

**DRAFT MINUTES
OF
GRADUATE COLLEGE FALL FACULTY MEETING
November 30, 2017**

ATTENDANCE

Approximately 25 Graduate Faculty attended the meeting.

WELCOME

Meeting Called to Order at 4:06 p.m. by Cynthia Forehand, Dean of the Graduate College.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 12, 2017 Minutes reviewed. No edits presented. **Motion** to approve Minutes made. Seconded. All in favor. April 12, 2017 Minutes APPROVED.

GRADUATE STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES AT THE GUND INSTITUTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, Donna Rizzo, Acting Director (slides 4-17)

Donna Rizzo introduced herself as the Acting Director of the Gund Institute for the Environment for the first year. Taylor Ricketts will step in as director when he returns from sabbatical.

Donna Rizzo explained that this institute was launched because they believe environment will define this century and solutions are going to require people from all disciplines. The goals of the Gund Institute are to facilitate interdisciplinary scholarship that addresses real world challenges, build community, attract high quality students and scholars, compete for funds, and reinforce scholarship.

The Gund Institute is designed with PhD and postdoctoral candidates in mind. It offers seed grants, grant writing support, and some support for undergraduate research, though it does not compete with any undergraduate research programs. The Gund Institute promotes good research all across campus.

The Gund Institute will have a rotating set of themes. Ecological economics will always be a theme, but it will be joined by others. A focus group will assist in defining these and faculty were encouraged to attend the events that the Gund Institute will be holding in the spring to offer ideas and feedback.

Donna Rizzo explained the affiliation system. All interested faculty who think their research aligns with the environment can become affiliates and be placed on the mailing list. Fellows are deeply engaged faculty with more responsibility.

Donna Rizzo then discussed the Catalyst Awards. This year there were 21 proposals from 6 colleges/schools and 92 faculty.

Donna Rizzo then discussed the PhD and Postdoc awards. These competitive awards are open theme, though they must align with one of the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development from the United Nations (see slide 16), and offer three years of funding. There are two postdoc positions right now and two PhD, but she is anticipating adding more PhD slots in the spring. Faculty were encouraged to advise students to apply and make sure they know that they must apply to a degree program and the Gund award.

Donna Rizzo explained several ways to stay connected to the Gund Institute, including email, Twitter, their website, and Gund Teas (see slide 14).

The biggest obstacle for the Gund Institute is that people don't understand it is new, and different from the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, which no longer exists.

A faculty member asked when the Gund Institute will be selecting new fellows. Donna Rizzo explained that the first batch will be onboarded in January 2018. She then explained what people need to do to become an affiliate, including submit a CV and letter of interest. To become a fellow, faculty must also give a public presentation either on campus or at a Gund Tea attended by two people from the onboarding committee.

DEAN'S REPORT, Cynthia Forehand, Dean (slide 18)

Dean Forehand explained how the Graduate College offers student support. These include student crises response training for two staff members, making recommendations on the stipend level, offering \$70,000 in Clean Energy Fund grants, offering small \$750-\$1,000 research support awards to defray out-of-pocket cost to students, opening the Graduate Writing Center and moving it to a new location in the Bailey/Howe Library, developing a CTL workshop for graduate students, and offering a fitness pass reimbursement program.

Dean Forehand discussed the implications of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and reviewed the websites below. The House Bill taxes waived or reduced tuition for graduate students, but this is not in the Senate Bill. There would also be impacts on University employees who take classes or whose children attend UVM.

1. <http://www.acenet.edu/Pages/Higher-Education-and-Tax-Reform.aspx>
2. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/11/30/how-senate-and-house-tax-bills-would-hit-higher-education>

Dean Forehand discussed the three year review of her role as Dean of the Graduate College. She was humbled by the positive feedback and noted that she will do more to communicate the strategic initiatives the Graduate College. She encouraged faculty to share ideas for things the Graduate College should be doing by calling or emailing.

Dean Forehand addressed the following questions and concerns following her report.

A major impediment for getting students to come to UVM has to do with the lack of student housing. There is not much guidance for graduate students on the website. Dean Forehand replied that there is not the budget or ability for the university to offer subsidized graduate housing. There are three issues. One, is there housing available? Two, is it appropriate and close enough? Three, is it billed through the University? Dean Forehand has been working on the last issue for international students in particular. She is also trying to develop relationships with landlords and trying to get housing secured below the market value. 400 Champlain students will be moving into the housing that is being developed downtown, which will open up Spinner Place and take pressure off of other housing in the downtown area. The Graduate College is trying to get a block of housing at Spinner Place. In terms of information on the web, when students are admitted they are directed to a link with housing information that is not accessible through the general website. There is a high level meeting in the works to talk about developing housing for graduate students through an outside contractor.

Is Champlain College hoping to increase its enrollment by 400 students in response to the additional housing? Dean Forehand was not sure, but thought that the goal was to take some pressure off of the housing market.

