

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Graduate Council Minutes
October 13, 2005

Members Present: N. Alp, S. Davidson, J. Dumas, D. Edwards, D. Halstead, B. O'Leary, R. Thompson for V. Bumphus, Jim Tucker, John Tucker, K. Turner, J. Wilferth

Members Absent: R. Briley, E. Foster, L. Harris, G. Heath, T. Lease, M. Long, V. Petzko, C. Smith

Ex-Officio Members Present: C. Arender, D. Arfken, S. Bellar, Y. Kilpatrick, T. Liedtka

Ex-Officio Members Absent: None

<p>1. Second Reading: Revision of Graduate Grade Appeal Process: 9-0-0</p>

I. Call to Order, Introductions and Approval of the Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 3:21 p.m. The minutes were approved unanimously with corrections.

II. Second Reading: Revision of Graduate Grade Appeal Process

Dr. Dumas opened the floor up for questions. None were raised. John Tucker moved to accept the proposal on second reading. Kim Turner seconded the motion. The motion passed 9-0-0.

III. Visit from the Provost

Dr. Dumas introduced Dr. John Friedl, Provost. Dr. Friedl thanked Graduate Council for inviting him to speak.

Dr. Friedl said he's extremely pleased with graduate enrollment this semester. All of us recognize the importance of graduate enrollment at UTC. He commended our efforts in graduate enrollment. He said another topic that will be raised is faculty workloads. Workload policy three years ago was "hard to grasp" because it was in disarray. Every department did things differently; there was no official recognition of departmental needs or distinction. The addition of three doctoral programs in three years has increased the need to address workload definitions. The Chancellor feels a need to address them as well. The Provost feels the standard workload for graduate faculty should be nine hours, not twelve. But he also thinks flexibility is needed for departments where there are different expectations taken into account, thus adjustable workloads. Doctoral teaching loads should be lighter but with a heavier research focus.

Dr. Friedl said that when he first came to UTC, he took on the goal of maintaining and improving the quality of graduate education. He wants to facilitate the opportunity for

graduate faculty to improve the quality of graduate education. With that comes upgrading the standards for graduate faculty membership. He says he “has taken it with a heavy hand at times.” The president and chancellor spoke and believe that in order for UTC to be more than a mediocre school it is necessary for the Graduate School to continue to improve.

Dr. Halstead raised the question, “How do we counter when raising standards affects enrollment?” Dr. Arfken responded to this question. She said that a few years ago when it came to TOEFL scores UTC was at the bottom of the universities. We chose to go from 500 to 550 and now our international students have scores above 550 without a drop in enrollment. Dr. Arfken also said that in the 1990s I/O Psychology was a large program with many student problems. A new director stiffened requirements, and drop-offs in enrollment happened briefly. But then the perception changed, and the program became a competitive program. If raising standards needs to happen, then the drop is going to happen but the perception will change for that program and enrollment will eventually increase. She believes this message needs to be reiterated during and before standards changes. Improvement in attracting quality students need to be brought forward.

Dr. Friedl said, “If it’s ever a choice between enrollment and quality I will stand behind quality.” He believes the financial hit is not as serious as if we get a reputation for being a mediocre school. The minimum ACT score was raised from 16 to 17 for undergraduates and we had an enrollment drop, so drops are understood. He said he looks at the graduate program profiles, and the first thing he notices are average test scores. In most we score below the national average. Our goals should be to be above the national average.

Dr. O’Leary that in I/O Psychology they currently have 23 new students, whereas normally they have between 12-15. They use standards as a minimum and they need a larger pool of applicants to select more highly qualified students. Better students are looking for funding, such as graduate assistantships. This year the program lost two or three really good students because of the lack of funding.

Dr. Dumas moved the conversation back to graduate faculty. He said that most need scholarly work showing on their vitas. What constitutes active scholarly research? Dr. Friedl said it varies from discipline to discipline. He said he cannot come with set standards and Graduate Council wouldn’t want him to. Leaving standards to departments is good up to the point the department faculty are willing to be responsible for making tough decisions. Some do, and some don’t. He said he’s willing to trust the faculty unless there seems to be a discrepancy.

Dr. Friedl took a moment and mentioned a new project he’s working on that will be called the Provost’s Report. It will highlight achievements of the faculty. He believes it will help in “Electrifying” EDO reports. A new scholarly and creative efforts report form is going to be online and will be sent directly to the graduate assistant who is managing the report for the Provost. This report will have photos and stories as well as faculty accomplishments. He believes this will help with the disconnect between what people outside the University think we do and what we’re known for.

Dr. Alp had a question regarding international students. She said that 75 percent of most students in engineering at other universities are international students. Dr. Friedl said that

all schools have felt the impact of 9/11 and the Patriot Act. He said he feels most regional schools probably feel the same as we do. Loans are also another issue; if their countries do not fund them, we can't here. Dr. Arfken said that one problem in the process we're getting untangled is how and when I-20's are issued.

No further questions were raised for Dr. Friedl.

V. Other Business

Dr. Bellar announced that on November 11, 2005 there will be a recruiting workshop conducted by a group from Nashville. It will be sponsored by the Graduate School.

Dr. Bellar also mentioned the Graduate Student Association research travel awards. The deadline has been extended until October 21, 2005. Spring travel needs to be submitted in the spring, not the fall.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Pier, CPS
Executive Secretary
The Graduate School