

Graduate Academic & Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes for April 20, 2016

Attending: John Yarie, Mike Castellini, Daryl Farmer, Mitch Reed, Mike Daku, Anne Beaudreau (by phone), Donie Bret-Harte, Amanda Loibl, Jayne Harvie, Laura Bender

I. Minutes of our meeting of 3/23/16 were passed.

II. We agreed that Donie Bret-Harte will represent GAAC at the subcommittee working on revisions to the academic appeals policy.

III. Updates from the graduate school. 1) The graduate school is working on preparing for commencement (which involved both fun and stress). 2) The graduate school has developed an electronic form for thesis signatures, which will be required of all students. A physical signature page is optional as far as the graduate school is concerned, but could be made mandatory for particular schools if they desire it. All of the title pages will have the typed names of the committee members, not signatures, because the electronic approval page will be an appendix. 3) Commencement. The most graduate students ever will walk for commencement (more have graduated in the past, but this is the most that have walked in commencement). Some of them are walking in the ceremony even if they have defended, but not yet completed their theses. The graduate school is working on the final edits for theses. There will be a reception for Ph.D. students on May 5 in the Murie Auditorium. Mike will represent UAF at the UAS and UAA commencements (for UAF graduate students who are located at those places). UAA does a hooding ceremony for all of their master's students. UAF considered this, but rejected the idea.

Update on the UAF budget – there are no pots of gold anywhere. The current estimate for the UA system is \$300 million. That includes \$25 million in one-time funding, so the situation may be worse for FY18. The Provost is asking for her reports to come up with plans to cut more. The legislative minority might be able to negotiate for a bit more for UA, but probably not a lot more. Mike Castellini urges us to go to President's forum tomorrow. Anne Beaudreau asked about graduate student health insurance for next year, as there is lots of concern among students. Mike Castellini responded that for next year, there is no change to the policy, and no cost increase. Right now, we have no information about FY18. UAF can't offer employee insurance to students (this is an ACA issue). For students who want to weigh in, is there a formal way to do that? Mike Castellini suggests waiting until the smoke has cleared from FY17; the process for considering health care for FY18 will likely start in September of 2016.

IV. GAAC discussed all the items currently under review and passed the following course and program changes:

**47-GNC:** New Course: [COMM F698 - Non Thesis / Project](#)

**48-GPCh.:** Program Change: [MA - Professional Communication](#)

both pending minor changes to forms.

V. Our next meeting will be May 4 at 1:15 pm. (Mike Castellini will be gone).