



Graduate Council

Meeting Minutes

Madison Union 404

March 31st, 2016

2:00-3:30 p.m.

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

Members present: Jie Chen (The Graduate School), Melissa Aleman (The Graduate School), Lynette Michael (The Graduate School), Michael Stoloff (The Graduate School), Marilou Johnson (Academic Affairs), Diane Wilcox (Adult Ed/HRD), Christine May (Biology), Ken Critchfield (Clinical and School Psychology), Chris Arndt (College of Arts & Letters), Tisha McCoy-Ntiamoah (College of Business), Pete Bsumek (Communication & Advocacy), Hossain Heydari (Computer Science –Information Security), Dani Bronaugh (Exceptional Education), Caitlin Mundy (Student Representative), Brian Flota (Libraries & Educational Technologies), Jerry Weniger (Physician Assistant Studies), John Scherpereel (Political Science, EUPS), Jeff Dyche (Psychological Sciences), Fred Mayhew (Public Administration), Karen Ford (Strategic Leadership), Michael Klein (Writing Rhetoric & Technical Communication), Nick Swartz (Research & Scholarship), Nancy Nichols (Accounting), Sonja Baker (College of Visual & Performing Arts), Brooks Hefner (English), Matthew Rutherford (Business Administration), Kristi Shackelford (Catalog), Twylla Kirchen (Occupational Therapy), Anthony Tongen (Mathematics Education)

Guests: Rick Larson (Human Resources, Training & Performance), Sara Harper (The Graduate School), Mike Saunders, (Kinesiology), Karin Tollefson (Art & Art History), Joanna Mott (Biology)

1. Approval of minutes

Dani Bronaugh moved to approve the February meeting minutes. John Scherpereel moved to second the motion. Last months' minutes were approved by the Council.

2. Kinesiology Presentation

Kinesiology representative Mike Saunders presented the proposal for the Kinesiology change. This is mostly a difference in structure, streamlining the program.

Melissa noted that the proposal will be sent out for e-vote. There are many other program and curriculum changes for this month because of the Grad Catalog deadline.

3. Announcements & Reports

Associate Dean Search

Nick Swartz, Chair of the Search Committee for the Associate Dean of The Graduate School search reported that the position is a twelve month Instructional Faculty position and there is a posting on Joblink. The search committee met initially with Jie Chen and Michael Stoloff March 4th. The Joblink ad will close April 7th for a review date of April 8th. The Search Committee will meet shortly thereafter to review applicants.

Admissions Software

Michael Stoloff reported that though the Graduate School Admissions process is partially automated, TGS is taking the next step to fully automate and integrate the system with the CollegeNet module ADMIT. The first steps of implementation will take place this summer, and the hope is to be able to roll out the system in fall 2017.

This change will benefit program directors and all users, allowing quick, efficient processing. There will be no need for access to the N drive. The system will be available off campus, and on any device. The Graduate School will serve as a helpdesk, answering questions and providing user sessions.

Admissions Requirements

There is a need to ensure the existence of protocol to periodically review requirements. Requirements are being examined now to determine necessity on the university level.

Changing the JMU TOEFL requirement could enable greater flexibility and diversity of students. A task force will be developed to continue to consider this issue, explore data and predict Grad School success. It is requested that Deans give a recommendation for task force members. There should be representation by all colleges.

Blue Ridge Community College Partnership

Melissa reported on her meeting with President John Downey of BRCC regarding potential partnership in the future. In this initiative, JMU and BRCC would work together to pilot this program. BRCC can grow their adjunct pool, demonstrating that community college professoriate is a valid and desirable career path, and JMU grad students will receive valuable experience and professional development. The first year is a teaching fellowship program – through CFI at JMU students will be mentored, receive professional development, and be vetted. The next year students will teach at BRCC as adjunct faculty. Information on this promising collaboration has been sent to all college deans, and both JMU and BRCC are exploring this initiative with their stakeholders. Melissa asked the Council to please reach out to her or to the deans with any input or questions.

