



The Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

January 26, 2015

The Graduate Council met on Monday, January 26, 2015 at 2:00 P.M. in room 311 of the Byrnes Building.

Graduate Council members present: Dr. Stacy Fritz, Chair; Drs. Jennifer Arns, Matt Brown, Nancy Brown, Erik Drasgow, Minuette Floyd, Thomas Kramer, Julia Lopez-Robertson, DeAnne Messias, Caroline Nagel, James Ritter, David Tedeschi, Terrance Weik, Tracey Weldon-Stewart; Danielle Schoffman, GSA Representative

Graduate Council members absent: Alexander Beecroft, Jerry Hilbish, Elena Osokina, and Susan Yeargin

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Jessica Elfenbein, Dr. Murray Mitchell, Dale Moore and Teresa Smith

Provost Office Representative: Dr. Kristia Finnigan

Guests: Laura Kissel

NOTE: *These minutes will become final on February 23, 2015, if not challenged.*

1. **Call to Order and Approval of Agenda** (Stacy Fritz)

Dr. Fritz called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M.

2. **Approval of Minutes for the meeting on January 26, 2015.**

The minutes were reviewed electronically and approved by the Council. Minutes are on file at The Graduate School website at:

<http://app.gradschool.sc.edu/gradcouncil/minutes.asp>

3. **Report of the Chair** (Stacy Fritz)

No report

4. **Report of the Dean of The Graduate School** (Jessica Elfenbein for Lacy Ford)

Today is the deadline for the first round of Presidential Fellows. A total of 31 nominations

were received.

The Travel Grants have been awarded for the year. The Graduate School funded 320 students from 49 different programs across campus. The budget for travel grants is stagnant at \$150,000. It is a first come, first served program. Vetting of the students is done in the departments before students apply. The Graduate School is pleased to fund travel for these students to represent the University.

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and USC have partnered to present three graduate fellowships. The Doctoral Fellowships provide three years of funding from the SREB at \$20,000 a year for the first three years. The student's University program is responsible for funding years 4 and 5. This fellowship is for underrepresented minority students. There is also a Dissertation Fellowship available at \$20,000.

The Graduate School is launching a [Graduate Civic Scholars Program](#). This is intended for students who are interested in conducting community-based research and social justice projects. There is a stipend of \$500 per student, and there will be up to 20 students in the first cohort. Kirk Foster from the College of Social Work is the founding faculty director of the program. You may contact him directly at kfoster@mailbox.sc.edu if you have any questions.

5. Report of the Associate Dean / Secretary of the Graduate Council (Murray Mitchell)

Dr. Mitchell reported that most of his time has been spent addressing outstanding graduation clearance issues from last Fall, processing Requests for Grade Changes and Requests for Completion of Incomplete Grades. Dr. Mitchell asked for Graduate Council's assistance in communicating with students and faculty in each department regarding the proper use of the Change of Grade form and the Completion of an Incomplete Grade form.

The Completion of an Incomplete Grade form clearly states, "Any additional make-up work done is not an acceptable way for a student to improve their grade." These forms are routinely submitted to the Graduate School, and Dr. Mitchell has to contact the faculty member to discuss proper use of the form.

Dr. Fritz asked if it is the grade change forms or the incomplete forms that are the most problematic. Dr. Mitchell responded that both forms present issues. On the grade change form, a faculty member will include a statement that a student submitted exceptionally good work, but only after final grades were submitted.

The other is the explanation for incomplete grades. Any student has a calendar year to make up an incomplete grade. Before that year expires, a request for an extension is possible. Routinely, Dr. Mitchell approves these forms if the circumstances were beyond the control of the student. For example, a student is on a grant where the funding was delayed. Therefore, data was not collected in a timely fashion. A student was there to analyze the data, however, the data was not yet unavailable. This is an issue beyond a student's control.

Problems arise for work not being completed within the one years. Then, two or more years are required, when the work was designated to be completed in a single semester.

