

Graduate Council
2016-17 End-of-Year Report

The following report includes the period from May 2016 through April 2017, including the summer months of June and July.

Summary of Tasks Completed:

1. 33 faculty applications for graduate faculty status were processed.
2. 32 student appeals or requests for time extension were processed.
3. Completed revision of language regarding admissions on Graduate School website to increase clarity, including changing verbiage regarding GRE score calculations (Subcommittee: Sylvester)
4. Consideration of new guidelines for recommending and renewing graduate faculty membership (Subcommittee: Kaddoumi, Palmer, Kim); action pending.
5. Approved new wording for graduate assistants
6. Approved establishment of policy regarding sanctioning graduate students who do not remain continuously enrolled.
7. Approved language on the Graduate School website regarding appeals process.
8. Recommended improving communication between Graduate School and programs regarding requirements for theses.

The council has had a very productive year, with a number of important improvements to policies and procedures that have helped to facilitate smoother processing of appeals as well as the functioning of the Graduate School and the council itself.

In April 2017, the new Director of the Graduate School, Dr. Sushma Krishnamurthy, proposed a new set of guidelines for recommending and renewing graduate faculty membership, with input from a council subcommittee (Kaddoumi, Palmer, Kim). This document is still under discussion. It is hoped it can be finalized by May 2017.

In February 2017, the council approved new wording for graduate assistants which will correct previous problems with lack of clarity regarding tax reporting.

In November 2016, the council approved Dr. Clark's request to establish sanctions against graduate students who do not remain continuously enrolled. This was originally put on the agenda in May 2016.

In April 2016, the council approved changes to the language on the Graduate School website and catalog explaining how, when, and by whom appeals should be prepared to come before the council. The council also began reviewing and revising the verbiage pertaining to GRE scores for admission, finding the current language too difficult to interpret. A subcommittee was appointed (Sylvester) to consult with a mathematician concerning the

proper way to establish conversion scores between old and new GRE. This was approved at the beginning of the fall 2016 semester.

In May 2016, the council recommended, following feedback from the History program, that there be improved coordination between the Graduate School and programs regarding thesis preparation.

Some changes were made to the membership of the Council which allow for a mix of new and old members. The VPAA's office established a rotation schedule for members. The chair recommends that this rotation be honored, and that existing members not simply be asked to carry on at the request of the dean for two reasons. First, if the rotation is implemented for some members and not others, despite the chair's annual report, questions will arise as to rationale. Second, younger faculty, and graduate faculty who have not previously served on the council, will not have the opportunity to learn more about the functioning of the university, which is a critical component for retaining and training new faculty, and better communication flow and understanding in terms of the faculty at large. Currently, there is very poor information flow from the council members to the faculty at large, and regular circulation of membership will assist in sharing information.

While the council will meet in May, an interim chair will need to be established for any special meetings during June-July 2016. Historically, most members are willing to meet even if they are not under contract and thus further the work of the council, but some are not, and it is important to note that they are not legally required to meet if they are not under contract.