

**University Graduate Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 18, 2023**

**3:00-5:00pm – Online Via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Laura Bounds (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Colleen Byron (Organizational Leadership), Joe Collentine (Spanish), Tiffany Cooke (Physician Assistant Studies), Mandy Dang (Business), Brooke de Heer (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Jared Duval (SICCS Graduate Programs), Catrin Edgeley (Forestry), Joshua Emery (Astronomy & Planetary Science), Visar Farhangi (Civil Engineering, Construction Management, and Environmental Engineering), Heidi Feigenbaum (Engineering-Mechanical), Matthew Gidley (Biology), Nicole Hampton (Educational Specialties), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Mahendra Joshi (MBA), Donna Lewis (Educational Leadership), Nanette Lopez (Interdisciplinary Health), Marcus Macktima (History), Stephen Meserve (Politics and International Affairs ), Leslie Mitchell (Academic Success Coordinator, CEIAS), Gabriel Montano (Applied Physics and Material Science), Brettania O’Connor (Health Sciences), Michelle Parsons (Anthropology), Natalie Randolph (Social Work), Rich Rogers (Communication), Sandra Stewart (Clinical Speech and Language Pathology), James Swift (Mathematics and Statistics), Nora Timmerman (Sustainable Communities), Ann Vert (Nursing & PL), Kyle Winfree (Chair Elect), Ugaya Wagle (public Administration and PIA), Andy Walters (Psychological Sciences)

**Members Absent:** John Fegyveresi (Climate Science & Solutions), Matthew Ford (Physical Therapy), Ron Grady (Global Languages and Culture), Marie-Christine Goodworth (PsyD), Jose Moreno (Ethnic Studies), Luke Plonsky (English), Franklin Vernon (Geography, Planning, and Recreation), John Heick (Past Chair), Gillian Porter (Occupational Therapy), Gretchen McAllister (Teaching and Learning), Kerry Thompson (Provost Office)

**Ex Officio:** Brittany Blanchard (Library), Diamond Bracey (GSG), Chelsea Hutton (GSG), Kelly Janecek (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Maribeth Watwood (Vice Provost, Melinda Treml (Curriculum and Assessment),

**Guest Speakers:** Ian Wischmeier (Registrar), Debbie Mariage (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies)

**UGC Chair Kyle Winfree welcomed everyone to the meeting and the meeting came to order at 3:00 pm MST.**

1. **Administrative Actions**
	1. Motion to approve the UGC September 2023 meeting minutes as distributed was made by Ann Vert and seconded by Rich Rodgers; **minutes were approved** (0 nay votes, 27 aye votes, 2 abstention), via zoom chat box.
2. **Policies up for vote:**
	1. Course Repeat Policy (#100318: **second discussion**)
		1. A minor change to the course repeat policy was proposed late in the discussions last year, which may address the vast majority of concerns; the committee ran out of time for further discussion. At this meeting, Melinda Treml brought forward changes to the policy that will operate as an umbrella change to support other graduate policies. Melinda suggested that when a course is repeated, both of the courses would be shown on the transcript, but the higher grade would be factored into the GPA. Questions arose about verbiage in the policy that states “students may repeat the course with advisor approval” and questions about how the policy impacts academic integrity. Changes sparked conversations between representatives and due to time restrictions, the Committee was unable to vote.
	2. Requirements for the Doctoral Degree, PhD (#100805)
		1. Review of 2B section of “A minimum of 5 hours of professional development activities is required between matriculation in the program and admission to candidacy.” Laura Bounds showed the Candidacy Application which includes the timing (5 hours) expectations to the representatives and asked for edits regarding verification of requirements that students must complete. Laura asked for the Committee’s input on changing the wording of the professional development requirement on the application. Laura also suggested changing the ‘5 hours’ wording to ‘5 clock hours’ or 1 credit hour (45 clock hours). Conversation was sparked regarding the equity of increasing time hours due to students with families or from low-income backgrounds. Due to timing restrictions, the Committee was unable to vote.
3. **Policies under continued discussion:**
	1. Graduate Policies for a D (#100401, 100407, 100412)
		1. A change in language has been proposed to decrease inconsistencies across three policies. Proposed changes reflect grade points to be assigned as: A = 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points, D = 1 point, and F = 0 point. All policies will reflect all graduate students as a whole. The UGC had a debate over verbiage and how to define the various policies. Ian Wischmeier brough suggested changes to the committee on the general lines of:
			1. 100401 will not change
			2. 100407, D is one point, does not earn program credit
			3. 100412, D not acceptable for program credit
		2. There is concern over consistency between the three policies and how they connect to the overall university GPA policy. There was continued discussion over the verbiage of the three policies and how they can be clearer for students to understand. The consensus was that Ian Wischmeier will make edits and attempt to finalize the policies for a vote at the next meeting.
4. **Current business action items:**
	1. Debbie Mariage – ETD
		1. Debbie Mariage presented about best practices regarding thesis work, dissertation committees, and candidacy applications. Forms, paperwork, signatures, etc. are needed to support students throughout the ETD processes. Debbie presented a diagram that will act as a supplement for students, staff, and faculty to follow for doctoral student milestones. Debbie explained the graphic and asked for feedback from the committee before the diagram is published formally.
5. **UGS Reports:**
	1. Vice Provost and Dean Watwood:
		1. Maribeth discussed the Ombuds program where graduate students can discuss qualms with someone from the Ombuds department when conflicts arise with their supervisors. The Ombuds program serves as a confidential, independent, impartial, and informal resource for students to discuss issues or concerns that impact their work, life, or study at NAU. The Ombuds Office is best suited for conflict resolution, discussions for sensitive issues, clarification on policies, or when students feel that they have been untreated fairly. Maribeth welcomed new employees to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, Mike Luna and Norma Zheng. Maribeth discussed the new step-by-step process for allocating tuition waivers which will be distributed shortly.
	2. Associate Vice Provost of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, Laura Bounds:
		1. Laura informed the Committee that the 3MRP and the GSG Poster Symposium are cancelled for the fall 2023 semester and that the events will return in the new calendar year. Laura reminded the committee to sign up for service, only 16 representatives have signed up. UGC service options include: four oral defenses, two oral defenses and one subcommittee, or two subcommittees.
		2. Laura discussed the Graduate AAR phased roll out. There are 28 GCERTS and master’s degrees in the first phase, and 23 Maters/Doctoral degrees in Phase 2. The AAR is intended to be used to phase out the POS system and transition into the AAR for convenience and simplicity. However, the POS will still be needed until the rollout is finalized. Laura reminded the representatives of the associated trainings that are happening within the next two months and the importance of attending. Laura thanked those who have been involved in this process.
	3. Chair, Kyle Winfree
		1. Kyle asked if any Committee members wanted to self-nominate for Chair-Elect and to communicate with Kyle for an introduction to the possible role. The formal vote will commence in the spring.
6. Motion to Adjourn the meeting: Colleen Byron moved to adjourn, seconded by James Swift.

**The meeting adjourned at: 5:07 p.m. MST.**