

## **Graduate Council Meeting October 15, 2020**

Present: Professors: Badovinac, Cwiertny, Doucette, Gfeller, Greyser, Forbes, Hoffmann, Hribar, Huber, Kang, O'Shaughnessy; Graduate Students: DeYoung, Gabriele, Piegors, Waldstein; Graduate College Personnel: Arbisi-Kelm, Keller, McKibben, Meintel, Teitle, Varga; Guest speaker: Cassie Barnhardt

Absent: Professors: Butali; Graduate College Personnel: Campo.

The meeting was called to order by Dean John Keller @ 08:16 AM.

**1. Approval of October 01, 2020 Meeting Minutes (Keller)**

No revisions to the distributed minutes were offered, a motion for approval was presented (Huber), seconded (Badovinac), and unanimous consent obtained.

**2. Announcements and Updates from the Graduate College (Keller)**

- i. Dean Keller followed up with the Council on the noted concern on campus and nationally among our peer institutions the new federal government legislation that has been proposed potentially impacting international students (F, J, and I visa holders) and postdoctoral appointees. The legislation could affect adversely, in part, time limits for degrees, delayed extension reviews, and one-year limit durations. Dean Keller shared that a strong letter of rebuttal –composed by the Dean, Associate Dean Shelly Campo and International Programs—has been sent to the Department of Homeland Security; similar action has occurred concurrently by the [Council on Graduate Schools \(CGS\)](#), [Association of American Universities \(AAU\)](#), and other organizations of higher education, along with our federal liaisons in D.C. The Council will be apprised of any future related updates.
- ii. Pursuant to the Graduate College's participation in the pilot project undertaken by the [Council of Graduate Schools \(CGS\)](#) to ascertain information about graduate students' mental health and wellness issues in higher education, Dean Keller and Graduate Student Adriana Swancy will be participating in two half-day related virtual sessions. The participation of Adriana Swancy, a doctoral student in Psychological and Quantitative Foundations (Counseling Psychology Program), lends noted merit given her current internship at the Iowa City Veterans Administration Health Care System working with military veterans, a UI affinity group that CGS has targeted the Graduate College to report on their graduate experiences.
- iii. The grassroots crowdfunding campaign of the Graduate College, entitled [Tech Equity for Grad Students](#), is currently two and half weeks from completion and has reached eighty-five percent toward the College's financial goal. Dean Keller thanked members for their contributions and appealed for their continued promotional support.
- iv. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) meeting scheduled for October 21, 2020 will feature guest speaker [Dr. Steven B. Thomas](#), Director, Maryland Center for Health Equity (University of Maryland School of Public Health), who will be discussing broadly mentoring practices across cultures.
- v. Previously mentioned in the last Council meeting (Oct 01, 2020), due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on budgetary shortfalls, here at the UI and other national research universities there is an emerging concern with managing financial resources to help current students in need of extra time toward their degree completion versus admitting new students in next year's admission cycle. The Graduate College leadership, in collaboration with collegiate deans, continues to evaluate this matter and seeks again input from council members from within their departments given the numerous implications that could transpire; among these are options to suspend all admissions or limit admissions to smaller cohorts for one year.
- vi. It was announced that Dean Keller, along with Associate Dean Sandra Daack-Hirsch (CON), have been requested by the BOR to co-chair the University Presidential Search committee. While currently in the preliminary stages, both Dean Keller and Daack-Hirsch have assisted the BOR with the RFP that has been sent to several consulting services and in providing guidance on how to construct and reach out to various UI affinity groups (faculty, staff, students) and members of the community regarding nominations for individuals to serve on the committee. It is the hope of the BOD that a final committee structure will be approved at their scheduled mid-November meeting.

### **3. Proposal to create a Graduate Certificate in Institutional Research and Effectiveness (Keller, Barnhardt)**

Dean Keller provided an overview of a proposal and sought approval from the Council for creating a new graduate certificate in Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE) within the College of Education (COE), stating that the Academic Affairs Office, together with the COE (Cassie Barnhardt, DGS; endorsers, Dean Daniel Clay and Director Executive Officer David Bills), worked earnestly preparing in advance the proposal for review by the Council, recognizing on a collegiate basis the important need for increasing accountability, responsibility, use of data and analytical information to review diverse academic activities.

It was highlighted that presently no IRE certificate programs exist in the state of Iowa and only a few in the BTAA and the curriculum courses are already in existence largely within COE to meet the need of the program's fifteen semester hours. It is expected that the program will draw broad attention from individuals not only in COE degree programs (MA, ED.S.) but across the campus and in other areas as well (master's degrees in business fields, public administration, social work or disciplinary doctorates; part-time, working professionals, non-degree aspirants) to address their desires and interests to work in noted areas of academic assessment and evaluation programs.

Professor Cassie Barnhardt, leading proposer, and the certificate designated advisor, provided an overview of the proposal to the council members, followed by a Q&A session and vote.

#### **Proposal Synopsis**

**(Cassie Barnhardt, Professor, DGS; Educational Policy & Leadership Studies)**

- Purpose

The Certificate is designed to prepare professionals to use data for institutional and organizational decision-making, reporting, and accountability in higher education and K-12 contexts.

- Objective

To increase preparation in the field so higher education institutions can improve capacity to perform these functions (use of data for institutional and organizational decision-making, reporting, and accountability) increasingly in a data environment where individuals have data skills and can both understand and learn their necessary application to issues like equity, equality, accreditation, performance in an educational settings, climate, culture and learning.