Currently, Dr. Mitchell has very little guidance on how to make decisions on these cases. He asked for guidance from Graduate Council. The work is fairly time consuming, reading each case, investigating the details, and writing explanations to faculty regarding proper use of these forms. He has not yet notified faculty that they can make an appeal to Graduate Council, if they disagree with this policy. But, until there is a change in policy, Dr. Mitchell will continue to administer the current policy. Dr. Mitchell's concern for the student is that they are being misinformed, if they believe they can produce extra work to get a higher grade. He understands that the student can save time and tuition not having to repeat a course for a better grade, but he does not want the student to be misinformed.

Dr. Elfenbein suggested sending out a "Did You Know?" campaign on listserv or via email to graduate directors and graduate administrators. It can be broadcasted also to the students using social media; Facebook, Twitter, on The Graduate School website and through the GSA. She stated that this would inform students, faculty and administrators.

Dr. Messias added that Graduate Deans and Associate Deans should also be included in the notification as well as graduate directors.

Dr. Fritz asked if Undergraduate administration may be experiencing the same issue. Dr. Matt Brown responded that Undergraduate administration does have a similar issue as he had been contacted by the Registrar's office in the past for a similar issue.

Caroline Nagel pointed out that a better explanation is need on Self Service Carolina website as to the meaning of an NR vs a W and under what circumstances a student might get these types of grades.

Danielle Schoffman mentioned that she once received an "I" as a doctoral student. She was not informed that the "I" would eventually transfer to an "F", if the work is not completed. She stated that better notification is needed to inform students as well as faculty and staff of the use of forms and an explanation of the codes on the forms.

Dr. Mitchell also mentioned that department head signature stamps are often used on these forms by administrative coordinators and that is also problematic.

Dr. Mitchell thanked the Council for their questions, comments and suggestions regarding these issues.

6. Report of the Graduate Student Association Representative (Danielle Schoffman)

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is planning for Graduate Student Week 2015. It is planned to coincide each year with Graduate Student Day. Graduate Student Day is April 10, and Graduate Student Week is April 6-10. This information is published in [The Garnet Graduate, GSA Newsletter](#), linked here.

7. **Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee** (Julia Lopez-Robertson)

No report

8. **Report of the Committee on 500/600 Level Courses, Distance Education and Special Courses** (Murray Mitchell)

A listing of 500/600 Level Courses was presented to Council. The list was presented to the Council for informational purposes only.

New Course Proposal & Distributed Education Delivery

[EMCH 567 Bio-Nano/Micro-ElectroMechanical Systems \(BioNEMS/MEMS\)](#)

Nano/Microfabrication for nano/microstructures, photolithography, self-assembly, etching techniques, physical and chemical vapor deposition, surface and bulk micromachining, MEMS integration and packaging; applications in Biomedical Engineering: microactuators, biomicrosensors, and biomedical devices.

[Prerequisites: CHEM112/L, PHYS 212]

[Effective: Fall 2015]

New Course Proposal

[POLI 591 Special Topics in Political Science \(3\)](#)

Intensive study of special topics in Political Science. May be repeated as content varies by title. This course serves an important departmental need to provide masters students as well as advanced undergraduates with suitable 500-level topics courses.

[Effective: Fall 2015]

Distributed Education Delivery

[SMED 729 Special Topics in Science for Teachers \(1-3\)](#)

Offered as a contract professional development course for teachers in a face-to-face format. Drs. Yow, Lotter, Ely have received a National Science Foundation's grant to provide professional development contract courses to rural teachers in areas outside the Columbia area.

Class will be organized into 9 modules, spread over 9 weeks. Each module will take approximately 12 hours to complete.

[Effective: Spring 2015]

Distributed Education Delivery

[SMED 769 Special Topics in Mathematics for Teachers \(1-3\)](#)

Offered as a contract professional development course for teachers in a face-to-face format. Drs. Yow, Lotter, Ely have received a National Science Foundation's grant to provide professional development contract courses to rural teachers in areas outside the Columbia area.

Class will be organized into 9 modules, spread over 9 weeks. Each module will take approximately 12 hours to complete.

