



# Graduate Council

## Retreat Minutes

05/15/15 – Montpelier Room – East Campus Dining Hall

*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, A.J. Morey (Cross-Disciplinary Programs & Curriculum Planning), Nancy Nichols (Accounting), Christine May and Janet Daniel (Biology), Michael Busing (Business Administration), Chris Arndt (College of Arts and Letters), Rick Mathieu (College of Business), Pete Bsumek (Communication and Advocacy), Ayasakanta Rout (Communication Sciences and Disorders), Holly McCartney (Education), Dannette Bronaugh (Exceptional Education), Brian Flota (Libraries and Educational Technologies), Anthony Tongen (Council on Academic Programs), Amy Russell Yun (Occupational Therapy), Jerry Weniger (Physician Assistant Studies), Michael Hall and Jeff Dyche (Psychological Sciences), Fred Mayhew (Public Administration), Karen Ford (Strategic Leadership), Karin Tollefson (School of Art, Design and Art History).

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the February 2015 meeting were approved by acclamation with no revisions.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- New Graduate Student Orientation will be conducted on Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. We would welcome faculty volunteers to join us for discussions with students at lunch.
- New Graduate Dean, Dr. Jie Chen, will be joining us on July 1 – please offer him your warmest welcome!

### **Report on Improvements in Student Support, Communications, & Professional Development** **– Melissa Aleman**

Melissa provided a summary of accomplishments in the areas of student support, communications and recruiting, and professional development.

Highlights in student support included the travel grant program, a streamlined thesis and dissertation formatting manual, partnerships with OSP and the Madison Center for Community Development in increase assistantship support, partnerships with University Advancement to encourage annual giving for graduate student scholarships, support for summer tuition scholarships, a campus-wide student belongingness study, and the first annual GSA report to the Education and Student Life Committee of the B.O.V.

Highlights in the area of communications and recruiting included the inauguration of The Graduate Community Newsletter, a survey of program directors to guide marketing efforts, a comprehensive study of program websites and the development of best practices for recruiting, segmented email recruiting using alumni databases, WMRA underwriting, a contract with Peterson's guide to graduate schools, and improvements to the TGS website.

Finally, highlights of professional development included the inaugural Showcase of Graduate Scholarship and Creative Activities, the co-sponsorship of Public Advocacy Contest, the opening of the Cohen Center for graduate students and its speaker series, the co-sponsorship of CFI's Grant Writing Institute, the

update on GSA scholarship lock-in's, networking and philanthropic events, and a revamping of new graduate student orientation for fall 2015.

### **Presentation of Graduate Student Belonginess Study – Michael Stoloff**

Michael presented initial interpretations of data collected as part of a campus-wide graduate student belonginess study. This study was spearheaded by AJ Good with Megan Rodgers Good, Michael Stoloff and Melissa Aleman. The goal of the study was to identify experiences that predict a higher “sense of belonging.” The presentation focused on levels of student involvement in professional development programming, student success services and offices, campus wide events (e.g. Forbes Center, Cohen Center Speakers), TGS and GSA activities, and the presentation of work at a professional conference.

### **Workshop on Professional Development**

Graduate Council members participated in a workshop that identified those skills that are most needed by graduate students and those activities on campus and in programs that exist to cultivate those skills. The workshops focused on the areas of Communication, Intercultural Competencies, Leadership, Project Management, Career Planning, and Research and Analytic Skills. The inventory and priorities generated from this workshop will be used for future surveys of students and program directors and for developing campus professional development programming.

### **Meeting Schedule for 2015-2016 Academic Year:**

All meetings will be 2:00-3:30pm with the exception of the May Retreat:

Thursday, September 10, 2015, Madison Union 404  
Thursday, October 8, 2015, Madison Union 404  
Thursday, November 12, 2015, Madison Union 306  
No December Meeting  
Thursday, January 14, 2016, Madison Union 404  
Thursday, February 11, 2016, Madison Union 404  
Thursday, March 31, 2016, Madison Union 404  
No April Meeting (Symposium being planned)  
Friday, May 13, 2016 - Morning Retreat