions), via zoom chat box. (John will be the Chair-Elect for 2020-2021 and serve as Chair in 2021-2022.) Thank you, and congratulations, John!

Reports:

I. Dean Watwood

- a. Dean Watwood expressed her gratitude and thanks to all UGC committee members who are leading and supporting NAU’s graduate community and for taking on the important work and tasks of the UGC, especially this academic year.
- b. Dean Watwood announced that she will be meeting with a group of graduate student teaching assistants on Friday, September 18, 2020 to discuss their concerns regarding the unique challenges and roles this semester with NAUFlex. She reported that, for the most part, she is hearing that GTAs are doing okay with the NAUFlex environment and are heartened by the strict enforcement of behavior guidelines, signage throughout the university, seating charts, etc. Dean Watwood encouraged UGC members, who have groups of GTAs, or graduate students in general, who are having concerns, etc. to reach out to her, and she will be happy to meet with them.
- c. Please contact Dean Watwood if you know of any graduate students who are willing to be filmed working or conducting research with PPE for a short NAU TV project regarding graduate education at NAU.
- d. Dean Watwood confirmed that the timeline for the Review and Reimagine Effort has been officially pushed back by at least a year due to a number of factors, including this year’s search for a new NAU president. She shared a graduation application spreadsheet, showing the wide variation of deadline dates across programs, and stated that streamlining and increasing consistency in application windows and deadlines fits under the Review and Reimagine Effort, and this component does not need to be held back; the sooner the better.
- e. Sneha Vissa asked about a scenario where a GTA tests positive following contact with a sick student and how this would affect their position, stipend, etc. Dean Watwood

- stated if they test positive, they do have to follow NAU guidelines (<https://nau.edu/jacks-are-back/>), including quarantine and remote instruction guidelines. She described that there have been situations in the past where assistants have been too ill to teach, and programs work together for coverage. She reported that she did not know of any situation where a teaching assistant who missed one or a few classes had their wages docked, though we have had to (rarely) terminate the appointments of GTAs, who have fallen off the map. Dean Watwood emphasized the extreme importance of following the CDC guidelines on and off campus and continuing to point colleagues and students to the <https://nau.edu/jacks-are-back/> website.
- f. Finally, Dean Watwood reported she does not yet have the GTA and TW funding allocations for 2021-2022. She encouraged departments to look at last year's allocations after the budget cuts, for initial planning purposes.

II. Associate Dean Collentine

- a. Associate Dean Collentine briefly highlighted her announcements, including the Graduate Student of the Month Recognition nomination dates, the GC Professional Development series, and Accelerated Program's guidelines.
- b. Associate Dean Collentine reported that the Graduate College is in the process of planning the upcoming Fall 2020 virtual celebrations for: 20-21 ARCS Scholars, 20-21 Presidential Fellows, and the 20-21 Qualye Scholarship recipients.
- c. Associate Dean Collentine explained the ETD forms are now fillable, electronic forms and are located on the Graduate College's website: <https://nau.edu/graduate-college/forms/>. She confirmed that all Fall 2020 oral defenses will continue to be scheduled and held remotely via Zoom or Skype.
- d. Associate Dean Collentine reminded the committee members of the various Fall 2020 deadline dates and stated that these important dates are not flexible.

III. GSG Vice President of Academic Affairs - Sneha Vissa

- a. Sneha announced that the GSG has vacant positions on their team and are seeking graduate students to represent the W.A. Franke College of Business, the College of Health and Human Services, as well as a Director of Public Relations, and a Director of Special Events. Please have any interested graduate students email gsg@nau.edu for more information. Dean Watwood reiterated that the GSG at NAU has real influence and meets regularly with the university's president. It is a great opportunity for a true leadership experience. Please encourage your students to participate.

IV. Masters-in-passing, masters fall back vote to start developing the policy - Associate Dean Collentine and Dean Watwood

- a. Associate Dean Collentine presented a brief review of the previous discussions regarding master's-in-passing (MIP) and masters fall back (MFB) and highlighted the goals of these two potential policies. The PPT will be emailed to all members on Thursday, September 17, 2020.
- b. 3 questions were posed.

