



Graduate Council Retreat Summary

May 15, 2020
9:00am - 12:00 pm
[WebEx](#)

Greetings

Dean Burgess greeted participants and shared a PowerPoint that had been prepared and presented before members of the Academic Leadership Team highlighting the success of the graduate programs and graduate alumni satisfaction.

I. Approval of Minutes

The April 9, 2020, Program Directors Assembly meeting minutes were unanimously approved via a voice vote.

II. Discussion Items

1. Policy Discussion/Approval

The Executive Committee worked diligently this year to update the Policies and Procedures. There will be a small group that will work over the summer on the certificate programs. There is also a need to bring in University Legal Services to revise the graduate faculty appointment portion of the Policies and Procedures.

The floor was open for discussion on the Policies and Procedures. Below are the highlights of those discussions.

- A request was made for additional clarification on the English Language Proficiency requirement found on page 3. All members were in agreement to add additional language to this policy that programs may have more stringent requirements.
- For policy 1200, language will be added that the conditions of admission must be completed ASAP and specific language will be added for one-year modules.
- The policy for the Forfeiture of Assistantship is very clear; however, it does not match letter D, on the second page, of the Graduate Assistant Contract. The language on the contract is vague. Mr. Boris Escalona will work to align the language found on the contract to match the policy.

Upon motion by Dr. Julie Wallace Carr, and seconded by Dr. Rachelle Dorne, the Policies and Procedures were unanimously approved with the addition of the items above.

2. Executive Committee Membership

The Executive Committee is comprised of one graduate faculty member representing each college, and the Associate Deans of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School serves as the chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee members will need to be identified by the start of the new school year in the fall.

3. Graduate Education Moving Forward

- Pressing Needs/Issues Programs are Facing

Concern was expressed for international students who are here in the US this summer and are unable to return home because of pandemic travel restrictions. Is The Graduate School aware of any international students stranded in apartments without means to travel to grocery stores? Are there international students faced with dilemmas like not being able to make rent and the inability to seek medical treatment? What emergency funding is available to these international students? The Graduate School has identified international graduate students and is working to provide support for these students.

The following questions were raised about the matter:

- What about the possibility of using foundation funds to provide students with assistance?
- Would the Development Office be able to provide any assistance to students in need?
- Would Madison for Keeps be able to provide assistance?
- Several members expressed willingness to assist with transportation and grocery shopping for these students, but wondered if there were implications for doing so (international tax laws)?

Besides international students, there may be other students facing similar issues that live in the area who are not able to travel home. The Graduate School has had conversations with Dr. Tim Miller, Vice President for Student Affairs, and he too shares the same concerns for the well-being of all students. Conversations such as these are on-going between Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and The Graduate School. Mr. Burgess and Dr. Maxwell will meet to discuss this matter further.

- Graduate Assistantships are the primary source of funding offered to students. Graduate Assistantships that have already been processed for 2020-21 will be honored. Given the current COVID-19 situation, the Division of Academic Affairs guarantees the tuition for Graduate Assistantships, but the stipend is dependent upon the student's ability to fulfill the duties of that position and contingent on available funding. Stipend funding ultimately reside in the budgets of the colleges

and in the units. The stipend component is a conversation that needs to happen between the unit heads and the Deans to ensure that the stipends exist.

The general message to all students who inquire: JMU has graduate assistantships that include tuition and stipends (as described on TGS's web pages). When talking with a particular student about a particular assistantship, there can and should be specific conversations about tuition and stipend for that particular position.

Graduate Assistantships that reside in Auxiliary budgets area a concern, and The Graduate School realizes the dependency of some programs on these Auxiliary Graduate Assistantships. Programs that depend on Auxiliary Graduate Assistantships should contact Mr. Boris Escalona. The Graduate School realizes these Auxiliary Graduate Assistantships are critical to the recruitment and retention of students.

- Members shared concerns with the uncertainty about when some students will be able to complete clinical experiences during this evolving pandemic, how that might affect graduation and what they can do in the interim. Temporary policies have been crafted to waive the requirement for enrolling in continuance courses in order to maintain continuous enrollment. The temporary changes in policies will help to alleviate the financial obligation of students until they are able to complete their degree program.
- In the fall, JMU plans to resume its on-campus operations. Mr. Burgess is serving on a presidential working group that is giving consideration to the safety of faculty and staff when students return to campus. More information will be coming over the summer on this matter.
- It is still not known when travel restrictions will be lifted. International students can take online courses from their home country. They can only receive a student visa if they are able to take face to face classes in the U.S. Discussion ensued about whether international students can hold a wage position and other possibilities for their employment. The bottom line is that there are tax implications and laws that cannot be circumvented.
- Online Program Advisory Group

The purpose of the Online Program Advisory Group is to hold conversations in order to assemble the knowledge and experience of the members and to be able to share that knowledge with others who may be interested in expanding the delivery of their programs in similar ways. The formation of this group to look at online education was already being considered early in the spring semester and before emergency remote teaching was implemented in response to COVID-19.

The members represent programs that were already offering their courses through an online environment or a combination of high-flex well before the impact of the pandemic. These programs have been quite successful and are modules that interested programs might consider emulating. The conversations during the

meetings have been rich with topics like technology uses, pedagogy, high-flex and assessment. The end result will be a report with recommendations for programs considering moving to an online environment. The members are more than willing to share their expertise and experiences with others.

- Exploring Distance Education

While the plan is to be back on campus this fall and operating fully, there are many possible scenarios being discussed as it is simply unknown the environment we will be operating in. If some degree of social distancing continues this fall, particularly with any students or faculty who are at an increased risk, offering distance learning options would be one option.

