Graduate Education Council
Agenda
Wednesday, November 18, 2015
1-3 pm, 101 Walter

Present: Jay Austin, Robert Blair, Lyn Bruin, Phil Buhlmann, Arlene Carney, Belinda Cheung, Celeste Falcon, Michael Gaudio, Emit Ito, Siddharth Iyengar, Deb Levison, Linda Lindeke, John Rohde, Henning Schroeder, Carissa Slotterback, Alena Talkachova, Katie Thomas, Char Voight

Guests: Daniel Jones-White, OIR

1) Update: GradSERU data from fall 2014 pilot survey (Daniel Jones-White): Daniel Jones White gave an overview of the GradSERU data from fall 2014 pilot survey. The survey response rate was about 30%. The pilot survey included 80 items across more than 10 topic areas associated with graduate student success, and asked students to respond. The results are being used to inform revisions to the survey instrument that will be used.

Discussion:

   a) Question on selection: GEC members wondered where exactly responses came from? Jones-White said he could verify respondents by program, gender, race, and can give this information to GEC members if this is needed or wanted.

   b) The information on the research doctorate seems to indicate the possibility of a decline in interest in research careers and the research doctorate. At the same time, if students rely on advisors for their main career advising and are seeking a non-academic career, how effective is this? Advisors are not very helpful when students are seeking non-academic careers. If students are having so much trouble getting career advice from advisor, then what should we be doing differently?

   c) GEC members wondered if there were big differences in terminal master’s versus non-terminal? Can this data be broken out to see if we can see what the specific needs are of each group? GEC members also asked if the data can be broken out in terms of teaching and training at the program level.

   d) Several GEC members commented that really difficult questions don’t seem to be part of the survey, questions on things such as experiences with sexual harassment etc. Why wouldn’t you ask all students these questions? If students thought you were really getting at climate issues with the survey, then there could be a core set of questions that could be asked. There are also many questions with not very interesting answers, so if length of the survey is a concern some could be dropped.

   e) 2014 was a pilot only. The results will be used to revise and refine the survey to be used in 2015-2016.
2) **Update:** GEC Policy Review Subcommittee (Katie Thomas and Michael Gaudio; Handouts: draft policies on Appointments as Director of Graduate Studies, Application of Credits for Students Earning Graduate Degrees; Table on Appointments to Graduate Examination Committees, Summary of Policy Review subcommittee recommended changes to DGS policy): Katie Thomas and Michael Gaudio briefed GEC members on the current status and discussion of the Application of Credits and Appointment as DGS policies.

a) Application of credits policy. The GEC previously approved the tracked changes version of the policy provided at the meeting. Previously approved policy with tracked changes. However, discussion at SCEP has resulted in some other changes that now require review and decision by the GEC. There are two major changes: 1) language concerning the minimum number of required credits has been changed from *while enrolled in that degree program*, to *while enrolled as a degree-seeking student in a University graduate program*, and 2) graduate credits earned while an undergraduate student will *not* be allowed to apply toward a graduate degree. A third change resulted from the SCEP discussion as well. This related to language clarifying whether or not credits earned toward a minor could be double counted toward a second minor.

**Discussion:** There was much discussion about the decision not to allow credits earned while an undergraduate to apply toward a graduate degree. Some GEC members argued that if you have taken the course and received credit, then you have demonstrated competency whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student. Why should students be made to retake courses at greater expense both financially as well as in terms of time toward degree? Subcommittee members reminded people that although a minimum number of credits may be required for the degree, the program can waive credits in instances where a student has already taken a course. The student would, however, have to earn other credits to meet the minimum, though these could be research credits, directed study, etc. There was concern that students could earn a number of credits toward a graduate degree but miss out on the cohort experience and the advising. In addition, passing a course or courses required in a degree program does not constitute acceptance into that program as a graduate student. Students might be found to be lacking in other traits that would make them a good fit for the program. GEC members asked the subcommittee to add an FAQ clarifying that programs had the option to waive certain required courses for students.

**Vote/Decision:** A vote was taken and 10 GEC members were for not allowing credits earned as an undergraduate to apply toward a graduate degree. Four were against. On the issue of the language change to *while earned as a degree seeking student…*” 12 were in favor of the change, there was one vote against, and one abstention.
Further discussion is needed on the issue of double counting for minors, including a better understanding of why we encourage minors and what they are intended to achieve.

b) Appointments as DGS policy: There were only minor wording changes made in this policy compared to the version last approved by GEC, along with one clarification that specifies in responsibilities that the Provost can delegate the authority to assign duties to the program DGS to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education.

c) Appointments to graduate examination committees: Due to time constraints, discussion of this policy was tabled until the next meeting.

3) Draft Call: 2016 Internship Initiative (Henning Schroeder, Handouts: 2016 draft RFP for Internship Competition). Henning Schroeder briefly discussed this year’s internship competition. One primary concern of GEC members was the singling out of STEM field students as not appropriate applicants. It was suggested the rationale and language around this be clarified so as not to discourage those students from applying. Changes will be circulated via email for GEC approval. The intention is to send the call in December.

4) Debrief Discovery Across the Disciplines event and input for next year DAD showcase (Henning Schroeder): Schroeder asked for feedback on the event this year. GEC members, some of whom participated, asked that the event be broadened to include undergraduate students (as a recruitment tool), and that we strengthen our efforts to increase attendance by industry representatives as well. One suggestion was to invite faculty who advise undergraduates. Without increased and diversified attendance, the traffic is not enough to justify the investment of time or resources.

5) Updates from the Dean (Henning Schroeder): Schroeder shared that he and Belinda Cheung have been having a series of meetings with representatives from the collegiate units to discuss the implications of the Provost’s proposed realignment of graduate and professional education.