[Effective: Spring 2015]

9. **Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations** (Murray Mitchell)

Name: None
Program:
Term:

10. **Fellowships and Scholarships Committee** (Caroline Nagel)

Dr. Nagel reported that today is the deadline for the first round of Presidential Fellows. A meeting is planned for Monday, February 2 to review the 31 nominations received.

11. **Report of the Science, Math, and Related Professional Program Committee** (DeAnne Messias)

Academic Program Actions and Bulletin Change **Tabled**

[Information Assurance and Security Certificate \(18\)](#)

Current: Certificate Requirements (18 Hours)

Proposed: Certificate Requirements (12 Hours)

The graduate certificate program in information assurance and security requirements 12 hours of graduate study at least half of which must be courses at the 700 level or above with the CSCE designator, completed within a period of six years before the award of the certificate.

The 12 hours must include two core courses: CSCE 522 – Information Security Principles, CSCE 715 – Network Systems Security
[Effective: Spring 2015]

Course Change Proposal **Tabled**

[GEOL 800 Seminar General Geology \(1-3\)](#)

Current: 1-3 credit hours

Proposal: 0-1 credit hours

Required of all graduate students. Note: Pass-fail grading
[Effective: Fall 2016]

12. **Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee** (Matt Brown)

New Course Proposal **Approved**

[FILM 710 Advanced Special Topics in Film and Media Studies \(3\)](#)

Advanced study of a specific topic in film and media studies. May be repeated as content varies by title.

The addition of a graduate level Advanced Special Topics course in Film and Media Studies enables faculty in our program to participate in graduate education at USC. A course in our discipline will draw from graduate students in the humanities, primarily from our partner units (English, Media Arts, and Art History) but also potentially from History, Public History, and Library and Information Science.

Faculty in Film and Media Studies have offered graduate courses in the past under ENGL and HIST designators. The addition of our own designator creates program visibility among graduate students and takes advantage of our faculty's expertise.

A Film and Media Studies graduate course designator will help us recruit graduate students with interest in film/media studies. It will also help recruit future faculty to USC who will be jointly appointed within the Film and Media Studies Program and another unit. Current partner units are English, Media Arts and Art History (School of Visual Art and Design), and Music.
[Effective: Spring 2015]

13. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (Erik Drasgow)

No report

14. Other Committee Reports

No report

15. Old Business

No report

16. New Business

Dr. Finnigan mentioned that the new Electronic Proposal Routing System is nearly ready to be implemented. We are working out the final glitches and making sure that the program works. As an overview of the system, Council members will be able to route, review, make comments, and approve proposals securely online. The names of the Graduate Council members are loaded and some final glitches are being resolved.

Dr. Finnigan will give a preliminary presentation of the system at the next Graduate Council meeting.

17. Good of the Order

Dr. Fritz reminded Council Members to please remember to sign the attendance roster.

Dr. Mitchell requested Council Members explore any concerns regarding graduate education that may exist in their home department or within their own reflection. The Graduate Council has the potential to influence policy and practice that can contribute to increasing the quality of graduate education at this University.

Dr. Nancy Brown asked if Dr. Mitchell could offer any examples. Dr. Mitchell responded that the Academic Policy and Practices Committees is already considering the issue of 'Residency.' Other possibilities may include attention to guidelines for Accelerated Plan and Senior Privilege opportunities, as more students are coming to their undergraduate programs with as much as 30 hours of college credit earned in high school and are

looking at getting an early start on graduate coursework. There are limits to what can be taken prior to full admission to a graduate degree program that will “count” toward that graduate degree and/or “count” also for undergraduate degree. There are likely other issues that also warrant consideration by this group.

18. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 P.M. The next meeting is on February 23, 2015.

Murray Mitchell, Secretary

cc:

President Harris Pastides

Senior Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies Lacy Ford

Provost Michael Amiridis

Deans

Department Chairs

Graduate Directors

Aaron Marterer, University Registrar

Jodie Morris, Office of the Registrar

Andrew Graves, Office of the Registrar

Nancy Floyd, Office of Institutional Assessment and Compliance