

Graduate College

**University Graduate Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
3:00-5:00pm – Havasupai In-Person/Online Via Zoom**

Members Present: John Heick, (Physical Therapy & Athletic Training), Viacheslav Fofanov Chair (Informatics & Computer Science), Colleen Byron (Organizational Leadership), Bettie Coplan (Physician Assistant Studies), (Biology), Truong Nghiem (Informatics & Computer Science), Brettania O'Connor (Public Health), Natalie Randolph (Social Work), Dave Auty (Forestry), James Swift (Mathematics and Statistics), Ann Vert (Nursing & PL), Chelsey E. Johnson, English/Creative Writing), Luke Plonsky (Applied Linguistics), Brendan Russo (Engineering-Civil), Mahendra Joshi (Business Administration), Gayle Blanchard (Educational Leadership), Emery Eaves (Anthropology), Erik Schiefer (Geography, Planning & Recreation), Thomas Finger (History), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Joe Collentine (Spanish), Hal Tagma (Politics and International Affairs), Michael Gowanlock (Computer Science), Rick Rogers (Communication), Heidi Feigenbaum (Engineering-Mechanical), Jose Moreno (Ethnic Studies), Sara Rinfret (Public Administration), Laura Noll (Psychological Sciences) Rebecca Best (Earth and Sustainability) Kyle Winfree (Computer Science), Nicole Hampton (Special Education), Brittany Blanchard (Library), Maribeth Watwood (Ex Officio: Graduate College Dean), Rebecca Seeger (Ex-officio: GSG President), Melinda Tremml (Ex-officio: Curriculum and Assessment). Unable to confirm full attendance due to recording.

Members Absent: Unable to confirm due to recording

UGC Chair, Viacheslav (Slava) Fofanov welcomed everyone to the first UGC meeting of AY2022-2023, and the meeting came to order at 3:05 pm MST.

1. **ACTION** - UGC April 2022 meeting minutes: Motion to approve the UGC April 2022 meeting minutes as distributed was made by Colleen Byron and seconded by Chelsey Johnson; minutes were approved (0 'no' votes and 4 abstentions), via zoom chat box.
2. **Guest Speaker – Melinda Tremml, Office of Curriculum and Assessment**

Melinda is the Director of Academic Support for Curriculum Initiatives. Her focus is entirely curriculum, particularly in launching and creating new initiatives for the university.

 - i. Melinda explained that policies may need to be updated or examined when bringing forward new initiatives. Two policies currently on the table for discussion: Transfer Policy and Academic Plans:
 - ii. Transfer Policy – Graduate (Policy #100336); The HLC revised their policy in June which means that we will need to do the same for both undergraduate and graduate to align with HLC policy. Currently, as an example, we only allow for 9 credits or 25% of coursework to be transferred into a masters program. Other areas of

consideration for an updated policy would be whether to accept credit from foreign institutions, non-traditional adult learner programs as well as fieldwork or professional experience. We will need to decide how we are going to evaluate credit, which kind of credit and how much credit we will give.

- a. Colleen Byron asked how we may be able to write the policy so that individual schools/programs can be more prescriptive, in particular when reviewing professional development transfer considerations.
 - b. Melinda agreed that this was the challenge to this new required policy update. It will take discussion and considerations as to the transferability of appropriate credit to specific programs. The UGC will be needed in these discussions.
 - c. Nicole Hampton voiced concerns for the line between undergraduate and graduate credit. Additionally, she suggested that we look to what our sister institutions are doing. Melinda confirmed that they would do peer comparisons.
 - d. Slava put forth the question of how accredited programs will be addressed, where we can maintain some control of a minimum amount of credits coming from accredited institutions for our programs.
 - e. Sara Rinfret described how her program includes public service trainings and how might transfer credit be applied. Melinda appreciated the question as these are the types of new learning experiences that need to be vetted and will include this example in future discussions.
 - f. Gretchen McAllister had questions on transfer credit as it relates to postmaster courses.
 - g. Joe Collentine asked for clarification on whether there are articulation agreements at the graduate level. If so, would agreements be decided locally and not only at the department and above levels. Melinda replied that we only have two agreements currently and when moving forward with any agreement, it would be done with the unit itself. Melinda concluded by asking anyone with ideas or concerns to email her, Maribeth and/or Laura. Updates will be forthcoming and hopefully with a timeline for Spring 2023.
- iii. Academic Plans – Graduate (Policy #100205); the policy is under review and in need of updating due to questions of unit load differences. For example, we have masters degrees requiring as little as 30 units and as much as 103 units. We are in the process of creating a new Doctor of Medical Science degree and we need to determine how big that doctoral degree needs to be if the masters for MPAS is 103. This question also segues into how many masters credits can be used towards a doctoral degree.
- a. Nicole Hampton commented that the College of Education in the Ed Psychology department has three masters degrees that nearly match the MPAS in unit load. She made the point that those programs have just renewed their national accreditation and to consider if the way that they are accredited might affect how the credits could be used toward a doctoral

degree. Melinda is appreciative of these questions and insights and will note them in the overall considerations that need to be worked through.

