



Graduate Council

Minutes

10/8/15 – Madison Union 404

*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), Karin Tollefson (Art & Art History), Tisha McCoy Ntiamoah (Business Administration), Brooks Hefner (English), Dannette Bronaugh (Exceptional Education), Courtney Sanders (Student Representative), Nicholas Luden (Kinesiology), Brian Flota (Libraries & Educational Technologies), Twylla Kirchen (Occupational Therapy), Gerald Weniger (Physician Assistant Studies), Jeff Dyche (Psychological Sciences), Fred Mayhew (Public Administration), Karen Ford (Strategic Leadership), Pamela Sullivan (Education), Alyssa Welch (GSA), Caitlin Mundy (GSA), Pete Bsumek (Communication & Advocacy), Ken Critchfield (Clinical & School Psychology), Diane Wilcox (Adult Ed/HRD), Janet Smith (University Communications), Traci Zimmerman (WRTC), [Marilou Johnson](#) ([Academic Development](#))

Guests Present: Kristi Shackelford (Catalog), Tisha McCoy-Ntiamoah (Outreach & Engagement), Sara Harper (The Graduate School), Joe Tacy (Nursing), Tracie Esmaili (The Graduate School), Lisa Ha (University Marketing)

Graduate programs not represented: Accounting, CSD, Counseling & Supervision/Clinical Mental Health Counseling/School Counseling, Computer Science - Information Security, Mathematics Education School Psychology, EFEX, TESOL, College of Education

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the September 11, 2015 meeting were approved.

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Marketing & Student Recruitment

Michael Stoloff reported on Marketing and Student Recruitment in The Graduate School. He introduced Tracie Esmaili, TGS Recruiter and Lisa Ha, Assistant Director of University Marketing, both of whom are instrumental to the expansion and focus of graduate recruiting.

September 2015 Survey of programs: Data shows the optimal and actual number of students enrolled this year.

Programs show capacity for more students, using current resources.

Grad Enrollment can increase 200- 250 students if all programs enroll to optimal capacity.

Google AdWords workshop Oct 29 Memorial Hall 2 – 3:30

Michael reported that in collaboration with JMU Marketing, the Graduate School is conducting these marketing activities:

1. Identifying overall messages that distinguish JMU's graduate programs from competitors.
2. Developing academic area website pages specific to graduate education.

3. Developing marketing-focused snapshot pages for each graduate program.
4. Supporting the development of program-managed web pages.
5. Developing and implementing recruitment strategies that include:
 - Appointment of a TGS Recruiter (Tracie Esmali)
 - Development of strategies to drive traffic to JMU graduate program websites (Peterson's Guide, Google AdWords, etc.)
 - Implementing email marketing campaigns to current students, alumni, GRE database, etc.
 - Expanding attendance at graduate fairs
 - Actively developing strategies for international recruitment

Michael asked the Council to help programs with the following:

1. Identify key messages for programs
2. Make improving program websites a priority
3. Review/help update academic pages
4. Review/help update snapshot pages
5. Develop and implement program-specific recruitment strategies
6. Consider recruitment of international students

Tracie is developing an information request form

Members are invited to email TGS with any further questions regarding initiatives

Commonwealth Graduate Education Day

Melissa Aleman announced to the Council that the upcoming Commonwealth Graduate Education Day will take place Friday October 30th at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The purpose of this event is to increase visibility of Graduate Education in the state and promote the value of a graduate degree to the undergraduate students attending. The target audience is underrepresented undergraduate students at community colleges and four-year institutions. The event will work to introduce these students to the possibility of a path to graduate school and beyond in the state of Virginia.

A story about Commonwealth Graduate Education Day will be posted to the website after the event.

JMU Graduate & Professional School Fair

Michael Stoloff reported on the success of the September 22nd Graduate & Professional School Fair that was held by The Graduate School.

There were 150 recruiters and 18 JMU programs

A record number of students attended the fair – over 300

Recruiter feedback: This was one of the most successful fairs they had been a part of, referencing both the number of recruiters and number of attendees

Tracie Esmali has begun the process of following up with the student attendees

Cohen Center Speaker Series

Jie Chen announced the Cohen Center Speaker Series, and the schedule was provided. The Cohen Center puts forth a collaborative effort to promote interdisciplinary ideas and research. Renowned speakers are invited to JMU, and members of the Graduate Council are encouraged to attend, as well as to inform their colleagues of this opportunity to interact with the speakers during and after their talks.

GSA Report

The Graduate Student Association is off to a strong start this year. GSA president Alyssa Welch reported on the progress made introducing the idea of advocacy, creating advocacy groups, fundraising, and encouraging students to join. Upcoming events include fundraising for travel grants, convocation cleanup,

Happy Hour at Capital Ale House, Proceeds Night at the Golden Pony, and the upcoming GSA meeting this Sunday. The collaboration between the GSA and The Graduate School is a critical partnership. Alyssa has regular meetings with the Dean – both Alyssa and Jie have high hopes for the GSA this year.

3. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Physician Assistant Studies Program Revision

Jerry Weniger presented the proposed change for the Physician Assistant Studies Program. The proposed change is a credit hour adjustment in order to accurately reflect the actual contact hours of the course, therefore aligning with PA programs of regional comparison.

This program action request was approved by the council via e-vote following the meeting..

Policy Change Discussion

Michael Stoloff facilitated a discussion regarding closing dates for graduate applications. He presented the current admissions procedures and raised the question ‘Should TGS have an Application Deadline?’

According to current Graduate School policy, programs are free to set admission deadlines, utilize a rolling-admission process, or develop some combination strategy. The Graduate School expects programs to adhere to published program-specific policies. Programs are expected to review all completed applications that are received prior to a program’s deadline. If a program has a deadline, applications that are received after that deadline, late applications should not be considered unless the deadline is extended for all applicants.

To facilitate graduate student recruitment efforts, the Graduate School is asking programs to consider delaying admission deadlines to allow us to recruit as many students as possible. However, the Graduate School also recognizes that many programs need to complete their admission process during the Spring semester because faculty do not work during the summer.

The Graduate School recommended use of the a “preferred review date” rather than a deadline whenever possible. With this strategy, applicants would be encouraged to apply before a particular date, but others may apply after that date. Late applications will only be considered if space is available, and/or late applicants might not have priority consideration for assistantships.

After some discussion, the Graduate School agreed to consider the conversation and input received during during the Graduate Council meeting. No immediate global policy change will be implemented. If policy changes are recommended in the future the Graduate School would send a draft proposal to Program Directors for feedback prior to making a specific recommendation to the Graduate Council.

Remaining 2014-15 Meeting Dates:

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

