

**University Graduate Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, September, 2024**

**3:00-5:00pm – Online Via Zoom**

**Members Present:**  Pamela Bosch (Physical Therapy/Athletic Training), Colleen Byron (Organizational Leadership), Tiffany Cooke (Physician Assistant Studies), Brooke de Heer (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Catrin Edgeley (Forestry), Joshua Emery (Astronomy and Planetary Science), John Fegyveresi (Climate Science and Solutions), Marianne Fillhouer (Educational Psychology), Tom Finger (History), Slava Fofanov (SICCS), Marie-Christine Goodworth (Clinical Psychology), John Heick (CHHS, Physical Therapy), Susana Hernandez (Educational Psychology), Liza Holeski (Biology), Jeff Hovermill (Mathematics and Statistics), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Mahendra Joshi (MBA), Donna Lewis (Educational Leadership), Nanette “Gigi” Lopez (Interdisciplinary Health), Gretchen McAllister (Teaching and Learning), Stephen Meserve (Politics and International Affairs ), Jose Moreno (Ethnic Studies), Keith Nowicki (Applied Physics and Material Science), Brettania O’Connor (Health Sciences), Katsuya Oi (Sociology), Michelle Parsons (Anthropology), Gillian Porter (Occupational Therapy), Natalie Randolph (UGC Chair, Social Work), Sara Rinfret (Politics and International Affairs), Richard Rogers (Communication), Brendan Russo (Civil Engineering), Michael Shafer (Bioengineering), Sandra Stewart (Clinical Speech and Language Pathology), Nora Timmerman (Sustainable Communities), Ann Vert (Nursing & PL), Kyle Winfree (SICCS), Gavin Zhang (Business Analytics)

**Members Absent:** Joe Collentine (Spanish), Nicole Hampton (Educational Specialties), Luke Plonsky (Applied Linguistics), Samuel Severance (Teaching Science with Certification), Nancy Sullivan (Kitt School of Music), Andy Walters (Psychological Sciences)

**Ex Officio:** Brittany Blanchard (Library), Laura Bounds (Associate Vice Provost, Office of Graduate & Professional Studies); Jennifer Lee (Graduate Student Government), Debbie Mariage (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Melinda Treml (Academic Support), Maribeth Watwood (Vice Provost, for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies)

