

MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
October 25th, 2022
Hybrid: Houchens, room 105 and Teams

Convene – The meeting convened at 3:00 P.M. by Dr. Beth Boehm, Dean.

Ex-Officio: Dr. Beth Boehm, Dean and Dr. Paul DeMarco, Associate Dean

Members Present: Anita Barbee, Simona Bertacco, Geoffrey Clark, Lindsay Della, Monica Gentili, Lidiya Grote, Mary Hums, Maiying Kong, Michele Kosiewicz, Matthew Nelson, Tricia Soucy, Joe Steffen, Cami Nasr, Ali Underwood, Gerold Willing

Members Absent:, Daniel Bennett, Natalie DuPre, Frances Hardin-Fanning, Michele Pisano, Lisa Markowitz, Michael McIntyre, Kelli Peck-Parrott, Meghan Pifer, Christopher Ryan, Tamara Sluss, Monica Wendel

Guests: Patriece Campbell-Palmer

Update from Graduate Student Council – Cami Nasr (President of Graduate Student Council) provided the following updates. (?)

Action Items:

- **Approval of minutes from August 23, 2022**
 - Dean Boehm asked for review and approval of the council minutes from August 23, 2022. **MOTION** by Gerold Willing. **SECOND** by Maiying Kong. 1 abstain. **APPROVED.**
- **Approve TOEFL Essentials Proposal**
 - TOEFL Essentials is a four-skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) English-language test, developed by the same organization that designed TOEFL iBT® test.
 - The TOEFL Essentials test is designed for efficient measurement of both foundational aspects of language proficiency (lexical and grammatical competence) as well as the ability to communicate in English through a range of language knowledge activities and communicative language tasks.
 - Many nationally ranked universities accept TOEFL Essentials as proof of English proficiency. Specifically, four members of the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) currently recognize the test at the graduate level.
 - We recommend recognizing the TOEFL Essential exam as proof of proficiency and setting a **minimum score of 9**, with a **minimum sub score of 8** based on the comparison with peer institutions.

- i. This is the guidelines for Graduate School, but the departments can increase the requirements, if they like.
- Dean Boehm asked for review and approval of the TOEFL Essentials proposal. **MOTION** by Joe Steffen. **SECOND** by Cami Nasr. 1 abstain. **APPROVED**.

Information Items

- **Review of the Provost's recommendation on virtual meeting options**
 - **Provost's response:** Virtual meeting options are not a requirement for any university meeting. Unless a student, staff or faculty member can provide a statement from their healthcare provider stating that they should not come into contact with other people, they are not entitled to a virtual attendance accommodation. While virtual meeting options can increase attendance and even enhance the objectives of a meeting, if meeting objectives are compromised or suffer because of the virtual or hybrid format, then it's very appropriate and permissible for the meeting organizer to move to in-person-only meetings.
 - Graduate School will provide a virtual meeting link for those with a medical issue that prevents them from attending in-person.
 - Those who are sick on the day of meetings can request a virtual meeting link.
 - Doctor's notes are not required.

Discussion Items

- **JED, Supporting Graduate Student Mental Health**
 - Dean Boehm is co-chairing on JED.
 - JED came for a site visit the week of October 17th to meet with students.
 - JED is looking for faculty to serve on the committee. Send your names to Dr. Boehm if you are interested.
 - 15 students participated in a focus group (half were graduate students).
 - Comments from the focus group were shared with the council.
 - Students are concerned that mental health is not a focus of the university.
 - Students want to understand what resources are available to them.

- Some students feel supported by their professors/mentors
- There are international students who do not feel supported by mentors.
- Mental health resources are available at orientation for students. They need to be reinforced by the units.

Recommendations: none

Announcements: none

Old Business – none

New Business – none

Adjourned at 4:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted 10/26/2022
Reilly Brown, Administrative Associate
Approved Graduate Council Meeting: _____