

Senate Growth and Development Committee  
Meeting Minutes 3.23.2018  
2:00-3:00 pm  
Senate Conference Room, Hall Building

Present: Janet Barnes-Farrell, Tracie Borden, Jon Clark, Joerg Graf, Faquir Jain, Laura House, Louise Lewis, Min Lin, Andrew Moiseff, Kylene Perras, Carl Rivers, Lyle Scruggs, Jeffrey Shoulson

Guest: Kent Holsinger, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School

Minutes from the 1.26.2018 meeting of the Committee were reviewed and approved.

Next meeting of the committee, April 13, will be devoted to discussion of what the committee learned this year and any recommendations that committee wishes to make to the Senate.

Dean & VP Holsinger provided some background for discussion of changes that have been ongoing at the Graduate school during the past year. Last year, Interim Provost Teitelbaum asked Dean/VP Holsinger to reflect on the current and critical functions of the Graduate School, and which of them properly should be carried out at the Graduate School, which of those functions might be more effectively carried out by other units. The primary functions to emerge were:

- Development of social support structures and academic support structures for academic support, professional and career support, and community building
- Application, admission
- Registration, degree audit
- Administrative support for all of these functions

One important aspect of this reflection was a restructuring of the Graduate School to transition Registration and Degree audit functions to the Registrar's Office. This transition is underway. Some Graduate Student staff are now carrying out their functions in other offices. Some examples: Sandra Cyr (degree audit) sitting in Registrar's Office, Ann Wilhelm (reporting functions) now sitting with Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Rowena Grainger (graduate fellowships officer) sitting with Office of National Scholarships and Fellowships. Graduate School is also working to separate out GA appointment and HR processes.

There was discussion of several other topics pertinent to the Graduate School:

- Support for postdoctoral fellows: The Graduate School does serve as the home for postdoctoral fellow support and concerns. It has an ongoing search for a fellowships and programming officer, who will address both doctoral and postdoctoral support issues.
- Structure and disbursement of fellowship funds: As explained, some fellowship monies are distributed by Graduate School but allocated by departments; other fellowships are directly awarded to nominees (provided by the departments); these include diversity focused and scholarly potential focused PhD and Masters fellowships. They have been restructured to be \$20,000 fellowships (\$17K during the year, \$3K during the summer) in order to be more competitive with fellowship opportunities provided by other institutions. Allocation of fellowships to departments have been pretty stable over a long period of time. It may be useful to consider what the criteria should be for divvying up the pie among departments; one possible criterion might be graduate degrees awarded

- Fellowships as a source of support: Fellowships are a relatively smaller proportion of graduate student support than GA support (about \$3M, compared to GA support about \$45M)
- Training grants: University-wide, we don't have very many (3 in psychology and related, several in Dept. of Education, otherwise we don't have substantial support in that form). The Dean was encouraged to look into opportunities to pursue more training grants.
- Growing resources for graduate students, such as full fellowships, travel support, extraordinary research expense funds: This is an area where UConn is deficient relative to some of our aspirational peers, it has been noted in several external reviews (e.g. Psychological Sciences). Practically speaking, this is a real challenge in the face of shrinking state funding – would require some major philanthropy and large endowments which we do not currently have.
- Tuition waivers: Discussion of tuition waivers and finding ways to cover tuition (which sometimes simply cannot be waived). Some departments (e.g., Business, Math) have come up with successful solutions, others are looking into creative ways of handling this obstacle. One kind of program, primarily pertinent to international students who are looking for career training is “Optional Practical Training” (OPT) which can prepare international students to then transition into doctoral programs. This (covering tuition) is an issue for several classes of graduate students and a particular problem for Fulbright Scholars.
- Responses to lack of resources: Lack of resources has led to an emphasis on integrated programs (undergrad to grad) and other revenue-generating graduate programs. The University encourages “entrepreneurial programs.” For certificate programs this is within the purview of Peter Diplock, for Master's programs this is not well-defined.
- Placement of graduates: Perhaps having a handle on where our graduate students go could help us to market entrepreneurial programs (certificates and master's programs). Dean Holsinger indicated that most of the placement data for graduate students resides at the department level rather than at the Graduate School level. Since we now have a permanent e-mail address, perhaps that could be used to continuously request updates.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.