**UGC Chair Natalie Randolph welcomed everyone to the meeting and the meeting came to order at 3:05 pm MST.**

1. **Announcements**
	1. Maribeth Watwood, Vice Provost for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies
		1. Maribeth welcomed everyone and extended her sincere appreciation for everyone’s efforts to support graduate studies at NAU. She specifically thanked Natalie Randolph to chair the AY 2024-2025 UGC Committee.
		2. Graduate highlights: the launch of the new Doctor of Medical Science program, the new College of Nursing, the highly anticipated Graduate 3 Minute Research Presentation (3MRP) on November 14, 2024.
	2. Laura Bounds, Associate Vice Provost, Office of Graduate & Professional Studies (OGPS)
		1. The 3MRP Information Session for students/faculty is Thursday, September 19 from 4:00-5:00pm. She encouraged UGC representatives to alert their students and offices to the session. She called upon the UGC representatives to review and provide feedback on the upcoming practice sessions. This support would satisfy one of the UGC Service options. Preliminary Heats are scheduled October 30 and 31.
			* 1. Gretchen McAllister inquired if the 3MRP might be available to online international students in the future. Maribeth and Laura noted to bring this up as a point of discussion for future planning.
		2. Thursday, September 26th OGPS is hosting the Graduate Coordinator Training (in-person and zoom) from 10:00-1:00pm (lunch included). She encouraged returning coordinators as well as new coordinators to attend. There are several new policies and processes in place this year.
		3. Entering and Mentoring – a new professional development opportunity extending to faculty as well as graduate students. 3 cohorts are available for this Fall term and 2 for the Spring term. Please contact our office for more information.
		4. Laura extended a call for all programs to review and update their Program Graduate Handbooks. Please send your revised handbooks to ogps@nau.edu by the end of November.
		5. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): a financial aid record is created when a student receives any type of financial aid award or for whom NAU receives the results of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). All NAU students must maintain a minimum of 67% pace of progress. Incompletes and In Progress grades are considered attempted, but not completed. For graduate students, carrying many units of IP 699 and 799 is problematic from a federal perspective and that pace of progress percentage requirement. Masters students are granted 18 graduate credits over and above those required for the degree program for completion of the degree. Doctoral students are granted an additional 30 graduate credits over and above those required for the degree program. OGPS has been the grader for all 699 and 799. To help prevent students from these SAP holds, OGPS would like to suggest a change in practice: primary instructors to enter a passing grade (if warranted) each semester until the last semester when a student defends their thesis or dissertation. OGPS will grade that last semester to confirm that all graduating milestones are met. We will bring this up for further discussion amongst UGC representatives at our next meeting. Again, this is not an action item to be voted on as it is not a policy change, but we do recognize the need to discuss a new procedure in more detail.
		6. Laura Bounds provided the link to the SAP website in the chat for more information.
		7. Debbie Mariage (OGPS) provide the OSFA presentation on SAP processes in the chat as well.
	3. Melinda Treml – Director, Academic Support, Curriculum & Assessment
		1. Dual Degree policy: PeopleSoft was not built to manage/accommodate dual degree programs. Melinda’s team is working with ITS to build an automated capability into PeopleSoft to replace the current manual one. This will help to ensure accurate reporting to the Federal government and the State of Arizona. ITS is now in the testing phase of the automation function. Since there are very specific State guidelines for the business and financial processes there may be changes in those areas as well. Projected timeline is to finalize policy by Spring 2025 that could enable the dual degree option by Fall 2025. Slava Fofanov highlighted the challenge to design the program fee side of things as there are different program fees not only between colleges but also between programs within the same college.
		2. Prior Learning Assessment progress for Undergraduate admissions. Look for a policy discussion and/or other updates in the Spring. If any undergraduate elements affect the graduate PLA policy, Melinda will present those to the UGC.
	4. Stephanie del Georgio – Office of the Provost/Office of Graduate and Professional Studies; Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Waivers
		1. Stephanie is the new Financial Oversight Analyst working for the Office of the Provost in close collaboration with OGPS. She manages the awarding and reconciling of waivers and assistantships (as well as the Exception to 9 units requests, additional work hours and Departmental Tuition Payment Requests or DTPRs) with the help of other internal stakeholders (Office of Scholarship ad Financial Aid, Student Departmental Account Services and the Office of Residency). Stephanie wanted to highlight an onboarding issue that affects many Graduate Assistants. As an example, the official start date of a GA contract started August 19th this summer. For some GAs, their move-in dates didn’t align with that contract date. Students were coming to campus with nowhere to stay until their designated move-in date of the 22nd or 23rd. Stephanie let UGC representatives know about the Campus Living Welcome Jacks. There is a time commitment to help serve students during move-in week, but Graduate Assistants could be allowed to move-in on the 19th. Stephanie and other partners gathered and analyzed data to determine how many Graduate Assistants are affected by this contract/move-in misalignment. In preparation for AY 25-26, it is suggested that colleges and departments make sure there is a conversation about the student’s living situation and what the anticipated move-in date is as it relates to the contract start date before the providing the assistantship offer letter and before the OnBase letter is crafted. Please contact gatw@nau.edu if there is a need for an early move-in request and a $50 charge can be expensed to the department. Slava Fofanov asked if it is possible to change the start date to the move-in date. It is possible for many programs to be able to do this, however, if a program requires the original contract date, then please work with gatw@nau.edu.
	5. Natalie Randolph, UGC Chair
		1. UGC Service Options:
			* 1. Option 1: serve on 4 defenses throughout the academic year.
				2. Option 2: serve on 2 defenses throughout the academic year and one subcommittee.
				3. Option 3: serve on two subcommittees.
		2. UGC representatives asked for clarification on the permitted number of program representatives, voting permissions and the sharing of service options. The Executive Committee will confirm for the next meeting.
		3. New timeframe for recruiting for AY 25-26 UGC Chair Elect. A fall Chair Elect selection would allow for more involvement and preparation for the AY 25-26 leadership role. Any representative that is interested in this role, please reach out to Natalie with answers to the following questions:
			1. Why do you want to be the Chair?
			2. What have you achieved or accomplished in a group setting that you’re most proud of?
			3. Why are you interested in policy?
			4. What is your leadership philosophy when leading diverse, multidisciplinary groups or teams.
			5. You would present these answers in the October meeting and have up to 15 minutes to respond to any questions.
2. **Current Business**
	1. February Meeting Minutes
		1. Motion to approve the UGC February meeting minutes as distributed was made by Ann Vert and seconded by Slava Fofanov. **Minutes were approved** (17 aye, 11 abstain, 0 nay), via chat box.
	2. April Meeting Minutes
		1. Motion to approve the UGC April meeting minutes as distributed was made by Ann Vert and seconded by Tiffany Cooke. **Minutes were approved** (17 aye, 12 abstain, 0 nay), via chat box.
	3. The Executive Committee met prior to this meeting. They looked at updates specific to the bylaws.
		1. Titles were updated for Laura Bounds and Maribeth Watwood to reflect the change from Associate Dean and Dean of the Graduate College to Associate Vice Provost of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies and Vice Provost, for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies.
		2. Updated the language describing the role of the Executive Committee Officers. Amending the timing language for the UGC Chair Elect noting the hopeful fall start to that position. If a Chair Elect is not selected, then the current UGC Chair would continue in that role until a Chair Elect is selected. (5.1.2; 5.1.3; 5.1.4)
		3. Included language that the meeting agenda is established in consultation with the UGC Executive Committee and representatives from OGPS (5.2.1)
		4. Added language to the Duties of Membership to include the following responsibility, “Review topics and applicable policies with appropriate department representatives”. (6.1)
		5. Added language to the Meetings section of the bylaws, “Member may attend remotely; a calendar invite will be provided prior to the meeting”. This edit was needed as the meetings are no longer in person. (7.3)
		6. Noted the “revised” Robert’s Rull of Order. (8.6)
		7. Natalie will work with the Executive Committee on some additional drafts based on the feedback received in today’s meeting.
	4. Natalie presented the Mentimeter App that creates presentations with real-time feedback. Natalie’s goal is to get feedback from the UGC membership on their hopes/ideas for engagement and involvement in the UGC. This information will be considered and integrated into this year’s UGC meetings and efforts.
3. **Future Business**
	1. Nora Timmerman would like to discuss the challenges associated with NAU’s heavy recruitment of international students and dwindling financial support. She would like to have a CIE representative at a future UGC meeting to discuss this issue.
4. Motion to Adjourn the meeting: Colleen Byron moved to adjourn, seconded by Ann Vert.

**The meeting adjourned at: 4:48 p.m. MST.**