

Associate Deans' Meeting

Minutes

February 9, 2018

Attendees: Dr. DeBrenna Agbenyiga (GS), Dr. Juliet Langman (COEHD), Mr. David Matiella (CACP), Dr. Robert Tillyer (COPP), Dr. Pamela Smith (COB), Dr. Raquel Marquez (COLFA), Dr. Floyd Wormley (COS), Ms. Georgina Anguiano Elliott (HR), Ms. Samantha Hernandez (HR), Ms. Veronica Longoria (HR), Lt. Thomas Calucci (UTSAPD)

Absent: Dr. Anson Ong (COE)

Representative: Ms. LiPing Bien (representing Dr. Ong COE)

Note Taker: Ms. Rochelle Arruda

Meeting called to order at **9:02 AM (CST)**

I. Welcome

II. Safety

- a. Lt. Thomas Calucci was asked to speak to the Associate Deans about safety protocol. This was brought up in light of a situation, from December's meeting, regarding a student and safety.
- b. The behavioral intervention team is the part of the police department that handles issues regarding behavioral issues.
- c. Lt. Calucci emphasized the necessity for communication in these situations. Adding that the police department needs communication from the start in order to better address any issues that may arise, and potentially negate any problems before they occur. Communication should be inter-departmental as well as with the police department.
 - i. Dr. Tillyer asked if there are any materials regarding safety protocols that can be dispensed to the various departments, colleges, etc.
 1. Lt. Calucci noted producing those materials is a goal of the police department.
 - ii. Dr. Langman asked for clarification between the health counselors and the behavioral intervention team.
 1. Lt. Calucci clarified that the counselors from the counseling center deal with mental illness and support groups. The behavioral intervention team's goal is to mitigate any threats made against anyone or anything in the institution. In the case of mental illness, they may refer that person to the counselling center.
 - iii. Mr. Matiella asked about a faculty member's ability to share information about student with their Associate Deans, asking if it was acceptable.
 1. Lt. Calucci noted that FERPA (Family Educational Right & Privacy Act) laws primarily refer to 3rd party entities. Sharing concerns about a student or faculty member's behavior with faculty members and the police department is acceptable.

III. Appointments of Assistantships

- a. After discussion with the various departments, the period for appointment of assistantships will run for the academic year. The appointment is for the fall and spring semesters, and a separate appointment is still required for the summer. This new policy will begin in fall of 2018, and a memo will be sent out with the information pertaining to this policy.
- b. The discussion was handed over to Ms. Georgina Anguino from HR for further clarification.
- c. Assistants will be hired from September 1 to May 31st, with a separate appointment in the summer.
 - i. They will receive pay during the Christmas Break and Spring Break time frame.
- d. Assistants appointed for the full year at 50% time are benefits eligible (health, vision, and dental). Or, they can apply for the student health insurance.
 - i. Dr. Wormley asked if students who receive grants are benefits eligible if they are hired on for the year.
 - 1. Ms. Anguino informed him it depends on how many hours they are hired to work. Assistants hired at 19 hours are non-benefits eligible.
 - ii. Dr. Langman wanted to clarify that students can be appointed from September 1 to May 31st, and not August 2nd through May 8th.
 - 1. Ms. Anguino replied that the August 2nd through May 8th example would be the ideal situation, as it runs in tandem with the student's academic year. However, as of now, it is September 1st to May 31st.
 - 2. Dr. Langman then requested for a list of three scenarios to be put together as a guideline or examples for the various departments to follow, for entering newly hired assistants into the system
 - a. Dr. Tillyer voiced his support for Dr. Langman's suggestion of a simple guidelines to be shared with all of the departments.
 - 3. At a culmination of the discussion Ms. Anguino confirmed that her team in HR will produce a document that will serve as guidelines for inputting assistants into the system. Dr. Agbenyiga will send a memo and the approved guidelines to the Associate Deans for distribution in the Colleges.

IV. Graduate School Awards

- a. G-Tap & PDRF
- b. Dr. Agbenyiga commented that she noticed a trend that students whose names have been submitted for these awards are not enrolled full-time in graduate courses. She wanted to remind everyone that in order for students to receive these awards, they must be enrolled full-time in graduate courses.
 - 1. Dr. Langman asked about students who are in their third year and working on their proposals, and not enrolled in nine hours of courses.
 - a. Dr. Agbenyiga informed Dr. Langman that those students are considered to be full time because they have reached that point in their program as outlined in the Graduate Catalog—therefore, they are eligible to receive the funding.

V. Summer Appointments for GA's and GRA's

- a. Previously graduate students with assistantships were required to enroll in six credit hours during the summer, which proved to be problematic with student workload and was a financial burden.

- b. The policy has been changed, graduate assistants need to enroll in one credit hour during the summer as per H.O.P. 4.09.