- b. The last item in Melinda's report is determining how and what a micro credential might look like at the graduate level. The Micro credential will need to be graduate level work and anything that is smaller than a certificate (12 units). The Micro credential would be 11 units or less of credit and would post on the official transcript. We want to look at advantages of certificates versus micro credentials.

3. UGC Reports – Associate Dean, Dr. Laura Bounds

- i. Graduate Student Orientation was very well received. Over 450 students attended in person as well as many of our colleagues across campus.
- ii. We created an Orientation online course to add more resources to their academic career, called Learning at NAU Graduate Orientation. This is a compliment to the in-person orientation presenting additional information that we couldn't cover in the half-day agenda. UGC members, if interested, were asked to partake in the dynamic course and then to provide feedback to Laura.
- iii. Laura announced the Graduate Coordinator trainings. Hosting three honoring lunches, Presidential Fellowship, ARCS (newly awarded NAU program: the School of Earth and Sustainability) and The Quayle Scholarship.
- iv. Slava asked if there were any changes to the PFP deadline schedule. The Graduate College will get back to the UGC with those deadlines.
- v. Upcoming ETD and Graduation Workshops – October 5th from 4pm to 5pm.
- vi. Laura asked the UGC that if they are aware or become aware of any professional development opportunities or needs for graduate students to please let her know. The Graduate College is gathering information to design service workshops if needed.
- vii. Laura did put forward a proposed change to the UGC member tasks. In the past, members could either choose to observe or sit in on four defenses or on two different communities. She is proposing a slight change to that previous UGC commitment wherein a member could sit in on 3 defenses and one committee.

4. UGC Reports – GSG, Rebecca Seeger

- i. Rebecca introduced herself to the group. Announcing that the GSG will have two Presidents this year. She is the Fall President. She will be defending her dissertation and graduating in December and will hand the reins over to another GSG member for Spring 22.
- ii. The GSG is a full team this year. Additionally, they have added 3 positions (community involvement in Flagstaff and the valley) as well as an international position to better represent international students.
- iii. The GSG created a Poster Symposium chair to lead this annual event that is presented alongside the Graduate College's 3MRP event.
- iv. The GSG team decided to bring back an international travel award.

5. UGC Service Requirements

- i. Parameters and components of UGC service
 - a. What service do we all need to do as a member of the UGC. Looking for more involvement from all members.
 - b. Laura spoke more to the proposed changes to the UGC members task commitments, commenting that this is an attempt to be sensitive to everyone's workloads but keep to our commitments to the UGC charge. The proposed change would be to observe 3 defenses and serve on 2 committees.
 - c. A discussion was held with both viewpoints presented. One viewpoint presented by several members was whether our presence at defenses is the best use of faculty time and does it really serve the student in any meaningful way. Other members presented an opposite viewpoint in support of attending defenses and how they can ensure an equitable process and quality of doctoral standards. It was decided to table the discussion for now and to revisit at October's meeting.

6. Academic Integrity Violations and Graduate work at NAU

- i. Kyle Winfree led the discussion on the increasing issue of academic integrity violations. Using visuals of actual websites, he explained how the technology is used and the challenge it presents to faculty and departments to track and prevent future violations. Several of the slides showed "innocent" looking websites that attract students with monetized and incentivized programs. Students who pay a certain amount of money can keep their user names anonymous. We have to be careful as this raises the question, will we only catch a demographic that is not financially challenged? It is important to talk to your students about these sites and let them know that these sites are not legitimate and can result in severe consequences: losing letter grades, losing assistantships or other funding; being dismissed from the university.
- ii. Documentation is crucial to help other faculty know that a student has violated the integrity policy so a department can establish a trend for a particular violator and that the student can know that they are on the department's and administration's radar. Administrator's will forward any violations to the Graduate College.
- iii. Brittany Blanchard suggested that faculty put a copyright on their assignments and tests. These websites often run copyright filters and will not pull documents displaying that mark.

7. UGC Reports – Maribeth Watwood

- i. The Provost Office is going through the tenure track request. Promising markers for tenure track hires.
- ii. TRIP: Voter referendum to advance technology and research and provides money to the three state universities. Jason Wilder is very effective at talking with ABOR to push our agenda for our programs
- iii. Starting a conversation on our overall curriculum. Do we have bottlenecks in our system. Working with Faculty Senate and employers to talk about future market directions and needs.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm MST.

Next Meeting:

October 19, 3:00pm-5:00pm, Zoom