**Graduate Assembly Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes from October 3, 2024**

Chair: Dr. Shawn Christensen

Chair Pro Tem: Dr. Patti Parker

Graduate Assembly Secretary: to be determined

Thursday, October 3, 2024

2:30 pm

*Virtual via msTeams*

**PRESIDING**: Shawn Christensen, Chair of the Graduate Assembly

**MEMBERS ATTENDING (voting):** Drs. Cara Boutte, Erin Carlson, Dennis Chiessa, Shawn Christensen, Paul Componation, Sophia Fantus, John Garrigus, Kristin Gigli, Vicente Iranzo, Junha Jeon, Yuan Ji, Robin Jocius, Larry Martinez, Taner Ozdil, Patti Parker, Nasir Rakib, Jia Rao, Donna Schuman, Wideline Seraphin, Jiwon Suh, Allison Tomlinson.

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING (non-voting):** Drs. Frank Foss, Jim Grover, Andrew Hippisley, Raymond (Joe) Jackson.

**GUESTS ATTENDING (non-voting):** Drs. Xinlei (Sherry) Wang.

**MEETING MINUTES**

1. **Call to order**
   1. The meeting of the Graduate Assembly was called to order at 2:30 pm by Shawn Christensen, Chair
2. **Members and Committees Introduced.** 
   1. Dr. Christensen invited the members to introduce themselves.
      1. Committee members, ex officio members, and guests introduced themselves
   2. For the record the names of the chairs of the subcommittees are
      1. Committee on Program Creation — Dr. Dennis Chiessa
      2. Committee on Program Revision — Dr. Sophia Fantus
      3. Committee on Graduate Students — Dr. Ericka Roland
3. **Consideration of Minutes**
   1. Minutes from April 2024.
      1. Motion to approve: Dr. Wideline Seraphin
      2. Seconded: Dr. Jiwon Suh
      3. Vote taken by msForms
      4. Vote results: **Approved** (17 approve, 0 oppose, 3 abstain).
4. **Provost Dr. Tamara Brown**
   1. Not present.
5. **Updates from Dr. James Grover, Dean of Graduate School and Interim Vice President for Research**
   1. Updated Graduate HOP pages and Advisory Vote on approving the updated pages
      1. The undergraduate and graduate HOP pages are being updated by the provost office. The provost office (represented by Dr Andrew Hippisley) wants input on the revised pages from the graduate assembly and the undergraduate assembly.
      2. The graduate assembly does not have final approval power but decided to hold an advisory vote to show support for the changes.
      3. Motion to approve by Dr Cara Boutte, seconded by Dr. Patti Parker
      4. Advisory vote taken by msForms
      5. Advisory Vote result: **Approved** (18 approve, 0 oppose, 1 abstain)
   2. Request to the Graduate Student Affairs Committee
      1. In the past, scheduling of Diagnostic Evaluations and Comprehensive Examinations was required and reported to the Graduate School, per catalog policy. Current policy has no scheduling requirement. Such a requirement could create accountability for both students and committees and promote better advance planning and preparation for such events. But it is not clear whether central versus departmental monitoring is needed, nor what particulars of scheduling should be required.
      2. Thesis and Dissertation Defenses no longer have an announcement requirement. They did in the past. Do we want to put this back in policy so that the university community is adequately notified of their opportunity to participate in these events? If so, what should be the mode of the announcement (e.g., electronic, hard-copy posting)? Relatedly, the audience and community to be invited to Thesis and Dissertation Defenses differs between Dissertations, and Master’s Theses in our current policy. Should these be harmonized and in what way?
      3. There is no mention in the catalog of reporting and recording requirements for graduate examinations and defenses. Diagnostic, Comprehensive, and Defense reports are supposed to go to the Registrar for entry into MyMav. In some cases, this has not happened until the student’s graduation and the audit of degree requirements. Though late reports can be added to enable graduation, there can be adverse consequences for students if neither the system of record nor the department’s operating data have a record of a passed exam. There should be a specified time limit for reporting to MyMav, and a requirement that departments retain a local record of exam outcomes.
