



The Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

December 14, 2015

The Graduate Council met on Monday, December 14, 2015 at 3:00 P.M. in room 311 of the Byrnes Building.

Graduate Council members present: Dr. Julia Lopez-Robertson, Chair; Drs. Swan Adams, Drucilla Barker, Bobby Brame, Jr., Heather Brandt, Matt Brown, Nancy Brown, Dirk den Ouden, Jerry Hilbish, Christian Jensen, Lara Lomicka-Anderson, David Tedeschi, Susan Yeargin

Graduate Council members absent: Drs. Jennifer Arns, Heather Brandt, Kay Edwards, Lorne Hofseth, Caryn Outten, Scott White, and Brittany Walter

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Jessica Elfenbein, Dr. Murray Mitchell, and Teresa Smith

Provost Office Representative: Dr. Kristia Finnigan

Guests: Ashley Burt, Hiram McDade, Elizabeth Ravlin, Dimitros Rizos, Amber Williams

NOTE: *These minutes will become final on January 25, 2016 if not challenged.*

1. **Call to Order and Approval of Agenda** (Julia Lopez-Robertson, Chair)

Dr. Lopez-Robertson called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M. and received Council approval of the agenda.

2. **Approval of Minutes for the meeting on [November 23, 2015](#).**

The minutes were reviewed electronically and approved by the Council. Minutes are on file at The Graduate School website at:

<http://app.gradschool.sc.edu/gradcouncil/minutes.asp>

3. **Report of the Chair** (Julia Lopez-Robertson)

Dr. Lopez-Robertson welcomed everyone and mentioned that it is almost the end of the Fall semester.

4. **Report of the Dean of The Graduate School** (Jessica Elfenbein for Lacy Ford)

Dr. Elfenbein thanked the members who participated in the Fall Commencement ceremony. There were 93 PhDs hooded at the ceremony.

Work has begun to obtain a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant to be implemented for Humanities doctoral students and may be extended to other doctoral students. The grant is called Next Generation, and it offers \$350,000 for a three year program. The purpose is to insure that institutions concentrate on the many students who are not interested in finding employment in the academy or on the tenure track. Dr. Elfenbein invited Council members who are interested in working Ad Hoc on this project to contact her at JessicaE@mailbox.sc.edu. She added that this grant, if received, will allow the University to enhance professional development programs for graduate students.

5. Report of the Associate Dean / Secretary of the Graduate Council (Murray Mitchell)

Dr. Mitchell thanked Council members for agreeing to delay the Graduate Council meeting for one hour to accommodate attendance at the Fall Commencement ceremony.

He stated that he is processing a number of requests for extensions, grade changes and various nominations as the Fall semester ends.

He recently attended the Council of Graduate Schools national meeting in Seattle and learned that the programs and services offered at USC's Graduate School are solidly within the status of other graduate schools across the nation.

The implementation of on-line program delivery was discussed at the meeting. The impression given was that on-line delivery resolves many program issues, and that sharing online programs across contiguous states would be beneficial for all parties involved. Dr. Mitchell's viewpoint was that these Universities will discover that they will be competing for the same, dwindling number of students. There seemed to be a lack of awareness of the process. For example, Dr. Finnigan's office had to secure state authorization to offer on-line programs and ensure that the University adhered to the accreditation guidelines within the state where the student resides. Therefore, the University of South Carolina is well ahead of many other universities in that area.

Strategies for data collection were discussed regarding how to monitor the career path of graduate students after graduation.

Boot Camps for Dissertators is a growing trend among institutions. It is an intensive program to help get doctoral and thesis writers started on the process. The Graduate School's Zach Lukemire has offered a number of thesis and dissertation seminars, but no intensive, "Check your cellphone at the door, put everything away and come in for an intensive writing session on your thesis and dissertation," type of boot camp seminar.

Dr. Elfenbein mentioned that the Graduate School has partnered with the writing center to help graduate student start the process. Dr. Tedeschi asked if the goal of boot camp is for students who have trouble writing or have difficulty starting the process. Dr. Elfenbein answered that the writing center designates time specified for graduate students to come in and start the process. She stated that many students intend to start, but get distracted by other obligations. With the boot camp process, there are fewer distractions and students have

time set aside to focus only on writing.

Dr. Mitchell added that many students including international students struggle with that process. Loyola University attempted to identify its students with problems completing qualifying exams and/or may have completely stopped working on a proposal. They asked graduate directors to research and identify these students. Once identified, there were approximately eight students. They were recruited and encouraged to attend two-hour meetings with a mentor once a month for 15 weeks in an intensive effort to help.

Another subject discussed at the Council of Graduate Schools meeting was for more support for advisors and mentors. For those who struggle to offer helpful advice to students, additional support would be beneficial to inform them of what it is like to assist a graduate student throughout the entire graduate process.

There is an emphasis on Humanities doctoral students and the opportunities they have in the field. In the past, the focus was on promoting STEM programs. However, the current trend is on Humanities doctoral training and that "Humanities Students Matter!"

