

The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Graduate Council Minutes

February 19, 2021
10:00 AM Via Zoom

x	Ellise Adams, NUR	x	Wafa Hakim Orman, BUS Assoc Dean*
x	Michael Anderson, ENG Assoc Dean	x	Sean Lane, Acting Dean of GC *
x	Jennifer Bail, NUR	x	Phillip Ligrani, MAE
x	Yeqing Bao, Int'l Srvs Assoc Dean*	x	Matthew Niemiller, BIO
x	Dylan Baun, HIS	x	David Moore, Library*
x	Joseph Conway, EH		Jason O'Brien, EDU
x	Eric Fong, MGT	x	Tingting Que, FIN
x	Karen Frith, NUR	x	Janet Waller, Registrar*
	Junpeng Guo, ECE	x	DongSheng Wu, MAT
	Robert Griffin, SCI Assoc Dean		

x Present

* Non-voting member

Proxy:

None

Visitors Present:

Nikolai Pogorelov, John Pottenger, Aurora Torres

Meeting reminder for future Graduate Council meetings:

March 19 and April 16 at 2:00 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

January's Minutes

- A motion was made by Dr. Fong to approve the minutes as written. Dr. Conway seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimously accepted.

Update on Graduate School

- The search for an Associate Provost of International Services and Academic Integrity and Dean of the Graduate School currently has 35 applicants. The search committee will invite six to seven applicants in March for zoom interviews. From these interviews, finalists will be chosen to have interviews with key university constituents, including Graduate Council in April. The University is hopeful the selected candidate can begin in July but August is more likely.
- The Academic Services Coordinator and Senior Administrative Assistant positions have been posted with job descriptions provided. It was noted by Dr. Lane the coordinator position will be a complement to the admissions officer but for current students, helping with retention efforts, especially in doctoral programs where retention may need to be improved. A director's position for International Service is being drafted with the Provost and will be posted at a later date.
- The change of the graduate application portal to Recruit is estimated to begin in six weeks. The process for training the departments has not been made available yet and customization is not known at this time. Members were reminded the change would reduce the application fee and allow for an application fee waiver, which Dr. Lane noted would be key in helping to recruit international students. Dr. Lane heard from Auburn and UA about their application and their international recruiting processes. The two universities confirmed their international recruitment was also down because of the pandemic, especially from China and India. Other countries do show interest and an application fee waiver may help to recruit international students.
Dr. Frith mentioned the Graduate School had used Recruit for a short time before deciding on the CAS system. She voiced a concern regarding the ability to see submitted documents in Recruit and if there will be a cost for seats. Dr. Lane noted the concern and would ask admissions for clarification.

Discussion Regarding Test Scores

- The University System has requested a review of mandatory test scores for entry into graduate programs and suggested an opt-in policy. The change would mean entry exam testing would automatically be optional; however individual programs were allowed to "opt-in" to retain the GRE, GMAT, or MAT if they felt it was warranted.
The review was requested for two reasons. During the pandemic when test scores have been waived the UA System noticed greater diversity in the applicant pool. Secondly, research has shown that entry scores are not predictive of a student's success, particularly beyond the first year. It also does not measure experiential

learning within the curriculum, or thesis or dissertation success. It has also been shown to disadvantage underrepresented groups depending on the discipline. Undergraduate admissions has also been asked to review their SAT/ACT entry score policy.

Graduate Council was asked to consider their thoughts on the recommendation and whether the council would like to propose a change after careful and deliberate review. Dr. Fong noted having more flexibility was good and opting in wasn't necessarily a bad idea. Dr. Bao commented this discussion is not new and the National Council of Graduate Schools has previously suggested universities review their test score policy. He also asked if a new criterion is needed to predict success. Dr. Baun was also open to greater flexibility and removing discriminatory practices and suggested an interview may be a greater indicator of success in place of a test score, along with transcripts and other predictors of success. Dr. Conway mentioned many humanities programs have phased out test scores already and agreed they were not predictive of success. Dr. Nikolai Pogrelov, a visitor from space science, agreed and mentioned his department reviews an applicant's entire application, not relying specifically on the GRE score to predict success. The Council was asked if it was reasonable to consider a proposal in the future, which was unanimously agreed upon.

Spring Tasks

- Bylaws are needed for the Graduate Council and Dr. Lane asked for a small group to begin drafting them, using the graduate handbook for guidance. Additionally, a committee chair and chair-elect may want to be considered to work with the Faculty Senate in the future and added to the bylaws. Dr. Baun and Dr. Bao agreed to assist in drafting these bylaws for the Graduate Council.
- A draft version of the Graduate Handbook was provided by Dr. Berkowitz before his retirement and departure from the Graduate School. Dr. Lane asked the council for feedback about the editing process. Dr. Frith commented she made edits to better represent the DNP process and Dr. Conway said edits were also made to be more inclusive of lecturers. It was mentioned that a full review of the handbook was needed and Dr. Lane commented he would review the handbook and solicit additional feedback and approval.
- Spring elections must be held for future Graduate Council vacancies. It was stressed that elections should not be appointments and every college should go through the process to elect representatives.

Curriculum Approval:

- Approval for Electrical Engineering's MSSE JUMP program is needed and available in the shared drive for review. A vote to approve the program will be taken via email.

Open Discussion

- The history of the signature requirement on the abstract page of a thesis or dissertation was requested to determine if it could be eliminated. This signature is in addition to the signature page from the committee, department, and deans. It was believed this additional signature was a holdover from a previous process that is no longer in place. Dr. Lane requested a motion to remove the second signature requirement on the abstract. Dr. Adams made the motion and Dr. Fong provided the second motion. The vote was unanimously accepted. The abstract will still be required but will no longer require a signature line. Dr. Lane will email departments, associate deans, and deans of the change and request the information be forwarded as needed. The change will be implemented immediately but required in the fall.

Meeting adjourned at 10:59.