

**Graduate Council  
Minutes  
27 October 2023**

The Graduate Council met in HHSB 357 and by Zoom on Friday, 27 October 2023 at 9:05 am.

Members present: J. Black, J. Bowers-Campbell, K. Doss, T. Eckard, B. Fonseca, M. Garrido-Lopez, H. Grappendorf, B. Karayaka, J. Lawson, K. Mathews, T. Orr, C. Parrish, H. Rimes, D. Solomon, C. Thomas, and A. Trombley, E. Virtue

**Members absent:** J. Deziel, D. Dorondo, L. Hammer, H. Jack, M. Kennedy, and G. Sabih

Others present: R. Stiles, T. Durbin and A. Messer

**Approval of the Minutes** Motion and second to approve the minutes for the September 12, 2023 meeting. **Passed**

**Curriculum Review**

- **MEPN**

The MEPN is a generalist nursing degree; upon completion of the program, graduates will be eligible to take the National Council Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). The MEPN program at Western Carolina University (WCU) will focus on nursing in the rural healthcare environment, encompassing Appalachia and indigenous Cherokee Indian populations.

Pre-requisites taken at the undergraduate level could be funded through Financial Aid as long as there is an undergraduate application to take those pre-requisites. Pre-requisites taken at the graduate level are not fundable through financial aid. Students must be admitted to a program. A council member suggested to develop 500 level courses or combine courses that house the pre-requisite subjects to align program at the graduate level.

Support for the need for this program comes in the form of market analysis showing support for this program in the region due to the rural focus, the number of students turned away because we do not have this type of program, and the critical nursing shortage. There is a significant impact in rural settings. If you want to be a leader or rural specialist, the MSN is a better fit. It is recommended that applicants complete a refresher on basic science if it has been more than 5 years since taking it.

Voting on approval to support and send to Provost and Chancellor: **Passed**

- **Higher Education Student Affairs (M.Ed.) Graduate Program Change Proposal**

Proposal to remove the GRE requirement for admission. Currently, a GRE score is required for applicants with a cumulative undergraduate GPA lower than 3.0. Finding board pass rates are suffering since dropping the GRE requirement in DPT. Motion from the floor, and seconded **Passed**

- **PSY - 887 - External Doctoral Practicum Graduate Course Change Proposal**

Proposal to allow PSY 887 as a repeatable registration course. Motion from the floor and seconded **Passed**

**Academic Policy and Graduate Faculty Review**

- The following persons were approved by the Graduate Faculty Review Committee as members of the graduate faculty and came as a seconded motion for approval. Approved. **Passed**

Dr. Chad	Maynor	affiliate Human Services
Ms. Chloë	Waterman	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Cyndy	Caravelis	affiliate Criminology and Criminal Justice
Dr. Jennifer	Platania	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Jewell	Cooper	affiliate Human Services
Mr. Joshua	Lynch	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Mike	Swan	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Monica	Lee-Currie	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Phillip	Brown	affiliate Human Services
Dr. Tanisha	Latimer	affiliate Human Services

Dr. Betsy Aspinwall affiliate Human Services  
Dr. Carlton Smith affiliate Human Services  
Dr. Michelle Kyriakides affiliate Human Services

### **Financial Assistance**

- The Graduate School is proposing to adjust the stipends for graduate assistants (GAs) to take effect Spring 2024. This would be the first installment in a longer-term initiative to improve GA compensation.
  1. \$500/year increase for each annual stipend of \$12,500 or less
  2. \$500/year increase for each instructor of record (from \$1000/year to \$1500/year)

**Passed**

### **Graduate Student Association**

- GSA Travel Awards for fall are being processed to students.
- GSA would like to institute a monthly award to recognize graduate students that is similar to the faculty member recognitions. The idea is to recognize graduate students who are going above and beyond for their programs. The students would be awarded \$100 award.

A cash award may affect student Financial Aid resources. Adjudication of nominations via essays, evidence of collaboration within the community, or other forms of giving back, examples of going above and beyond in program, faculty and peer support. GSA should work with Graduate School Dean and Budget Officer on budget allocation and awarding.

### **Associate Dean Report**

- Virtual Open Houses: we have the Spring 2024 VOHs scheduled.

September's residential programs VOH had 262 registered and 156 attended which is a 60% show rate. October's online programs VOH had 153 registered and 36 attended which is a 24% show rate. We work towards a minimum 30% show rate. November 2 is residential programs. We have 409 registered. The last VOH for 2023 is in December for online programs.

Starting November 2, we will have a breakout room for international applicants before they move to the program breakout room. Global will run that room to answer the general int'l Qs.
- Research and Scholarship Conference RASC

Reminder that RASC is coming up in March 2024. We have combined Undergraduate Expo, Graduate Research Symposium, Faculty Scholarship Celebration, and the 3MR into one week. We are looking for faculty engagement in the 3MR. We have also been asked to host a mock 3MT and 3MR for the Board of Trustees meeting in December.

### **Dean Report**

- Enrollment report from Fall 2023 census to current date is stable. The melt from census is small and it is a snapshot of the aggregated information. Thanks to all PDs for helping to close the gap from last year to this year. Distance programs are carrying growth in enrollment and SCHs.

### **Lightning Updates**

- Trina Orr reported a delay in the Financial Aid application deadline due to FAFSA Simplification Act overhaul. The application period will open in December, but the specific date is unknown at this time. Massive communications plan addressing the delay and notifications will be sent as soon as date is confirmed.
- Angie Trombley thanked the Graduate School for support of program changes.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 am.

Submitted by – Roxane Stiles

Please note: All attachments are on file in the Graduate School with the Graduate Council meeting minutes.