

Graduate Academic and Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes of 01/13/2016

Attending: Sean McGee, Mike Castellini, Karen Jensen (by phone), Laura Bender (by phone), Anne Beaudreau (by phone), Mitch Reed, John Yarie, Jayne Harvie, Amanda (for Holly Sherouse), Don Hampton, Donie Bret-Harte, Daryl Farmer, Mike Daku (by phone)

I. Minutes from our meeting of 11/25/15 were passed with one correction.

II. Graduate Student Health Insurance. As requested at our last meeting, graduate student representative Mitch Reed did some research on what it would cost for him to get health insurance in the private market, using the health insurance exchanges set up under the Affordable Care Act. In his case, he would expect to pay \$5076/year in premiums for 60/40 plan (60% paid by the insurer after deductibles are met), with similar deductible and out-of-pocket maximum to what is currently offered to graduate students (which costs \$2000/year in premiums for an 80/20 plan). This is more expensive than the current health insurance for graduate students. Mike Castellini commented that he was not able to make a presentation on graduate health insurance to the Senate in December, but will look for another opportunity to address the Senate. The issue of what to do about graduate student health insurance is obviously tied in with the overall budget for the University. Mike has presented the graduate school's analysis to Provost Henrichs. He does not know whether the options that they presented on graduate student health insurance were passed on to President Johnson. Anne Beaudreau asked whether health insurance is required by NSF Graduate Student Fellowships (which are awarded to students individually, and are separate from PI grants). Mike will check into this.

III. Mike Castellini provided an update on the proposed budget for the Graduate School. Their proposal to Provost includes continuing to reduce staffing levels (by 0.5 FTE), and a reduction in number of thesis completion fellowships (by 25%). All travel was cut last year. He explained that the Provost went over the entire budget process, that all proposals have been turned in, and the President is expected to provide some direction in concert with the Board of Regents (whose retreat is coming up). However, it will be months before anything is known with certainty. There will be opportunities to weigh in on the whole package once it is released, and there will be general forums with Chancellor, Provost. GAAC recommends asking our members to find out what our departments think about possible options for grad student health insurance for our February meeting. Mike Castellini will find out whether Provost is considering dropping health insurance for graduate students or not. (Later in the day, he clarified that the Provost is not contemplating any changes to graduate student health insurance in FY17 at this time.) Daryl Farmer commented that the loss of grad health insurance would be devastating for English graduate program; their stipends are already lower, and expenses higher, than average.

IV. GAAC passed the following course and program proposals and changes:

**11-GNP: NEW PROGRAM: [MA - Marine Science](#)**, passed pending a few minor corrections, which were received after this meeting

**16-GNC: New Course: [PETE F687 - Experimental and Data Analysis Methods in Petroleum Engineering](#)**

**20-GPCh.:** Program Change: [Master of Education](#)

**25-GNC:** New Course: [GEOG / GEOS F478 / F678 - Ice Age Alaska](#), passed pending final correction of hours

V. New assignments were made.

VI. Our next meeting will occur on Wednesday 1/27/16 at 1:15 pm.