

The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Graduate Council Minutes

December 4, 2020
2:00 PM Via Zoom

	Ellise Adams, NUR	x	Robert Griffin, SCI Assoc Dean
x	Michael Anderson, ENG Assoc Dean	x	Wafa Hakim Orman, BUS Assoc Dean*
x	Jennifer Bail, NUR	x	Phillip Ligrani, MAE
x	Yeqing Bao, Int'l Srvs Assoc Dean*	x	Matthew Niemiller, BIO
x	Dylan Baun, HIS	x	David Moore, Library*
x	David Berkowitz, Grad Dean*		Jason O'Brien, EDU
x	Joseph Conway, EH	x	Tingting Que, FIN
x	Eric Fong, MGT	x	Janet Waller, Registrar*
x	Karen Frith, NUR		DongSheng Wu, MAT
x	Junpeng Guo, ECE		

x Present

* Non-voting member

Proxy:

Karen Frith for Ellise Adams

Visitors Present:

None

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed changes to the Faculty Senate Handbook regarding the Graduate Council

- The Faculty Senate has proposed changes to the organization and function of the Graduate Council in a revised version of Chapter 6 of the Faculty Handbook:

6.3. The Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is an elected body representing the graduate faculty. The Council consists of the Dean of the Graduate School (non-voting, ex-officio chair), the Registrar (non-voting, ex-officio) and a number of full members of the graduate faculty, each college with a graduate program (master's and/or doctoral) has two representatives, The Faculty Senators in colleges with graduate programs elect the representatives from the college. At least one member from each college shall be a current senator. The term of an elected member is two years.

The Council examines new policies, procedural requirements, new graduate courses and programs, graduate faculty appointments, student petitions, and other matters dealing with graduate studies. Graduate program creation, merger, or deletion requires the approval of the Faculty [DTN1] Senate Curriculum Committee. Matters dealing with academic policies and substantial changes in catalog are referred by the Graduate Council to the Council of Deans and Provost for approval before implementation.

- The Graduate Council discussed the proposal and concluded the “March Resolution from Graduate Council Regarding Proposed Changes to Chapter 6.3 in The University of Alabama in Huntsville Faculty Handbook” already addressed and refuted this suggested change.
- It was further noted that the Graduate School had moved to streamline the approval process for the creation or change in graduate programs. Accepting the Faculty Senate’s proposal would return the Graduate School to a process that is slow and inefficient. The Graduate Council’s changes were also in line with changes seen across the country. ACHE is also in the process of removing steps and making the approval processes faster. Also having shared governance with the Faculty Senate allows each governing body to focus on the required tasks and does cede control to one governing body.
- Graduate Council members are also faculty teaching at the graduate level whereas some members of the Faculty Senate may only be teaching at the undergraduate level. Keeping the approval of graduate programs within the Graduate Council maintains the integrity of the decisions and approval processes.
- Regarding representation, the Graduate Council was reminded by Dr. David Berkowitz, that an offer of transparency was given by providing reciprocal ex officio positions to be held on each governing body, but was not accepted by the Faculty Senate.

- Dr. Eric Fong expressed concern that he had not heard from any member of the Faculty Senate regarding this change and proposed that the Graduate Council reach out to their faculty senate representative for their college to find out the reasoning behind the unanimous decision. Dr. Fong said he could provide a draft letter to be sent to the faculty senate members. Dr. Phillip Ligrani and Dr. Yeqing Bao also expressed similar concerns and wished to understand the Faculty Senate's logic in their proposed change.
- It was determined that an addendum to the Graduate Council's March resolution would be written to address the Faculty Senate's handbook changes and provided to the President and Provost.
Drs. Joseph Conway, Robert Griffin, and Matthew Nienmiller will work with Dr. Sean Lane to draft the addendum, which will be shared with the Graduate Council before being forwarded to administration.

Faculty Senate Resolution 20/21-08: Graduate Program Requirements

- This Faculty Senate resolution appears to prevent an increase in the number of credits that can be transferred to the University. The focus of the resolution appears to be directed towards the Alabama ASSETS program. This program was created to combine certificates from state universities to create master's degrees that are collaborative and specific to aiding the needs of the Alabama workforce.
- UAH currently accepts 12 credit hours that can be transferred to the University by an incoming graduate student for a Master's program. Exceptions to this rule currently exist because of MOUs from partner universities, allowing 15 credit hours to be transferred. SACSCOC now allows for only 33% of credit hours from the degree-granting institution. It was noted UAH should modify its rules to follow SACSCOC recommendations.
- From a marketing perspective, it was mentioned that UAH should not have policies that preclude the University from participating in a state-wide initiative. The ASSET program is being embraced by other Alabama universities and it would be shortsighted for the University to not make efforts to participate.
- It was again noted that the Faculty Senate did not reach out to the Graduate Council for additional information before making a decision to draw up the resolution and present it to the administration for approval.
- Dr. Lane recommended contacting system graduate schools to understand their policies regarding transfer credits and would provide the group with his findings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:04.