

**University Graduate Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, November 15,2023**

**3:00-5:00pm – Online Via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Colleen Byron (Organizational Leadership), Joe Collentine (Spanish), Tiffany Cooke (Physician Assistant Studies), Mandy Dang (Business), Jared Duval (SICCS Graduate Programs), Catrin Edgeley (Forestry), John Fegyveresi (Climate Science & Solutions), Heidi Feigenbaum (Engineering-Mechanical), Cesar Flores (College of International Education), Jeff foster (Biology), Slava Fofanov (SICCS), Marie-Christine Goodworth (PsyD), Nicole Hampton (Educational Specialties), John Heick (Past Chair), Liza Holeski (Biology), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Mahendra Joshi (MBA), Chelseigh Keene (Educational Psychology), Donna Lewis (Educational Leadership), Marcus Macktima (History), Gretchen McAllister (Teaching and Learning), Stephen Meserve (Politics and International Affairs ), Leslie Mitchell (Academic Success Coordinator, CEIAS), Truong Nghiem (SICCS), Brettania O’Connor (Health Sciences), Michelle Parsons (Anthropology), Gillian Porter (Occupational Therapy), Natalie Randolph (Social Work), Rich Rogers (Communication), Sandra Stewart (Clinical Speech and Language Pathology), James Swift (Mathematics and Statistics), Nora Timmerman (Sustainable Communities), Kyle Winfree (Chair), Ugaya Wagle (public Administration and PIA), Andy Walters (Psychological Sciences)

**Members Absent:**

Matthew Ford (Physical Therapy), Ron Grady (Global Languages and Culture), Jose Moreno (Ethnic Studies), Luke Plonsky (English), Franklin Vernon (Geography, Planning, and Recreation), Kerry Thompson (Provost Office), Brooke de Heer (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Joshua Emery (Astronomy & Planetary Science), Visar Farhangi (Civil Engineering, Construction Management, and Environmental Engineering), Matthew Gidley (Biology), Nanette Lopez (Interdisciplinary Health), Gabriel Montano (Applied Physics and Material Science), Ann Vert (Nursing & PL)

**Ex Officio:** Brittany Blanchard (Library), Laura Bounds (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Kelly Janecek (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Maribeth Watwood (Vice Provost) Melinda Treml (Curriculum and Assessment)

**Guest Speakers:** Mike Luna (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies), Norma Zheng (Office of Graduate and Professional Studies)