#### **Q&A**

- Takeaways

- i. Initial Cohort Target: Based on past admissions, five or less students typically enroll in the master's program seeking to delve and specialize in research and there is an increasing demand for such among doctoral students. Rather than initiating a concentration within existing degrees given the strong interest evidenced to pursue the identified curriculum courses, the design was to further endorse and distinguish the curriculum given Iowa's tradition of measurement and noted acclaim. Furthermore, the COE Ed.D practitioner based program admitted fifteen students in the first doctoral cohort for fall 2020 which is believed to bode well for demand in terms of increasing different forms of educational degree preparation.
- ii. The certificate program courses are available to students enrolled in other degree programs to enable them to leverage their statistical training both within their domain and other types of environments (i.e., social work, public health, combined educational settings, etc.).
- iii. It was noted that the certificate program would be an applied focus of a more theoretical study and appealing to students enrolled in COE's Educational Measurement and Statistics courses. Also a concern was expressed for the utility of listing specific required certificate program courses that might not continue to be offered; that is, due to consolidation of courses and eliminating redundancy among course offerings.

While not perceived as a barrier by the proposer, the concern was readily conceded, based on earlier complex challenges between departments within the College of Education; the certificate curriculum may fall subject to being amended, but the Dean's endorsement gives credence that this is a foundational part of institutional research in need of service.

- iv. Approaching organizational change and institutional research and effectiveness and quality is in part what the certificate program seeks to assure. How this certificate would equip students and educational

leaders to be conscientious about the use of data to try to ensure equitable educational outcomes across key groups and how this is made evident was addressed. For students, through the strength of merging differences on broad metrics and pulling them into the way they perceive the manner behaviors are enacted, having cross-case comparisons and use of qualitative methods, to access dynamics that breed organizational transformation around inequities; giving students applied practical and theoretical experiences as such. For educational leaders, through course audits, evaluating the competencies being trained, the objectives for the Director of Graduate Studies, the HLC Learning Outcomes, and the essential integration required across curriculums.

- Motion for Approval. It was clarified by Dean Keller that pending the approval of the Graduate Council, this certificate proposal does not need approval by the Board of Regents. A motion was presented for approval of the “Proposal to create a Graduate Certificate in Institutional Research and Effectiveness” (Huber), seconded (O’Shaughnessy), and unanimous consent obtained by the voting members.
- 4. **Consideration of Language to Allow a “Support Person” at Formal Grievance Hearings (Varga)**

The Graduate College’s formal grievance process, specifically the contingency of having an advocate or support person be present with a student during a hearing, had been under previous consideration by the council prior to the onset of the pandemic and was re-introduced by Dean Keller. Further review of the formal grievance procedures by Associate Dean Steven Varga led to proposed modifications to the procedure and the written policy of the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, [Formal Academic Grievance Procedure \(AGP\) of the Graduate College, Step 4](#).

  - i. Current Policy Excerpt: “Students may attend the hearing alone or elect to be accompanied by an attorney.”
  - ii. Proposed Addendum: “*The student may be accompanied by a witness observer or support person. The student may also be accompanied by legal counsel of his or her choosing.*”
- Takeaways (Council Members):
  - i. Clarification for the term, “Witness observer” was provided as well as stating that the involvement of the accompanied witness observer or support person during a hearing is limited to interaction directly only with the student and outlined during the meeting onboarding.
  - ii. Accommodations as needed would be provided to allow full participation and amended to express equality and advocacy and align with current University regulations (i.e., UI SDS policy statement).
  - iii. For gender inclusion purposes, it’s observed presently that the gender-neutral plural pronoun (“they/their”) is used in place of singular third-person pronouns (“his or her”).
- Motion for Approval. A motion was presented for approval of the proposed modifications to the current policy of the Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, [Formal Academic Grievance Procedure \(AGP\) of the Graduate College, Step 4](#)., pending inclusion of an accommodations statement (Gabriele), seconded (Doucette), and unanimous consent obtained by the voting members.
- 5. **Language pertinent to adding a Graduate College Faculty Representative to the Graduate Council (Keller)**

Dean Keller announced the amendment changes to the council’s membership configuration (reviewed previously by the Council members, Sept 17, 2020) to achieve more accurate council representation for the academic units that report to the Graduate College. The favored substitutional proposal would limit the two at-large membership to one; replacing a current at-large member serving on the council with a collegiate electee from the academic units effective fall 2021.

  - i. Current Policy Excerpt: “Faculty representation on the Graduate Council shall consist of eleven collegiate representatives and two at-large representatives. One collegiate representative shall be elected by the graduate faculty of each of the colleges of Business, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health. Three collegiate representatives shall be elected by the graduate faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The two at-large representatives shall be elected by the graduate faculty as a whole.”
  - ii. Proposed Addendum (Changes in italicization): Faculty representation on the Graduate Council shall consist of *twelve* collegiate representatives and *one* at-large representative. One collegiate representative shall be elected by the graduate faculty of each of the colleges of Business, Dentistry, Education, Engineering, *Graduate College*, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health. Three

collegiate representatives shall be elected by the graduate faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. *The at-large* representative shall be elected by the graduate faculty as a whole.

- **Motion for Approval.** A motion was presented for approval of the proposed modifications to the current policy of the [Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College, Membership, Section XVI](#). The Graduate Council (Doucette), seconded (Hribar), and unanimous consent obtained by the voting members.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 AM

**Future 2020-21 Graduate Council Meeting Dates**

2020: October 29, November 12.

2021: January 28, February 11, 25, March 11 April 1, 15.