6. Report of the Graduate Student Association Representative (Brittany Walter)

Dr. Mitchell reported for the GSA. He mentioned that Brittany Walter is in London, and the GSA President, Andrew Fogner has the flu and could not attend the meeting.

The GSA's Blue Ribbon committee will hold three focus group meetings; on January 12 from 9:00 to 11:00am, January 13 from 2:00 to 4:00pm, and on January 14 from 5:30 to 7:30pm. Graduate student cabinet members have been assigned to facilitate those group meetings.

The GSA is planning to create Affinity Groups for the Spring semester. They are coordinating with Wright Culpepper of the Graduate School to schedule dates, times and venues for the groups. In January, they plan to create an International Affinity Group, in February, a group for Graduate Students with Families; in March a group for Graduate Students with Disabilities, and in April the focus will be Student Veterans.

In late January, the GSA will host a Feedback Forum and in February, they will host a Stress-buster and CPR training event for graduate students. During the Spring semester, the GSA will continue to advocate for the over 6,000 graduate students on campus.

Dr. Eifenbein added that graduate program directors and program administrators should have received an announcement to notify graduate student to participate in the Blue Ribbon focus groups. Participation from both masters and doctoral students is very important. University administrators are interested in getting their perspective on what we are going well and what areas need improvement. Information and a link to the announcement is published here for your convenience.

Focus Group Flyer: As part of the Provost Blue Ribbon Committee on Graduate Student Life at USC, there will be facilitated graduate student Focus Groups on 1/12, 1/13, and 1/14. Please encourage your grad students to come and share their insights on topics like professional development, wellness, diversity, inclusion and equity, and community building.

More information is available at: <http://gradschool.sc.edu/facstaff/gradcouncil/2015/Focus Group Flyer supplement 12-14-15 meeting.pdf>.

7. **Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee** (Matt Brown)

Dr. Matt Brown mentioned that the committee will meet in January to examine the policy regarding students who audit courses and discuss whether the course may be retaken for credit.

8. **Report of the Committee on 500/600 Level Courses, Distance Education and Special Courses** (Murray Mitchell)

A listing of 500/600 Level and Distance Education Courses was presented to Council for informational purposes only.

500/600 Level Courses

None

Distance Education Delivery

None

Special Topics Courses

MATH 778 Spectral Graph Theory (3), Spring 2016
PSYC 841 Adult Cognitive Behavior Therapy (1), Spring 2016
PSYC 888 Psychology of Language (3), Spring 2016

9. **Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations** (Murray Mitchell)

None

10. **Fellowships and Scholarships Committee** (Heather Brandt)

Dr. Elfenbein presented for Dr. Brandt and mentioned that there are upcoming deadlines in January for two programs:

1) The Presidential Fellows Scholarship. The program is open to doctoral and MFA students. Please notify department colleagues to recommend the strongest incoming students for the scholarship. There are three rounds of nominations. Any student not funded in the first round will be reconsidered for funding each of the other rounds.

2) The Graduate Civic Scholars Program. January 19 is the deadline for the Graduate Civic Scholars Program which will begin in May 2016 and run until April 2017. Open to master's and doctoral students interested in community and public engagement and action-based research, this program provides opportunities for interdisciplinary research, involvement in social justice initiatives, and an enhanced understanding of the role of scholarship in addressing societal needs. Stipends are provided. More information is available at: <http://gradschool.sc.edu/students/gcsp.asp?page=gcsp>. The program will have two faculty

directors, Kirk Foster from the College of Social Work and Allison Marsh from the History department.

Dr. Elfenbein asked the Council members, if they know of faculty who may be interested in directing the Graduate Civic Scholars program, please contact her at:

JessicaE@mailbox.sc.edu.

11. Report of Science, Math, and Related Professional Programs Committee (David Tedeschi)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Each curricular action can be viewed at this Public Agenda review site: <https://www.sc.edu/programproposal/gradagenda/?id=11>.

At this Public Agenda link, the individual proposals are not live-linked, but agenda items are listed in alphabetical order. To view the full proposals, GC members and Committee Chairs still need to go to the Committee Review site, and filter for “Committees”, then for the “Committee” called “Added to Grad Council agenda.”

- CIVE Academic Certificate Railway Engineering, Engineering & Computing, New Certificate Program
- COMD 727, Public Health, New Course
- ECIV 784 Dynamic Analysis of Railway Systems, Engineering & Computing, New Course
- ELCT M.S. Electrical Engineering, Engineering & Computing, Change program degree requirements/bulletin language
- ELCT M.E. Electrical Engineering, Engineering & Computing, Change program degree requirements/bulletin language
- EPBO PhD In Biostatistics, Public Health, Change program degree requirements, electives and bulletin language
- NURS 738 Financing of Health Care, Nursing, Grading System Change and DED delivery
- NURS 740 Facilitative Processes in Nursing Administration, Nursing, Grading System Change and DED delivery
- NURS 741 Coordinating Processes in Nursing Administration, Nursing, Grading System Change and DED delivery
- PHYS Physics, PhD, Arts and Sciences, Change program degree requirements/bulletin language

All proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

12. Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee (Drucilla Barker)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Each curricular action can be viewed at this Public Agenda review site:

<https://www.sc.edu/programproposal/gradagenda/?id=11>.