      4. The catalog mentions that many graduate programs post or print a “handbook” or “manual” for graduate students. But there are no minimum requirements for content or periodic review of contents, and such specifications should be considered. A central repository of such documents could be considered, so that programs can easily examine what others are doing for possible solutions to problems in their own programs.
      5. By practice, we allow departing faculty a two year period to remain as advisors/committee members for their graduate students (after resignation or retirement). But it seems never to have been written into policy. Do we want to codify or modify this practice?
   3. Request to the Graduate Assembly leadership
      1. Robin Jocius brought a request from the College of Education for consideration of whether or how to remove someone from the Graduate Faculty. Graduate Faculty membership is a matter of HOP policy, so ultimately the question would involve possible revisions through the HOP process. Currently there are qualifications and procedures for adding members but not removing them. The goal of this request is to ensure all faculty actively advising graduate students at the doctoral level remain active in their scholarship. Informal restrictions may be in place for some departments on who may perform certain graduate studies functions (e.g., teach particular courses, supervise dissertation research, serve on doctoral committees). Policy guidance might be helpful for departments in some cases. This issue doesn’t fall under any of the standing committees of the assembly, and might need an ad hoc committee.
6. **Updates from Graduate Student Council, Mr. Nasir Rakib**
   1. No Business.
7. **Old Business**
   1. **Report from Committee on Program Creation: Dr. Dennis Chiessa**.
      1. No Old Business.
   2. **Report from Committee on Program Revision: Dr. Sophia Fantus.**
      1. No Old Business.
   3. **Report from Committee on Graduate Students: Dr. Ericka Roland.**
      1. No Old Business.
8. New Business
   1. **Report from Committee on Program Creation: Dr. Dennis Chiessa** 
      1. PhD in Data Science
         1. Drs. Dennis Chiessa and Xinlei (Sherry) Wang introduced the program proposal
            * This interdisciplinary program is designed for individuals with a passion for harnessing the power of data to drive innovation and discovery across a wide range of scientific fields, from academia to industry. It offers a transformative academic journey at the intersection of cutting- edge statistical methodologies, advanced data analysis techniques, and state-of-the-art computational approaches, including theoretical and practical training in component fields. With in-depth training in data sciences, Ph.D. candidates engage in supervised research experiences in disciplines across departments to solve open questions in the sciences and motivate the development of new knowledge and methodology.
            * The Ph.D. program in Data Science enables students to establish a strong foundation in core skills, including mathematics, statistics, computing, and machine learning. Through rigorous training, this data science program not only develops advanced problem-solving abilities but also equips students to apply these skills effectively to create new knowledge and transform the process of discovery in the sciences.
         2. Several general questions were fielded by Dr. Sherry Wang.
            * --
         3. The Graduate Assembly Program Creation Committee recommends approval of the program
            * --
         4. Vote
            * Motion to approve the program
            * Seconded
            * Vote taken by msForms
            * Vote result: **Approved** (14 approve, 0 oppose, 1 abstain)
   2. **Report from Committee on Program Revision: Dr. Patti Parker**
      1. No New Business.
         1. --
            * --
   3. **Report from Committee on Graduate Students: Dr. Ericka Roland**
      1. No New Business.
         1. --
            * --
9. **Additional Items**
   1. **No additional items**
      1. --
10. **Adjournment**
    1. **Dr. Christensen asked for a motion to adjourn.**
       1. Dr. Dennis Chiessa motioned to adjourn.
       2. Dr. Paul Componation seconded.
       3. Adjourned at 4:00 pm.

**Teams Meeting:**

* Chat feature should be used for questions or comments during the meeting.
* Votes are taken using msForms. Links to the forms are supplied within the meeting chat feature.

**Meeting Minutes Submitted by GA Chair:** Dr. Shawn Christensen