**UGC Chair Kyle Winfree welcomed everyone to the meeting and the meeting came to order at 3:02 pm MST.**

1. **Administrative Actions**
	1. October Meeting Minutes
		1. Motion to approve the UGC October 2023 meeting minutes as distributed was made by Rich Rodgers and seconded by Gretchen McAllister; **minutes were approved** (1 nay votes, 28 aye votes, 1 abstention), via zoom chat box.
	2. Welcome to Two New Members of Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
		1. Laura welcomed Mike Luna, who oversees WRGP and Fellowships, and Norma Zheng, graduation coordinator, who are new employees within the office.
	3. Call for Chair Elect
		1. Vote will be coming in the Spring.
2. **Policies up for vote:**
	1. Policy 100805 - Requirements for the Doctoral Degree, PhD
		1. Review of Policy 100805, as following the discussion from last month’s UGC meeting regarding the language of “minimum five hours of professional development activities is required between matriculation in the program and admission to candidacy” within the policy. There was a call to vote to define the credit hour minimum and clock hour minimum verbiage within the policy. These hours would be reflective of 1 credit hour or 45 clock hours of professional development. Melinda Treml specified that each doctoral program will be expected to declare the professional development expectations in their respective academic catalogs.
		2. Motion to revise Policy 100805 was made by Slova Fofanov and seconded by Colleen Byron; **Policy 100805 was approved** (0 nay votes, 21 aye votes, 4 abstentions), via zoom chat box.
3. **Policies under discussion:**
	1. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) – Pace of Progress
		1. Laura Bounds and Melinda Treml discussed issues and potential ideas to address the Pace of Progress element within the SAP policy. The Pace of Progress element is a statement that all NAU students must maintain a minimum 67% pace of progression when completing credit hours for career-appropriate courses. When students fall out of the pace of progress, they receive a letter from the federal government, threatening removal of funding. Melinda asked the UGC how NAU can best show progress of dissertation work so PhD students can avoid the pace of progress problems. Melinda proposed a separation of defense and passing the dissertation from making process on the dissertation to show that the student is making process on their degree. Melinda suggested the creation of different topics for dissertation classes to allow students to continue working on their dissertation to get credit for making progress. This proposed policy change sparked conversation among the UGC the conversation will continue in February at the next UGC meeting.
4. **Policies under continued discussion**
	1. Policy 100318 - Course Repeat Policy
		1. Readdressing the previous conversations around Policy 100318 during the October UGC meeting. Jared Duval (Computer science) suggested to allow a cap of 6 credit hour replacement in the total career and grade replacement cannot happen with an AIV attached to that course; therefore, students can still retake a class, but both grades factor into the GPA. Jared suggested a review of the Academic Integrity Violations policy in its relation to the Course Repeat Policy. The committee had a discussion regarding the Policy and how it relates to advisor approval, undergraduate AIVs, generative AI, AIV reporting,
5. **Current business action items:**
	1. Bylaws Reflecting October 2022 Change and Proposed Further Changes
		1. The Chair suggested reviewed changes to the UGC Bylaws, including language changes of the title of the Graduate College to the College of Graduate and Professional Studies and overall format changes. Conversation ensued about the creating of a bylaws committee that would rest within the policy committee.
	2. Doctoral Defense Survey
		1. A survey was sent out regarding graduate student readiness to defend their thesis and dissertations. The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies is looking for ways to better support students when they begin their defenses. The survey is intended to see where the UGC has seen successes and celebrations from the student’s defenses. Those who are a chair, co-chair, or a mentor for a student are encouraged to fill out the survey.
	3. Dual Degree Policy Update
		1. Melinda gave an update from the pervious conversation about policy from the UGC’s September meeting. Dual degrees have examined the program fees and these fees must be administered to the students per ABOR’s rulings, while factoring in campus location of the student. There is question of whether a student is truly enrolled in one of their programs if they are only enrolled in one or two classes per semester for each program. Melinda Treml discussed the operational expenses related to operating dual degree programs.
	4. Elevating Excellence for UGrads
		1. Brittany Blanchard presented opportunities for those who mentor graduate students. This is a professional learning opportunity for faculty who mentor graduate students in CEFNS and CEIAS called *Entering Mentoring* based on curriculum created by the Center for Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research and is evidence based to help mentors develop skills for engaging in well-rounded mentoring relationships. The trainings will take place every Friday in February, there are 24 spots for those faculty in CEFNS and CEIAS.
6. **OGPS Reports:**
	1. Vice Provost for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies, Maribeth Watwood:
		1. Maribeth gave updates on the search for a Vice Provost for NAU Online. There will be interview periods between Thanksgiving break and winter break and she encouraged the committee to keep an eye out for those interviewees as the candidates will want to meet with various stakeholders.
		2. Maribeth also discussed the updates to the AAR and that processes are expected to become more streamlined to ensure that milestones and graduate student progress is more streamlined.
		3. Maribeth administered a reminder to the committee regarding that once a graduate student has been accepted into a program and is making satisfactory progress, if or when there is a falling out between student and mentor, the student cannot be forced to leave the program. The student can only be removed from the process due to established lines, if there are no behavior or policy violations, NAU has an obligation to support and help the student to find an alternative pathway to graduation.
		4. Maribeth talked about GA-ships and a survey that will be going out at the end of the year regarding GAs and if some departments need more GA support, to please indicate that. The survey will be filled out by Deans and Associate Deans. Maribeth discussed the possible reallocation of funds between GTA, GRA, and GSAs. Some concerns have risen because some GTAs in PeopleSoft have not been given a teaching assignment and every GTA needs to have a proper assignment listed. The committee raised questions about the concerns of student/program accreditation and regarding the equity of the dispersal of funds between domestic and international students.
		5. Maribeth also reminded the committee that when students are defending their defense, forms must be filled out and policy must be addressed prior to the defense.
	2. Associate Vice Provost of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, Laura Bounds:
		1. Laura informed the UGC of the upcoming Thesis and Dissertation Writing Bootcamp on Friday, January 26th 8:30-12:00 via Zoom.
		2. Laura reminded the UGC to sign up for UGC service.
		3. Laura asked the UGC to fill out the oral defense readiness survey to help determine gaps and best practices to support doctoral students.
		4. The Graduate AAR phase 1 and 2 are still in the roll out process. There are 48 GCERTS and Masters degrees in Phase 1 and 23 GCERTS, Masters, and Doctoral degrees in Phase 2. The Graduate AAR will be partnered with the POS until the processes have been fully transitioned. Laura asked if any UGC member’s programs are interested in being included in Phase III for summer 2024 builds and roll out next AY, please let her know. The recordings for previous Graduate AAR trainings are on the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies’ website.
	3. Chair, Kyle Winfree
		1. Kyle asked the committee to come prepared to discuss what is going well within the UGC and to provide any feedback on improvements or solutions. Kyle also asked the UGC to think about how things are operating within their programs, what concerns the UGC may want to see input on, and if there have been any changes in practices that are operating successfully.
7. Motion to Adjourn the meeting: Colleen Byron moved to adjourn, seconded by Slava Fofanov.

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