**Graduate Studies Meeting AGENDA for September 22, 2022**

Philbrick Room

**Dr. Sikorski does not know all names yet. He was unable to specifically give credit for specific comments to specific people in most instances. He will work to improve as the academic year transpires. 😊**

1. **Minutes from last meeting are below**
   1. **The minutes were approved without objection.**

Attendance:  Bednarski, M.; Castaneda, N.; Chae, M.; Cohen, R.; Davis, M.; Davis, M.; Fuentes, R.; Gendron, M.; Holt, J.; Hou, X.; Huang, Y.; Jacobson, L.; Kling, E.; Koulidobrova, E; Leong, C.; Lim, H-S.;  Morano, P.; Mulcahy, C.; North, M. Passaro M.; Rachler, R.; Robinson, C.; Rodriguez, C.; Ryan, A.; Schnobrich-Davis, J.; Shabana, K.; Sikorski, J.; Simmons, R.; Sommers, B.; Spillman, D.; Takemae, N.;  Thomas, C.; Xiaobing, H; Yuem, J.; Zlatareva. N.

Announcements

* GSC Chair, Laura Jacobson
* Several faculty are retiring this year including Ralph Cohen from the Counselor Education and Family Therapy department and Dr. Fearon from the Math department.
* There will be a retirement gathering May 11 from 2-4pm in the community room of Barnard Hall.
* On May 12 there is a retirement gathering for Joan Nicoll-Senft from 3-5pm in the Special Education department in Barnard Hall.
* L. Jacobson asked for a faculty member to serve as GSC secretary for the 2022-23 AY. Jason Sikorski put his name forward. The committee voted and he was elected as the new Graduate Studies Committee secretary.
* New Business
* What content might we want graduate students to be informed about during orientation?
  + Issues of plagiarism were raised. More awareness on the importance of citing sources may be helpful to ensure students don’t unwittingly plagiarize sources.
  + One suggestion was to offer a 2 credit course for graduate students with different faculty member teaching the course for 1 week. Each week would focus on a different topic (e.g., study skills, citing sources, etc…).
  + Make students aware of how to access resources such as the librarians and library resources.
  + Highlight the importance of developing relationships with your professors and provide support on how to be actively involved in networking.
  + Reach out to Laura Jacobson with any other ideas you may wish to share.
* Communications
  + A reminder that it is important to be aware of the curriculum process. A workshop at the School level during new faculty orientation might be helpful.
  + Be aware of the Gradate School mailbox. Award nominations will come from this mailbox.
  + To be sure that our voice is being shared intentionally, put the GSC agenda out as early as possible. Therefore, topics on the agenda can be discussed with departments prior to the meetings.
  + Developing an exit interview asking questions such as: What should we be doing? What should we stop doing? What is working well?
  + Ralph Cohen reminded us of a 2004 report on an Adhoc committee identifying ways to reorganize graduate studies.

Standing Committees

CURRICULUM- Chair: Toni Ryan

* + [Report](https://myccsu-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/laura_jacobson_ccsu_edu/EXREtVcPww5DmUcvTIZTui8BQRGwaCE7SB9PHAFO5yCJJQ?rtime=XWuz0k0T2kg)
* Motion to pass the consent agenda was approved.

POLICY- Chair: Kareem

* + [Report](https://myccsu-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laura_jacobson_ccsu_edu/EfxVFDN6psBFtMFxAMdHFG8BxvDkOwOMmQn1B7UJreGeqQ?e=UOlkI4)
* All items were approved.

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Julie Schnobrich-Davis

* + The GSA is hosting a winery event.

