

University of West Georgia

Graduate Programs Committee Meeting Minutes

10:00 AM, September 25, 2024 (Virtual Meeting)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 10:00 AM.

II. Roll Call and Introductions of Attendees

Present: Craig Schroer, Kyle Lorenzano, Agnieszka Chwialkowska, Sarah Hupp Williamson, Kim Huett, Maria Doyle, Matt Varga, Misty Stewart, Donna Haley

Absent: Patrick Hadley, Pam Dunagan

III. Discussion of GPC Responsibilities

The GPC Chair presented an overview of the GPC's responsibilities:

Purpose: to receive and consider requests for modifications to the graduate curriculum as specified in the UWG Shared Governance Procedures for Modifications to Academic Programs and to advise the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs on said requests; to recommend policies and procedures concerning graduate programs, curriculum, admissions, transfers, admission to candidacy, eligibility for graduation, and appeals; to advise on incorporating diversity and inclusion into curricula as appropriate; as well as to review comprehensive program reviews, and to develop policies regarding graduate faculty.

Comments and Questions:

- Comprehensive Program Reviews: Will take place in the spring, and Chair will find out how many are scheduled for this year.
- Diversity and Inclusion: A question was raised about incorporating diversity and inclusion into curricula. This has not been a primary focus for GPC in the past, and a discussion with the Faculty Senate Chair may be necessary to understand this function for the committee.
- Graduate Faculty Policy Development: A question arose regarding GPC's role in developing policies related to graduate faculty. It was clarified that the Graduate School proposes policies, and GPC comments and approves them.

IV. New Business

a. 10-Year Policy GPA Policy for Graduate Admissions

The GPC approved codifying an existing practice that allows programs to exclude GPAs earned over 10 years ago. Programs have the option to opt in to this policy at the program admissions level.

- **Policy Overview:**

- Eligibility: The GPA required for admission is eligible for exclusion if it has been 10 or more years since the degree was conferred.

- Holistic Evaluation: Admissions will conduct a holistic evaluation of the applicant's other criteria, such as personal statements, writing samples, and letters of recommendation.
- Competitive Admission Review: Programs relying heavily on GPA may request additional information for a holistic review.

Questions Raised:

- **Rationale for Policy:** Older GPAs might not reflect a student's current abilities. Programs may request additional information to facilitate a more thorough review.
- **Admission Process Impact:** Competitive programs often rely heavily on GPA. Programs have the option to apply stricter requirements but must decide before reviewing applications.
- **Prerequisite Courses GPA Consideration:** If a student has taken prerequisite courses within the last 7-8 years, this GPA can be considered, but this decision is determined at the program level.
- **Inclusivity and Appeal Reduction:** A comment was made that the policy reduces appeals and promotes inclusivity.

Vote on the Proposal:

- Approved by 6 out of 7 voting members (6 Yes, 1 Abstained).

b. Graduate Assistantship Process and Requests

An update on the timeline and GPC responsibilities was provided:

- Applications open from October 1 to October 31, 2024, for the fiscal year 2026.
- The GPC reviews applications approved by unit leaders to ensure they align with the institutional mission.
- The minimum assistantship may increase from \$800 to \$1,000.
- GPC's role is advisory, while the Graduate School and Provost make final decisions.

Comments:

- An infographic was requested to clarify the process and include in the Faculty Senate newsletter.

V. Other Business

A question was raised about the policy document detailing how Faculty Standing Committees are organized and their responsibilities. A link to the resource was provided:

westga.edu/assets/provost/docs/faculty-resources/PoliciesProcedures.pdf.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 AM.