Graduate Showcase of Scholarship & Creative Activities

The Graduate School Showcase will be held Thursday, April 14th, 2016 in the Cohen Center and Madison Union Ballroom.

Council members are asked to encourage students to attend the Grad Showcase. Notification letters are going out in the next couple of days. There is diverse student representation, and partnership with the Honors Program, under the rubric of Scholarship Expo. There will be panels, lunch, and a poster session. Other conferences will be held that day. Melissa will work with Research & Scholarship to ensure we have a comprehensive list. Melissa extended a special “thank you” to Chris Arndt, Michael Klein, Cate Mundy and Laura Ryman for their roles in the planning. A save the date has gone out, and Melissa expressed that The Graduate School hopes that the Grad Council members will attend the event.

The Graduate School Awards Reception

All should have received invitations to the Grad Awards Ceremony Sunday, April 17th at 7:00pm. President Alger and Provost Benson will attend and give remarks, and Dean Chen will present awards. Student achievements in the areas of scholarship, creativity, and engagement will be awarded, and individuals who received a travel grant in 2016-1016 will be recognized. This is an excellent way to close out the academic year, celebrating students' accomplishments. Melissa expressed special thanks to members of the Awards Committee.

GSA Report

Cate Mundy reported that the 2nd annual Ethics Slam event was a success. Eight programs were represented, and the Grad Student team won. An Ethics Slam will be planned for the fall semester.

GSA Executive Council has been formed for 2016/17. Member bios will be posted soon.

The Meet & Greet with the Deans was last week. Possible initiatives that resulted from conversations between Deans and students are: A food drive for graduate students, and housing assistance via a Facebook group for graduate students.

“The Big Event” is scheduled for April 9th. Council members are asked to encourage students to join.

A CVCFP workshop will be held at the Cohen Center, Wilson 107 April 11th.

The Graduate Showcase is a great opportunity for students to show their work. Please support them.

The final GSA meeting is April 17th at 5pm, before the Awards Reception. Provost Jerry Benson will attend.

Council is asked to encourage students to attend this meeting.

The GSA will be presenting the GSA Impact Awards at the Graduate Awards Reception – there is one student award and one faculty award.

December Grad Commencement Ceremony

Kathy Thompson reported on capacity issues for commencement, and the suggestion by Jerry Benson and Donna Harper that Graduate Commencement in December 2016 be held separately in Wilson Hall, Friday evening at 7pm. The parking deck will be completed by then, and Wilson would provide plenty of room. There has not been a final decision yet on this change. Council members were encouraged to send feedback to Sara Harper by next Friday, April 8th.

Graduate Strategic Planning

Jie explained the process of how the draft Strategic Plan has been developed by the task force. He reiterated that there are 3 phases, and the 2nd phase will be completed after soliciting and receiving feedback from stakeholders. The taskforce plans to have the Strategic Plan finalized two weeks after receiving input from stakeholders. Jie expressed thanks to the task force, pointing out those who were in attendance, including Rick Larson, task force facilitator, attending as a guest. This has been a comprehensive and inclusive process, generating interest in graduate education. All attending the Graduate Council meeting are asked to also encourage colleagues to provide feedback. The deadline for feedback is Friday, April 8th. Please email Sara Harper at harpe2sc@jmu.edu.

Jie, Melissa and Michael summarized the goals and subsequent strategies for the group. Goals were explained by the Dean and Associate Deans according to the focus areas within The Graduate School.

Jie concluded the discussion by asking the group to read the draft Strategic Plan closely, and send comments and feedback to Sara Harper at harpe2sc@jmu.edu by Friday, April 8th.

****Remaining Schedule for 2015-2016 Academic Year:***

No April Meeting

Thursday, April 14, 2016 Graduate Showcase of Scholarship & Creative Activities, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Sunday April 17, 2016 TGS Awards Reception, Madison Union Ballroom (RSVP grad@jmu.edu)

Friday, May 13, 2016 - 9:00 am - Noon