1. From Lara Sujo-Montes, "If different courses listed in the POS, but from the same prefix are taken in the doctoral degree, can they count towards the MIP?" Associate Dean Collentine confirmed, "Yes, they can."
 2. From Slava Fofanov, "The language in the MIP... that the advisor is responsible for verifying that the requirements have been met... previously, on a normal master's, it is both the advisor and the chair (or chair's designee) that signs off on it. Does this mean that for MIP, the chairs and their designees no longer need to sign off on it, or is that an omission?" Associate Dean Collentine responded, "No, it's not an omission; I wasn't talking about who would sign the form, but rather who would be responsible for making sure those degree requirements have been met. So the procedure is going to be the same with respect to the verification of the transcripts and routing for the appropriate signatures."
 3. Final question: "Can a Ph.D. comprehensive exam also be applied toward a master's as fall back, accepted in lieu of?" Associate Dean Collentine answered, "Yes, that's what we are going for, and the unit can then decide whether the doctoral comp exam is sufficiently equivalent to the master's level exam."
- c. **ACTION:** Motion to begin developing the policy for master's in passing and master's fall back was motioned by Vedran Dronjic and seconded by Slava Fofanov. The motion was approved unanimously (0 'no' votes and 0 abstentions) via the zoom chat box.

V. Residency of doctoral students – Associate Dean Collentine

- a. Associate Dean Collentine presented for discussion the current residency requirement for candidacy. She clarified that it has nothing to do with establishing residency for tuition purposes. She referenced the current residency policy for doctoral students as "providing the benefit and opportunity to engage and contribute to the full spectrum of educational and professional opportunities provided by faculty and other students within their program across campus." She reported that our state sister institutions (ASU and UofA) do not have a residency requirement and that other universities who were part of an informal study showed that there was a residency requirement for specific programs but not a university-wide requirement.
- b. The committee discussed whether we are mostly operating in a virtual Zoom world for professional development and teaching, etc. due to the pandemic, and whether the term "residency" seems to be antiquated. Dean Watwood explained that the term *residency* itself is not describing what the intent is anymore. The committee discussed the original intent of giving graduate students an opportunity to fully immerse themselves in their field and provide in person social and academic interaction.
- c. The UGC decided to continue discussing this topic at the next UGC meeting so that programs have time to discuss the idea internally and gather ideas and feedback. The PPT will be emailed to all members on Thursday, September 17, 2020.

VI. NAU Review and Reimagine Process for Graduate Programs – Dean Watwood

- a. Dean Watwood explained that the pressure of the timeline and strict deadline of this project is off; yet, she believes that it's vitally important to continue to reimagine, review, refresh, update, and modernize our curriculum. She clarified that we will continue to use the regular structure of the program reviews and new program proposals this year with respect to improving our curriculum, especially since our focus as graduate program leaders is on best serving our students, now and into the future. New leadership will surely appreciate continued momentum to improve curriculum in alignment with career expectations.
- b. Members should continue to discuss with their programs appropriate changes, brainstorm, and share new ideas without having the pressure of the original Review and Reimagine deadline.

VII. Future UGC meeting topics of interest for AY20-21 – Chair Dawn Clifford

- a. Dawn requested that UGC members email her topics of interests for presentations or names of guest speakers for future UGC committee meetings.

VIII. NAUFlex and online teaching tips for graduate faculty – Flower Darby

- a. Flower asked the committee members to engage in a conversation about what is going on now with online teaching, since we are a few weeks into the semester. She encouraged members to share ideas; she answered questions; and she offered some tangible tips and suggestions tips for the NAUFlex environment. Her presentation was very well received.
- b. Dawn Clifford shared that she is using google docs with her breakout rooms and that planning, preparing, and monitoring participation has been extremely time-consuming in NAUFlex.
- c. Flower stressed the importance of thinking creatively, thinking differently, and trying new things.
- d. Emery Eves asked for strategies or ways to encourage students to keep their video on, i.e., to remain present in a graduate class discussion. Flower suggested to members the need to acknowledge that this platform of teaching and learning is all very different. It could be an equity or access issue, or internet bandwidth speed that leads students to leave their video off. Flower highlighted some structured ideas and ways to use interaction with the chat box by asking questions, providing cues and guidance, and giving students a “heads up” that they may be called on to answer a question, known as “tepid calling” from Paul Hempstead’s book, Creating Wicked Students. The PPT with the mentioned tool kit and resources will be emailed to all members on Thursday, September 17, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 4:48pm MST.