



# Graduate Council

## Minutes

9/11/13 – Taylor 404

*Supporting, facilitating and promoting excellence in lifelong education  
through graduate programs of distinction, innovative outreach programs and a diverse student body.*

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**Members present:** Melissa Aleman, Michael Stoloff, Lynette Michael, Teresa Gonzalez (The Provost's Office), Nancy Nichols (Accounting), Karin Tollefson (Art & Art History), Deborah Bandalos (Assessment and Measurement), Tim Bloss (Biology), Michael Busing (Business Administration), Josh Bacon (College Student Personnel Administration), Ayasakanta Rout (CSD), Hossain Heydari (Computer Science – Info. Sec), Debbie Sturm (Counseling & Supervision/Clinical Mental Health Counseling/School Counseling), Allison Fagan (English), Dannette Bronaugh (Exceptional Education), Natasha DuMerville (Student Representative), Caitlin Mundy (Student Representative), Jeremy Akers (Health Sciences), Nicholas Luden (Kinesiology) Brian Flota (Libraries & Educational Technologies), Anthony Tongen (Mathematics Education), Mary Jean Speare (Music), Patty Hale (Nursing), Amy Russell Yun (Occupational Therapy), Gerald Weniger (Physician Assistant Studies), Michael Hall (Psychological Sciences), Fred Mayhew (Public Administration), Tammy Gilligan (School Psychology), Karen Ford (Strategic Leadership).

**Guests Present:** Chris Arndt (CAL), Jane Thall (College of Education), Paula Maxwell (College of Health & Behavioral Sciences), Sarah MacDonald (Outreach and Engagement), Janet Smith (University Communications), Eric Dirth (GSA President)

**Graduate programs not represented:** Adult Ed/HRD, Clinical & School Psychology, Communication & Advocacy), Computer Science, Education, History, ISAT, Political Science (EUPS), WRTC.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 16, 2014 meeting were approved with one amendment. The amendment called for an awareness of the need for more funding in terms of graduate and doctoral assistantships.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Program Directors and Graduate Faculty, as well as their students, were invited to attend the Graduate Community Dinner on September 19, 2014 from 4:30-7:00pm.
- Program Directors and Graduate Faculty, as well as their students, were invited to attend the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Graduate & Law School Fair on September 23, 2014 from 4:00-7:00pm.
- Graduate School Brochure and program descriptions are available upon request.
- April 9, 2015 is the deadline for course/program requests to take effect Summer or Fall 2015. Reviews and revisions of catalog copies must be submitted to Kristi Schackelford by May 15, 2015.
- There is now a more formalized process for submitting travel grants, in order to make TGS travel grants available to more graduate students and to permit the equitable allocation of funds. There will be three deadlines throughout the year. Melissa and Michel encouraged program directors to try to support graduate students with alternate funding and also encourage students apply for TGS grants.
- Melissa and Michael, also encouraged program directors to send The Graduate School stories about student projects and accomplishments, in order to highlight these successes and to help raise visibility about The Graduate School.
- Melissa explained the nomination process for the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Awards. The deadline for submitting nominations to TGS is October 1, 2014.

- The newsletter will circulate about every 3 weeks. Its purpose is to inform graduate students of opportunities outside of their specific programs. Michael's goal for this year is to encourage graduate student engagement and tell the stories of our students.
- Janet Smith (University Communications) described her role as the liaison to The Graduate School. She will try to publish many stories about graduate students through JMU's website, social media sites, and in Madison Magazine and Scholarly News. Please submit story ideas to Janet directly at [smithjl@jmu.edu](mailto:smithjl@jmu.edu).
- Graduate Commencement will now be held on Thursday, May, 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the Convocation Center. This may not be a permanent change. An evening commencement may increase the attendance of students taking online classes or working professionally. Finals will still conclude on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **GSA Report (Presented by Eric Dirth)**

Twenty nine programs were represented at the first GSA Meeting on September 5, 2014. This number is almost double the number of programs that were represented in the GSA last year. All JMU graduate students are welcome to be a member of GSA and participate in GSA activities. There is no membership process. The primary goals of the GSA are to:

- Contribute to the professional development of graduate students
- Facilitate connections among graduate students through sponsorship of social events
- Development of community engagement and responsible stewardship among graduate students

As a service to TGS, the GSA organizes campus tours for prospective graduate students.