At this Public Agenda link, the individual proposals are not live-linked, but agenda items are listed in alphabetical order. To view the full proposals, GC members and Committee Chairs still need to go to the Committee Review site, and filter for “Committees”, then for the “Committee” called “Added to Grad Council agenda.”

- EDCS 812 Principles of Action Research, Education, New Course
- EDCS 813 Advanced Principles of Action Research, Education, New Course
- EDEX 701 Nature of Students with Autism, Education, Course delivery system changed
- EDEX 794 Foundations of Secondary Transition Planning and Supports for Individuals with Disabilities, Education, New Course
- EDRD 730S Teaching Reading and Writing in the Content Areas, Education, Change course description change/bulletin change
- EDRD 731 Assessment and the Foundations of Reading/Writing, Education, New Course
- GEOG PhD in Geography, Arts and Sciences, Change program degree requirements/bulletin change
- INTE MAT in Physical Education, Education, Change program degree requirements/bulletin change
- INTE MT in Secondary (Mathematics, Social Studies, Science and English), Education, Change program degree requirements/bulletin change
- LANG Foreign Language MAT, Arts and Sciences, Change program degree requirements/bulletin change
- SOCY 705 Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality, Arts and Sciences, Change course number
- SOCY 729 Selected Topics in Sociological Methodology, Arts and Sciences, Change course number and add course description
- SOCY 745 Social Demography, Arts and Sciences, Change title, description and bulletin language
- SOCY 755 Social Structures and Inequality, Arts and Sciences, New Course
- SOCY 775 Medical Sociology, Arts and Sciences, New Course
- SOCY 779 Selected Topics in Medical Sociology, Arts and Sciences, New Course
- SOWK 781 Field Instruction I: Generalist Social Work Practice, Social Work, Change grading system/bulletin language
- SOWK 782 Field Instruction II: Generalist Social Work Practice, Social Work, Change grading system/bulletin language
- ZZBA Concentration Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Business, New Program
- ZZBA Concentration Finance, Business, New Program

All proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

13. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (Nancy Brown)

No report.

14. Other Committee Reports

No report.

15. Old Business

No report.

16. New Business

Dr. Elfenbein thanked the subcommittees for *doing all of the heavy lifting* regarding the course proposals. She stated that she liked the new meeting format because it allows time for serious discussion about the quality of graduate education and graduate student life on campus. She and Dr. Mitchell have discussed an initiative for the Spring semester to develop a faculty focus group to discuss graduate education and graduate student life.

There will be subcommittees to address:

- a) Graduate Student Life
- b) Financial Realities of Graduate School
- c) Innovation and Interdisciplinary
- d) Master's experience
- e) Subcommittee on Focus Groups

There is an interest in the faculty's perspective regarding what the University is doing well and what areas need work. The University cannot improve what is not yet known to be a problem. Faculty participate is extremely helpful in that area.

Dr. Mitchell asked the Council for feedback regarding the new meeting format. A list of proposals is provided along with information on how to view the proposals prior to the meeting. This information will be provided for the next several meetings.

Dr. Nancy Brown stated that the new format places the responsibility on Council members to inform themselves about each proposal prior to voting at the meeting.

Dr. Mitchell commented that the process is very similar to Faculty Senate. If Council members are concerned that there may be an issue in their departments, there is an obligation to examine the issue. The Council always has the option to ask for more information, but please recognize that each subcommittee member works very hard at vetting proposals. Dr. Mitchell stated that he and Dr. Finnigan attend both subcommittee meetings and witness the work that is done.

Dr. den Ouden asked if there is ever a case when the subcommittees cannot find a solution for a curriculum issue. Dr. Mitchell responded that curriculum proposals are often returned to the department with recommendations for a solution.

Dr. Mitchell stated that there is now time for Graduate Council to bring graduate-related policy and advocacy issues to bear for the University. It insures quality control for graduate programs. Graduate Council is intended to be a governing body of graduate faculty. The hope is to bring more substantive discussions regarding what a quality graduate education should look like at the University of South Carolina.

Dr. Mitchell thanked the Council for their comments and support for the new meeting format.

17. **Good of the Order**

Dr. Mitchell reminded Council members and guests to sign the attendance roster. He mentioned that the agenda and minutes are distributed to the President, the Provost and the Deans of the University. It is documentation of the extensive and beneficial work done by Graduate Council members in meeting their service obligations to the University.

The next Graduate Council meeting will be on Monday, January 25, 2016 at 2:00pm.

18. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 P.M.

Murray Mitchell, Secretary

cc:

President Harris Pastides

Provost Joan Gabel

Senior Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies Lacy Ford

Deans

Department Chairs

Graduate Directors

Aaron Marterer, University Registrar

Jodie Morris, Office of the Registrar

Andrew Graves, Office of the Registrar

Nancy Floyd, Office of Institutional Assessment and Compliance