FALL 2017 ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT, Kimberly Hess, Director of Admissions & Enrollment Management (slides 19-25)

Kimberly Hess reviewed the *Applied, Admits & Newly Enrolled AY Comparison* chart on slide 20. She noted that the AY 17-18 data was not complete, but she wanted to represent that applications are coming in. She anticipated that AY 17-18 would be close to the same numbers as AY 16-17. For AY 16-17, this chart represents the below statistics:

- 11% increase in applications
- 12% increase in admissions
- 19% increase in acceptance
- 16% increase in enrollment
- 47% yield from admitted pool, or people who were admitted and enrolled
- 23% yield from applicant pool, or people who applied and enrolled

Kimberly Hess reviewed the *Total v. International Fall Enrollment Comparison* chart on slide 21. Fall total enrollment from 2012-2017 shows a dip in 2015, but is on an upward trajectory. There was a 4% increase in total enrollment from 2016 to 2017. The international students as a percent of total graduate students figure is holding steady at 10%. This number reflects new and current international students.

Kimberly Hess reviewed the *Three Year Total Enrollment Comparison by College* chart on slide 22. This chart shows enrollment change by college from 2015-2017. Most colleges and schools are up, with the College of Arts and Sciences the only one showing a decrease in enrollment.

Kimberly Hess then discussed new developments in graduate admissions. The application has moved to a responsive design platform, which means applicants can start their application on any device and finish it on another. It also brings the Graduate College into compliance with ADA for screen readers. It also allowed the application to switch over to the most recent University

Communications logos and fonts, making it clear that applicants are applying to the University of Vermont Graduate College.

There were requests for departments to receive emails when they had new/completed applications to review. This is now possible, and departments who opted in should be receiving these communications. There is now consistent branding across all communications that go out to applicants, and an automatic email goes out to applicants who started an application but have not resumed it for two weeks. An example of a communication that goes out to students can be viewed on slide 24.

The Graduate College is also engaging in recruitment efforts by sending staff to several New England graduate fairs, revamping the recruitment card with University branding, and partnering with the Young Alumni Association. Kimberly Hess also identified a way to capture what schools applicants come from. Most come from New England, with 12% from UVM. This information helps determine locations to send information to.

Kimberly Hess then encouraged faculty to ask her how to engage in recruitment and how to pull information on where their applicants are coming from.

GRADUATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS, Cynthia Forehand, Dean (slide 26-28)

There have been six meetings subsequent to the last Graduate Faculty Meeting.

Dean Forehand encouraged faculty to submit course proposals well in advance of the February 15 deadline.

The Graduate Executive Committee reviewed 19 new or significant change course proposals, two minimal change, deactivation, or delete course proposals and 22 graduate faculty applicants since the last Graduate Faculty Meeting.

The Graduate Executive Committee approved the following curriculum proposals:

- PhD in Complex Systems and Data Science
- Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering
- Master of Science in Engineering Management
- Certificate of Graduate Study in Community Resilience and Planning
- Finance Track in the Sustainable Innovation MBA
- Termination of Certificate of Graduate Study in Sustainable Transportation

The Graduate Executive Committee has conducted a curriculum assessment of 200 level coursework. Dean Forehand noted that 46% of master's coursework across the university is at the 300 level, but this is a deceptive number because there is a 0% to 95% range across individual programs. The Graduate Executive Committee approved the following **motion** regarding 200 level coursework:

The Graduate College should meet with curriculum committee chairs or department chairs to ensure that 200 level courses approved for graduate credit have appropriate prerequisites or are removed from the graduate catalogue, and that courses that are actually graduate courses are changed to the 300 level.

A faculty member from the College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences (CEMS) commented that it is difficult to offer graduate only courses because there are not enough students to support this. Dean Forehand replied that CEMS has five new graduate programs coming on and this will boost the number of students enrolling in these courses. In addition, 100% of the tuition revenue from these graduate students will go to the unit, which will make it more feasible to offer graduate only courses.

A topic currently up for discussion in the Graduate Executive Committee is assessment criteria for NEASC. The committee is trying to come up with university wide outcomes data for master's, doctoral and professional programs. Two criteria that have been identified for the master's level are below:

1. Apply discipline specific knowledge and formal logic to solve novel problems presented in oral and written form
2. Create an independent person who can come up with their own ideas and hypotheses, analyze outcomes, and solve problems along the way

A faculty member asked if each graduate program will have to assess these criteria? Dean Forehand replied that yes, programs would have to agree to assess these. She acknowledged that this is a big commitment, but this is a high priority for NEASC.

The faculty member requested that there not be too many learning outcomes to be assessed. Dean Forehand stated that her goal is to have two at the master's and doctoral levels, and the professional level is to be determined.

It was suggested that a form be created that defense committees can evaluate at the time of defense, but no process was determined at this time.

ADJOURN

The meeting concluded at 5:10 p.m.