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

NON-GRADED APPEALS- Chair: Ralph Cohen

1. **Attendance: Laura will fill in the attendance with her QR Code results.**
2. **Secretary for University GSC**
   1. Jason Sikorski elected without objection.
3. **Laura Jacobson is on sabbatical in Spring 2023. The job requires the person to chair the full GSC meetings and attend the policy and curriculum subcommittee meetings.** 
   1. Please consider volunteering to take on this role at our next meeting in October.
4. **Dr. Christina Robinson, AVP of Enrollment Management** 
   1. Greeted the committee and clarified her role at the university and in working with and assisting graduate students.
   2. If a student requires money to continue their schooling, please refer the student to Financial Aid. Financial Aid will work with Financial Literacy to assist the student. Dr. Robinson wants to know if faculty and students are being assisted at the Offices of Financial Aid and Financial Literacy. She is highly motivated to make the system as seamless as possible for students.
      1. For instance, if graduate students have an employer helping them pay for school, they are probably eligible for the Employer Reimbursement Payment Plan. The Central Payment Plan is available to all CCSU students, including graduate students. Third party payment plans are also available for graduate students who have employers paying for their graduate education.
   3. There is a current search for the new head of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions underway. Jillian Holt is the Chair of the Search Committee.
   4. There is a new plan in place for the Graduate Open House in Willard-DiLoreto. They will clear out the open space for tables to be used for different departments and their graduate programs. Visitors will be able to park in the new parking garage and use the new pedestrian bridge.
      1. Dr. Robinson wants a lot for the students to do when they come to Open House. She is hoping that departments will assist with programming.
         1. Invite alumni from your programs.
         2. Show off lab space or other innovative areas in your department.
         3. Dr. Robinson is looking for the “wow” factor at the event.
         4. Please discuss with your department ways to make Open House a meaningful experience for prospective graduate students.
5. **Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs: Dr. Steven Minkler. Dr. Minkler’s office is in Davidson Hall near the Provost OFfice**
   1. His role in working with he Provost is multifaceted and focuses on faculty support services. He looks forward to partnering with faculty to improve the graduate programs and coordination amongst different faculty and student support services. Dr. Minkler will work to coordinate some of the departments below and others.
      1. Library
      2. Grants and Funded Research
      3. Continuing Education and Workforce Development
      4. Distance Learning
   2. Dr. Minkler is also interested in partnering with community colleges and strengthening the pipeline from community college to the university setting.
      1. Dr. Robinson reminded members that community college students can move directly into program Accelerate programs.
   3. Dr. Minkler’s office is in Davidson Hall down the hall from the Provost.

Standing Committees

1. **CURRICULUM- Chair: Toni Ryan**
   1. There were several new Accelerate programs voted on and some language changes for programs in the consent agenda for Graduate Curriculum. Please revisit the agenda from the Curriculum agenda.
   2. The consent agenda was accepted without objection
2. **AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP**
   1. This sub-committee will require a new Chair for the Spring 2023 semester when Laura Jacobson is on sabbatical.
3. **Non-Graded Appeals**
   1. We will need a new chair for the Non-Graded Appeals Committee

New Business

* Discussions
  + Extensions to the Six-Year Time Limit (5-10 minutes)
    - S. Minkler will work with Sheldon Watson and Amy Gagnon to manage what used to be called the School of Graduate Studies. In this role, S. Minkler heard student appeals of dismissal and heard requests for extensions of the 6-year time limit.
      * Current policy - Students may request an extension to the six-year time limit, not to exceed a total of eight years (nine years for programs with 36+ credits)
        + Changes in curriculum over time may make this impractical; significant extraordinary circumstances such as the COVID pandemic may increase such requests.
      * S. Minker sought advice regarding whether we should allow extensions beyond 8 or 9 years due to significant extraordinary circumstances?
        + M. Davis recalled prior discussions in Graduate Studies where Deans wanted an absolute limit in place for how long extensions could be granted for.

S. Minkler indicated that he would plan to work loosely with program coordinators and faculty to arrive at decisions for unique student scenarios.

Some members indicated that some health programs have strict guidelines for not allowing students to extend their time in the program due to the speed by which knowledge accumulates and state of the art practices change (Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice).

Some members indicated that decisions were complex and tough to make on anything but an individualized basis in consultation with program coordinators and faculty members.

