

**Minutes**  
**Graduate Academic Affairs Committee**  
**August 19, 2016**

**Members in Attendance:** H. Ardizzone, J. Barber, J. Fu, D. Hall, SD. Jayaram, S. Jordan, A. Kaikati, A. Kent, M. Mancini, J. Martin, L. McLaughlin, A. Miller, A. Rellergert, D. Roby, J. Schneider, A. Trees, C. Werner, L. Willoughby, R. Wood

**Guest in Attendance:** J. Haugen

**Call to Order:** Dr. Wood called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes from the May 20, 2016 meeting:** Motion made by H. Ardizzone to approve the May 20, 2016, meeting minutes and seconded by D. Hall, unanimous approval.

**Old Business:**

A review of the current policy on graduate students working while on an assistantship was discussed. R. Wood questioned whether or not there was a completed policy.

The policy that is in the assistant handbook states that a student must have prior approval of their dean to take any external appointment when holding an assistantship. The reason for the rule is to make sure that the student's focus is on their graduate work. It was discussed whether there should be a change in this policy.

There was discussion regarding half assistantships, especially when they are working just a few hours on campus. Elimination of the need for approval would allow a student to get a job without going through all the steps. R. Wood requested an electronic copy of the current policy. Once received it will be distributed to all members of the committee.

The current wording from the grad assistant manual states: "Students appointed to an assistantship or fellowship may not engage in any concurrent employment without the express consent of the department or program and their dean or director. Requests for exemption must be made in writing."

Since procedure is currently in the Graduate Assistant Manual, the place to address this would be in everyone's individual departmental Graduate Handbook. At the December 2015 UAAC meeting, the following sentences were written:

1. Policy change on outside work for graduate assistants. Students holding an assistantship requiring 15 hours or fewer per week may hold employment outside of SLU or can hold a student worker position at SLU; and
2. Students may not hold an adjunct or other type of employee position at SLU.

These changes were not approved. Verbiage from the December 2015 UAAC meeting where this policy was discussed will be redistributed.

A. Rellergert is meeting with IT next week to discuss a way to list the total number of hours students are working per week on the EGAR.

This subject will be discussed further at the next meeting. R. Wood asked that the committee members go back and solicit their units and come back with information about what is being done in their individual departments or units.

### **New Business:**

Two proposals were approved at the GAAC meeting in May that went before CADD this past week.

- The new policy on Academic Definitions was endorsed unanimously by CADD so that will become policy.
- The proposal on the graduate minor in African American Studies was denied and it has been kicked back to African American Studies.

Questions came up regarding whether elective courses noted in the proposal were appropriate. Another missing piece were letters of support from the departments offering the courses. R. Wood will talk to K. Scott regarding removing some courses and obtaining a full set of endorsements.

- One thing that the Provost office is working on is an alternative policy containing a prior round of approval, before proposals actually come to GAAC.

As a Point of Information - This could be a one to two page white paper that lays out the idea: these are the students that this would be appropriate for, these are the aims of what the program is, etc. We can then get a first cut of an assessment. Faculty could pitch ideas before they put all the effort in.

One of the requirements for a proposal like this is a financial plan describing what resources might be needed if any. The dean who is in charge of financial resources will sign off before the proposal goes forward to the academic committee.

The policy we are talking about is not meant to stifle anything. It is meant to save all the time and effort that goes into a group of faculty sitting down and pouring their heart and soul into a proposal that doesn't seem to be feasible.

There is an ability for this to improve the process. It will streamline things in a way that will make it easier for faculty. What Dr. Brickhouse has envisioned is two or three pages...a pre-proposal.

- In addition to reviewing all programs that are presented, another thing that Dr. Brickhouse has asked that we do this year, is to finish what was begun when the graduate school was dissolved. A lot of the policies and procedures were never completely transferred accurately from the Grad School. There are many things that are broken, not clear, or not as clear as they could be. R. Wood and J. Haugen will be working on and bringing forward policy changes that are substantive enough to need oversight approval. It is anticipated that at this year's meetings, from now until May, there will be some items that the committee will be asked to consider. J. Haugen is in attendance today to explain these items in context. J. Barber, a representative of the associate deans will have a good handle on what the impact is on graduate programs. Many of these items will just need clarification. We want to get to the point where we have a functional set of policies, definitions, and procedures that work, are meaningful, and can be unambiguously interpreted. We will try to clarify that as we go through the year.

### **Zero Credit Hour Courses:**

We have a target date of Fall 2017 to eliminate zero credit hour courses. The problem is that using zero credit hours puts us out of compliance with the Department of Education standards and law. This is going to impact each and every unit in some way. The committee members were asked to begin having serious dialogues among committee members, with grad and undergrad program coordinators, and the registrar's office, about different pathways and solutions to work around those things.

J. Haugen stated that every policy must be looked at. We have to look at non-course requirements from the degree evaluations, the School of Education started doing this. There are ways to track non-course things, not through zero credit. Psychology did a great write up three or four years ago when this discussion came up. We could probably ask Dr. Gfeller if he could share that document. They went through all the uses of their zero credit classes and what they were used for. We need to figure out how they are being used and determine other approaches to track various zero credit activities.

This is a very serious charge to everybody. It is going to go down through the deans as well and the committee was told that they will hear it from multiple angles. It is better to be proactive and begin discussion. There will be common solutions that go far beyond individual departments.

Departments are to identify all types of zero credit hour courses, and identify what purpose they are serving.

### **Changes to System:**

J. Haugen gave an update with respect to new software which is being considered. SLU is functionally behind in many systems. The new software which is being tested will cost a significant amount of money but would greatly improve many of our processes. Jay is optimistic that we can move forward with this and will continue to push.

### **Announcements:**

The next GAAC meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. in the Vitale Boardroom.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.