Melissa thanked Eric and the rest of the GSA for their leadership and continuous efforts towards developing student connections within The Graduate School.

### **CGS Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees and Assistants (Presented by Melissa)**

The CGS resolution was renewed this year. Concerns about students and/or universities violating the terms of this resolution were raised by members of the Graduate Council. Melissa expressed that when a student is in a difficult situation, or when a program is negatively impacted by violations of this agreement by a particular program, the problem should be reported to her and she will communicate with the Graduate Dean of the other institution.

### **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Library Display (Presented by Brian Flota)**

Brian Flota (Libraries & Educational Technologies) presented ideas for creating a display in November 2014, in honor of The Graduate School's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Display ideas presented:

- Books about graduate school in general
- Books that have been written by JMU graduates
- Books about professionals of graduate programs

Brian's goal is to display about 50 books. Any ideas or suggestions about the display can be sent to Brian at [flotabc@jmu.edu](mailto:flotabc@jmu.edu).

### **Graduate Directors Survey (Presented by Michael)**

Michael expressed the importance of recruiting and described the Graduate School's goal of benchmarking current efforts, sharing ideas across programs, and expanding recruiting efforts. Michael reviewed the responses of 50 Program Directors who responded to a survey completed during August, 2014.

Satisfaction with number of applicants to programs varied across the full spectrum (1 = not at all happy to 5 = very happy), but most Program Directors reported medium (3) to (5 = high satisfaction) with the quality of program applicants. When less satisfied, Program Directors reporting that they were less satisfied with the applicants' technical, analytical, critical thinking, writing skills, or other qualifications.

Program Directors frequently reported the following obstacles to effective recruiting: Lack of student and/or program funding, insufficient time to recruit, lack of marketing skills or knowledge and the absence of quality marketing. They suggested that TGS can help with recruiting by providing marketing consultations, support and funding, helping programs to develop effective marketing strategies, and by increasing student or program funding.

The most frequent marketing strategies reported by Program Directors included: Development of a comprehensive program website, active cultivation of prospects, promotion to JMU undergraduates, inclusion in professional organization databases, and promotion at professional conferences and graduate program fairs. Other less common strategies were also reported.

Next steps for TGS include:

- Discussion regarding what program websites should ideally include.
- Identification of effective strategies for programs with particular target audiences.
- Sharing of ideas and initiating discussions with the Graduate Council and Program Directors.

TGS will:

- Explore new sources of funding (eg- Veterans benefits, additional grant-funded GA positions, community partnerships)
- Enhanced focus on minority & international recruitment
- Provide support to programs with the capacity & desire for growth
- Provide support to programs so they can try new or additional recruitment methods

TGS will also assist with the development of key messages for effectively communicating the value of our graduate programs.

The full presentation that describes specific recruitment strategies is available on request to Michael Stoloff ([stolofml@jmu.edu](mailto:stolofml@jmu.edu)) .

At the conclusion of the presentation, Melissa encouraged council members to think creatively about getting the word out about their programs. The more visibility programs have on campus and in the community, the more faculty members, community members, and alumni consider JMU graduate students for scholarship opportunities.

### **Committee Appointments**

Student representatives to Graduate Council: Caitlin Mundy and Natasha DuMerville

Graduate Council representative to C&I Chairs: Michael Stoloff

Graduate Council representative to A-Team: Michael Stoloff

CAP Graduate Council student representative: Natasha DuMerville

CAP Graduate Council faculty representatives: Karin Tollefson-Hall & Mary Jean Speare

Honor Council representative: Nancy Nichols

### **Remaining 2014-15 Meeting Dates:**

Thursday, October 9, 2014 – Taylor 404

Thursday, November 6, 2014 – Taylor 404

(No December meeting)

Thursday, January 15, 2015 – Taylor 404

Thursday, February 12, 2015 – Taylor 404

(No March meeting)

Thursday, April 2, 2015 – Taylor 404

Retreat: Friday, May 15, 2015, 9:00 a.m. – noon – Montpelier Room