* + - * There was discussion about whether people ever remembered there being a 15% rule where extensions could not be granted in situations where more than 15% of the program curriculum changed.
        + No member remembered such a rule being in place.
      * Laura asked members take these discussions to our departments in hopes of offering S. Minkler some information to use in arriving at extension decisions in a fair and equitable manner.
  + Changes to Graduate Studies (15-20 minutes)
    - Laura Jacobson shared some knowns and unknowns about plans for graduate programming at CCSU. She respectfully asked for the discussion to calm and deliberate and not include attacks on administration.
    - Knowns Mentioned:
      * The School of Graduate Studies no longer exists. The administrative role of that office has been absorbed into our colleges. There may be a Division of Graduate Studies like is seen at other CSU institutions, but that specific direction is unclear.
        + The intention is to decentralize operation and put that work into the departments and schools where the programs reside.
        + There is no longer a person that carries a Dean of Graduate Studies title. We do not have anyone who is solely in charge of graduate admissions. The colleges are supposed to get more Administrative Operations Assistants to work with schools, departments, and programs. That process of hiring Administrative Operations Assistants has already begun.
      * These changes were not pursued with the feedback of members of the Faculty Senate University Graduate Studies Committee.
        + L. Jacobson displayed the Faculty Senate bylaws of the University Graduate Studies Committee. Many of the functions and responsibilities require the Faculty Senate University Graduate Studies Committee to advise and make recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Studies. L. Jacobson was thus concerned whether our University Graduate Studies Committee would be rendered useless.
      * S. Minkler suggested a potential change from the idea of a Graduate Student Assembly to a Graduate Student Advisory Board. S. Minkler is seeking feedback from graduate students, graduate faculty and graduate program coordinators in determining whether such a change is warranted.
    - Unknowns:
      * We do not know what the impact of this decision will look like for faculty and students, especially for programs that do not have undergraduate programs and thus may fear having less influence and support at the university level.
      * We do not know what the next steps will entail and how it will impact faculty and students, but there are next steps coming from the Office of the Provost.
      * L. Jacobson indicated that she is not clear about the purpose of these changes and the timeline of these changes.
    - Some Questions from Committee Members **(I was unable to record names because I don’t know all names yet)**:
      * How do graduate students supposed to proceed with thesis submissions?
        + S. Minkler - Dr. Watson is reviewing capstone proposals. Dr. Watson and Dr. Minkler will be reviewing special project proposals.
        + You can still send questions to the Graduate Studies Mailbox and personnel will be able to direct your question to the appropriate professional in charge of managing that issue.
      * Has the Faculty Senate been notified of a potential by-laws violation, given the changes reported?
        + That notification will proceed in the coming days.
      * What was the exact date by which we stopped having a School of Graduate Studies?
        + Some indicated that the change occurred at least 6 months ago, but no exact date was provided.
      * Is the idea to have little graduate schools within every University School?
        + S. Minkler does want to maintain some thread of continuity across the four schools, even though the idea of “little graduate schools” may apply in some ways.
      * Given that having a Dean of Graduate Studies is so common at institutions with graduate programs across the country, there must be a compelling reason for the change. What is the compelling reason for the change?
        + None was provided at this time.
      * Does this decision mean that CCSU wants to be an undergraduate school and that graduate students and faculty are “second class citizens”?
        + S. Minkler indicated that he did not think that the change represented an intentional move toward an exclusively undergraduate institution.
        + S. Minkler absolutely supports graduate education and wants to see graduate programs grow and improve. He reiterated his willingness to support graduate students and graduate faculty.
      * Will there be a graduate studies committee for every school?
        + The answer to this question was unclear.
      * Do we have a responsibility to report potential by-laws issues to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee?
        + Yes. That report will be forthcoming in the very near future.
      * Several years ago, the Dean of the SGS told us (the GSC) that significant increases in graduate enrollment were to be a major factor in maintaining and increasing overall university enrollment. As the SGS is eliminated, will the reliance on increasing graduate enrollment continue? If so, how will that be done with the new model for graduate studies at CCSU?
      * For at least fifteen years, a substantial portion (one fourth?) of the proposals relating to graduate processes and policies that have come to the full GSC were initiated by the SGS Deans (Dr Lemma, Dr Fitzgerald, Dr Robinson). With the SGS Dean gone, will there be anyone in the administration with the breadth and focus in graduate matters to lead that innovation?
* **An important task for all of us:** Please share with departments what is happening and ask for feedback about concerns with these potential changes. A list of concerns will be generated by the Chair of University Graduate Studies, Dr. Laura Jacobson. Dr. Jacobson intends to share the list of questions with Dr. Steven Minkler and other administrators on campus responsible for overseeing graduate level programming at CCSU. **Please summarize concerns or questions from your department by no later than 10/22/22.**
* **Minutes respectfully submitted by Dr. Jason Sikorski on 9-22-22.**