VI. 99 Credit Hours

- a. Dr. Agbenyiga reminded the Associate Deans that once students hit 99 credit hours, they get charged the full amount for their tuition.
 - i. It was pointed out that there are several graduate students who have taken more than 99 credits and this is beyond the required credits needed for their program. These students should be encourage to complete their program.
 - 1. Dr. Tillyer asked if there was a way to “red flag” the progress of students, to know where they are in their program.
 - a. Dr. Agbenyiga commented that there is a current system of milestone agreements. However these milestone agreements are not always enforced properly.
 - b. She also noted with the integration of Degree Works into the Graduate School, there will be a better way to track the progress of graduate students as they work through their degree. Everything will be assessable digitally so students and faculty can keep track of progress. There will be a position opening up in the Graduate School for an auditor to work with Degree Works to keep track of student progress.

VII. PhD in Translational Science

- a. The Translational Science Ph.D. program offered at UTSA, UT Austin, and UT Health. In the program the student choose which campus they would like to be trained on. It is an intra-transdisciplinary program that includes the sciences, education, public policy, etc.
- b. Dr. Agbenyiga noted that there will be an event for Translational Science held on March 9th, 2018 at 9:00 AM. The event was created to promote the program.

VIII. SACSCOC (Attachment)

- a. The current language in SACSCOC referring to transfer credits, which does not state that credits must come from an accredited institution. This is not aligned with the current policy from UTSA Graduate School.
- b. Undergraduate has decided to remove the language from their Catalog that would require transfer students to have credits from an accredited institution. However, this is a policy that Dr. Agbenyiga and the Graduate Council do not wish to pursue.
- c. It is the consensus of the Associate Deans that this policy remain unchanged in the Graduate Catalog.

IX. Plus/Minus Grading System (Attachment)

- a. The Graduate Council asked their representative to go to their respective colleges/departments to get an understanding of the faculty’s perspective of the plus/minus grading system. Currently the system is not consistent across the university.
- b. This inconsistency is problematic for students, and especially international students.
 - i. Dr. Marquez asked if Graduate Council will vote on this matter.
 - 1. Dr. Agbenyiga replied that there is discussion for the ACPOL committee will write up a policy for the council to review in regards to the plus/minus system, for the Council to vote on the matter if this is the agreed upon process once the Council members provide a report from their departments.
 - ii. Dr. Agbenyiga is still waiting to hear from Graduate Council in regards to their decision and will keep the Associate Deans updated.

- iii. Dr. Agbenyiga commented that if any of the Associate Deans who would like to make their position known to Graduate Council, forward it to Dr. Agbenyiga.
- iv. Dr. Marquez suggested that the Associate Deans make a vote on this topic.
 - 1. Dr. Wormley, Dr. Marquez, Dr. Tillyer, Dr. Smith & Mr. Matiella all voted *against* the current structure of the plus/minus policy implementation
 - 2. Dr. Ong and Dr. Langman were absent
 - 3. Dr. Agbenyiga noted that she would get their vote after this meeting.

X. Matters Arising

- a. Dissertation Boot Camp (Flyer)
 - i. Dr. Agbenyiga asked that the Associate Deans share this information with their students. The Graduate School has noticed an increase in doctoral students defending early and getting their degree completed in a timely manner.
- b. Graduate School Excellence Awards (Flyer)
 - i. These are awards given out to students for their teaching and research, as well as outstanding graduate advisors.
 - ii. The call for nominations opened on December 8th, 2017.
- c. 3MT (Flyer)
 - i. There have been several students participating over the various colleges at UTSA. The doctoral student who won last year will be heading to Arkansas to compete at the Council on Southern Graduate Schools.
- d. SSPD Center Spring 2018 Schedule (Flyer)
 - i. The center has had steady growth and utilization over the past year. Hours and resources coming through the center has grown, and positively benefitted students.
- e. V.I.P. Program
 - i. Dr. Tillyer wanted to ask the committee to reconsider why the V.I.P. program requires a 3.3 GPA in discipline requirement for students. As opposed to a 3.0 GPA baseline at the Graduate School, and each individual college/department could choose their GPA requirement.
 - 1. Dr. Wormley pointed out that having a 3.0 GPA baseline would not be considered V.I.P., as that is the minimum GPA to enter into the Graduate school.
 - 2. Dr. Tillyer insisted that the V.I.P. application requires a faculty nomination, and that is what distinguishes V.I.P. students.
 - ii. Dr. Agbenyiga noted that this topic had already been voted on previously. The reasoning behind the higher discipline GPA is to demonstrate the student's ability in their field of study.
 - iii. The Associate Deans agreed that the VIP GPA requirements should remain.

XI. Closing Matters

- a. Dr. Agbenyiga noted that in March there will be some workshops for students on the application process in the Graduate School.
- b. Dr. Tillyer asked about an update on Embark, as his faculty cannot see the in progress applications.
 - i. Dr. Agbenyiga will speak with Monica Rodriguez for an update.

Meeting ended at **11:00AM**