

USA Graduate Council Minutes

2.23.21 @ 3:00 PM

Zoom

Members Present: Elizabeth Adams, Eric Loomis, Mark Taylor, Gwendolyn Pennywell, Debra Chapman, James Stefurak, Robert Cloutier, Kathy Bydalek, Donna Wooster, Ben Lee, Tim Sherman, Kevin West, Ryon McDermott, Bettina Riley, Todd Andel, Brandon Baggett, Jon Rayner, Harold Pardue, Lorene Flanders, Brittany Seals, Kelly Osterbind, LaSonya Toney, DeAnna Cobb

Members Absent: Marie Migaud

Guests: Hannah Murphy, Avery Robinson, Heather Nix

Agenda and materials distributed prior to the meeting.

1. Previous minutes motioned, seconded, approved.
2. Graduate Dean's Report (Harold Pardue)-Dr. Pardue gave an overview of our University program ACHE progress (ACHE forms going online, Chemical & Biomedical Engineering PhD program was approved), the Graduate School budget (no cuts, overall good shape), graduate enrollment (steady). Avery Robinson was introduced as the new admin support for Undergraduate Research and the Graduate School. Avery presented slides on enrollment rates (total number has increased, completed applications have increased, and if the current rate continues enrollment will exceed previous years). Some council members noted that emails requesting application fee waivers have dramatically increased and after discussion, Hannah Murphy will be given waiver codes for applicants who participate in our USA recruitment events. Dr. Pardue gave an overview of the 5 year strategic plan (Program evaluations have been completed. Resources, funds, sustainability, and corrections will be developed) and announced further meetings with department chairs and program leadership are scheduled in April. The annual Research Forum will be held on April 6th, virtually. USA ILC is developing the online format. DeAnna Cobb announced that since her effort to personally email each student on academic probation exactly what they need to earn to attain good academic status, probation dismissals have decreased. Research productivity is up (50 theses and 41 dissertations SP-F). Dr. Pardue reminded the council members that Graduate Assistants are considered students and student rules apply to them instead of employee rules. Timesheets serve the ACA requirements. GA's will get paid for a zero hour timesheet. This issue arose with the changes to the academic year due to COVID. A Graduate Assistant assessment is underway.
3. EMP update (Eric Loomis)-Dr. Loomis gave an overview and asked any directors or coordinators who haven't accessed it yet to contact him for more information. The click rate and USA student rate has increased.
4. Master's of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies (Harold Pardue)-This is a statewide ACHE approved program of stackable certificates. A capstone project is required for coherence. Motioned, seconded, approved.
5. Proposed policy 3 article model for theses/dissertations (Harold Pardue)-Dr. Pardue announced that we need published guidance for 3 article theses/dissertations. Programs can have additional requirements if desired. The committee has power to decide on whether this model will be followed or the student should submit a traditional thesis/dissertation. Several revisions were suggested and will be made. Motioned, seconded, approved.
6. Safety Risk Assessment for Theses/Dissertations (Harold Pardue)-The form was distributed with the agenda to council members. There were several questions and issues discussed and Dr. Pardue will ask for more information from the Lab Safety committee and request a policy.
7. Proposed transfer credit policy (Kathy Bydalek)-Dr. Bydalek discussed why nursing students would benefit from being excluded from the 9 hour completion rule. Further discussion questioned the usefulness of the rule at

large and Dr. Pardue asked the council members to discuss with their programs to see if this should be discontinued. The exception for Nursing was motioned, seconded, approved.

8. Exception for English speaking countries to language test admission requirement (Harold Pardue)-A memo approved by Dr. Kent was distributed prior to the meeting. Hannah Murphy discussed this issue at large and stated that India was not included since the majority of US institutions do not include India. Motioned, seconded, approved. This list will be added to the website. Program participation needs to be listed as well.
9. Graduate Student Survey results and the GRE requirement were only briefly mentioned due to time constraints. Dr. Pardue encouraged members to review the documents provided. Each program can hold a vote among their faculty to discontinue the GRE requirement. If approved, they need to notify the Graduate School and update their Bulletin statements. Meeting adjourned.