

Graduate Academic & Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes for 03/20/17

Attending: Robin Shoaps, Mitch Reed, Mike Castellini, Sean McGee (by phone), Roman Makarevich, Jayne Harvie, Donie Bret-Harte, Don Hampton, Karen Jenson, Holly McDonald, Mike Daku, Anne Beaudreau (by phone)

I. Minutes from our meetings of 2/20/17, 1/20/17, and 12/02/16 were passed

II. Mike Castellini provided updates from the Graduate School. Health insurance for graduate students will continue for another year with basically the same terms, which is good news. Premiums might go up ~8-9% (this will not affect the students, but will be paid by the university). A telemedicine option may be included, for people who can't access clinics, such as those graduate students based in Juneau (24 hr coverage). There are still a few details to be worked out, but this should be finished soon.

Updates on School of Ed consolidation. Mike Castellini met with the Provost and Deans. For now everything will continue as usual this year, because the time required to implement the consolidation is significant. Even though the change is coming, there are so many things that have to be done ahead of time that GAAC can carry on as usual. The Dean of School of Education is concerned about how graduate committees will function if School of Education faculty members end up working for UAS, but based in Fairbanks.

There was quite a bit of discussion on the question of whether the provision that graduate students can enroll in 1 credit instead of 3 during their last semester (after defending their thesis) should apply to students that have non-thesis and non-project degrees, such as the Master's in Business Administration. There are cases where students get an incomplete, or fail to turn in their graduation paperwork, so their graduation is delayed for a semester. Should they have to register for 1 credit in this semester? Some argued that students should not be rewarded for missing deadlines, and at UAA, they are more strict than at UAF. On the other hand, GAAC passed the change in requirement from 3 to 1 credits in order to make it easier for students who are trying to finish their theses and projects. GAAC discussed the possibility of instead imposing a fee for filing mistakes, etc. (\$50-100?) instead of requiring registration for another credit. This was the generally preferred option.

Mike Castellini noted that the CNSM graduate student association has asked him about wording in the graduate student contracts that says that, if you are on a UA-based scholarship and you don't do the work for which you were supported, UAF can ask for the money back. Some people feel that it is a useful stick, but the students feel that it is scary and imparts a negative view of the scholarship. The graduate students would like to have the language changed. UA legal would have to approve any changes. Mike Castellini has not yet discussed with UA legal, but will do that. Roman knows about an issue that is related, in that the contract also states that students must maintain a B average in classes. The issue of noncompliance also arises frequently with thesis completion fellowships, because people often don't finish by the time the fellowship ends, but there are often mitigating circumstances, and the Graduate School has never asked that the fellowships be repaid. Mitch commented that, if language is in the contract, it needs to be specific enough that whether the condition is met can be easily assessed.

Anne recommended adding language to say, “please contact the graduate school if there are circumstances that would change your time line.”

III. Holly McDonald gave us an update and demonstration on Courseleaf. She would like some volunteers to try out Courseleaf and let them know if issues arise. Any course change now will go through the same process involving Courseleaf, and the distinction between minor and major changes will disappear. She envisions that GAAC will be notified electronically for all changes, and the GAAC chair would need to approve them. Program changes will also go through this system in the future. Robin, Karen, Sean Topkok, and Sean McGee volunteered to do some testing in April and May. Everyone will get training eventually. Mike Castellini will join on program side. Committee will have to route courses back to the individual to make changes, as we won't be able to make changes for them.

IV. GAAC passed the following course proposal:

39-GNC: New Course (Stacked): [RD F471 / F671 - Corporate Social Responsibility and Accountability in Rural and Indigenous Contexts](#)

V. The next meeting was scheduled for April 10.