- Virtual Choices for Graduate Education

Traditionally, CHOICES is offered to undergraduate admitted students as an Open House event on campus. However the university moved CHOICES from an on campus platform to an online platform. The Graduate School will be creating a virtual view book, which will be modeled after the undergraduate online CHOICES. It will be a virtual campus tour focusing on graduate education. Programs already have videos introducing their programs. Program Directors will be asked to record videos about their programs with the goal of having authentic videos that explain about each program. The wish is to expand on the program videos to include student testimonials, which are powerful recruiting tools. Recordings will be done in the early fall and information about what programs should include in their videos will be sent out by TGS.

- Interdisciplinary Leadership Certificate

The Graduate School in Partnership with the office of Professional and Continuing Education are interested in developing an Interdisciplinary Leadership Certificate program that could be expanded to a Master of Science in Administration Degree. The idea has been discussed and support has been received from the Provost. It is a fusion of a number of different types of programs to create an adaptive master of science in administration, leadership and supervision.

- Masters of Science in Administration Degree

A Master of Science in Administration is being considered as an interdisciplinary leadership program. It would meet the educational needs and interests of a wide range of administrators and managers in both the public and nonprofit sectors. The program would be geared to working professionals in the administrative field that want to advance their current management and leadership skills. The program is designed to offer a core of 18 credit hours of interdisciplinary courses and would require a total of 36 credit hours. It would be a very unique program and would be the only one of its kind offered by a state university in Virginia.

While initial support was expressed, one concern is how to incentivize for program participation especially in the current environment with the inability to hire

adjuncts. Yes, right now that is a valid concern with the priority being to support the existing programs during the pandemic. In the long run, there is definitely positive potential for growth by offering such a program.

- **Online fees for Summer Programs**

Online fees for summer programs have been a concern of graduate students. At the graduate level, courses taken during the summer are required courses for degree progress. A list is being created that distinguishes courses that would have been traditionally taught face-to-face, but now have been moved to an online format. It is felt that students who signed-up to take those face-to-face courses should not have a burden for the online course fees.

Members were in agreement that the course fee is like a double whammy to mandate that students take classes online to graduate and then to charge them more during a pandemic. These conversations are still on-going.

Conclusion

Dean Burgess thanked members for their participation on Graduate Council this year.

With no further business, the Graduate Council Retreat ended at 11:56 a.m.



Graduate Council Retreat

Voting Members

Sign-in Sheet

May 15, 2020

2:00 - 3:30 pm

WebEx

Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined WebEx Meeting
Almjeld	Jennifer	Writing, Rhetoric, & Technical Communication (WRTC)	Yes
Argenbright	Christine	Nursing	Yes
Bandalos	Deborah	Psychology - Graduate	Yes
Brantmeier	Noorie	Learning, Technology, & Leadership Education	Yes
Carothers	David	Mathematics	
Dabback	William	Music	Yes
Dorne	Rachelle	Occupational Therapy	Yes
Dyche	Jeff	Psychology - Undergraduate	Yes
Ford	Karen	School of Strategic Leadership	Yes
Hefner	Brooks	English	Yes
Heydari	Hossain	Computer Science	
Hickerson	Corey	Communication & Advocacy	Yes
Luden	Nicholas	Kinesiology	Yes
Mayhew	Fred	Political Science	Yes
Morales	Daniel	History	
Myers	Joy	Early, Elementary & Reading Education	
Nichols	Nancy	Accounting	Yes
Rout	Ayasakanta	Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSD)	
Rutherford	Matthew	Business Administration	
Wallace Carr	Julie	Hart School	Yes



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Wasta	Stephanie	Educational Foundations & Exceptionalities	Yes
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Signature
Webb	Angela	Middle, Secondary and Mathematics Education	Yes
Wightman	Bill	School of Art & Design History	Yes
Wunderlich	Roshna	Biology	Yes



Graduate Council Retreat

Guests

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2:00 - 3:30 pm

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The Graduate School Representatives Non-Voting Members		
Full Name	Title	Joined WebEx Meeting
John Burgess	Interim Dean	Yes
Michael Stoloff	Associate Dean, Admissions and Recruitment	Yes
Laura Ryman	Interim Assistant Dean and Director of Graduate Student Services	Yes

Guests			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Signature
Anderson	Robin	Graduate Psychology	Yes
Arndt	Chris	Dean's Office, College of Arts and Letters	Yes
Atkins	Karris	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Bell	Pamela	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Bourne	Mary Lou	Research and Scholarship	
Buchholz	Florian	Computer Science	
Davis	Marcus	Dean's Office, College of Science & Mathematics	
Diop	Corinne	School of Art and Design History	Yes
Doss	Cheryl	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Escalona Berbetty	Boris	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Evans	Amanda	Graduate Psychology	
Gaines	Briana	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Garber	Jeannie	Nursing	



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Graham	Amy	Nursing	
Holloway	Steven	Libraries & Educational Technologies	Yes
Kiely	Michelle	School Counseling Program	
Klein	Michael	Associate Professor, WRTC	Yes
Knopp	Andrea	Nursing	Yes
Leventhal	Brian	Psychology – Graduate	Yes
MacDonald	Sarah	Dean’s Office, Professional & Continuing Education	Yes
Maxwell	Paula	Dean’s Office, College of Health & Behavioral Studies	Yes
Michael	Lynette	Dean’s Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Miller	Yvonne	Dean’s Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Shackelford	Kristi	Office of Vice Provost for Academic Development	
Sloan	Margaret	School of Strategic Leadership	Yes
Tang	Jeff	Dean’s Office, College of Integrated Science and Engineering	
Wang	Felix	Center for Global Engagement, International Programs	
Williams	Brittany	Dean’s Office, The Graduate School	

Name of Guest Not Included on List Above			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Signature