

**2015-16 FACULTY SENATE**  
**GRADUATES STUDIES POLICIES COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**

**March 1, 2016**

*Approved 3/15/16*

Members Present: Bogazianos, Heather, Hembree, Kaplan, La Rocco, Pinch, Topping, Wassmer

Members Absent: Cowan, Hamilton, Meidinger, Newsome, Vargas

Guests: Malee Xiong (Office of Graduate Studies), Andrew Michaud (Graduate Student Advisory Council)

**a. Call to order:** Called to order at approximately 8:34 a.m.

**b. Open Forum:** There were no items for Open Forum.

**c. Minutes of February 16, 2016:** Approved.

**d. Approval of Agenda:** Approved with one amendment.

**e. Information Items**

a. Report from Chair

Heather updated the committee on two items GSPC recently forwarded. Senate Executive Committee discussed the Graduate Learning Goals policy. They made one minor change to the description of the *Professionalism* goal and placed the policy as a first reading item for the March 3, 2015 Senate. The Duplicate Degrees policy is a second reading item for the same meeting.

Heather asked members to consider standing as chair for 2016-17 when the committee's nominee is selected later this semester. He also announced that the GSPC meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup> will be cancelled if the CFA strike goes ahead.

b. Report from Graduate Dean

No report.

c. Report from Statewide Senate

Chris Miller indicated that there has been discussion among the Board Of Trustees and at the Chancellor's Office regarding the elimination of State University Grants (SUGs) for graduate students. Heather said he will research this topic for a future discussion.

**f. Discussion Items**

a. Old Business: Blended Programs Policy

Members discussed with Malee Xiong several concerns that had been raised at previous meetings:

- *the policy doesn't indicate that blended programs are an option, rather than a requirement.*

Heather suggested the optional nature of these programs would be clearer with additional language regarding the approval process.

- *the requirement that students must apply to blended programs prior to obtaining 60 units, which is too early in their career for programs to make meaningful assessments of their potential for successful graduate work.*

Xiong indicated that this requirement was connected to the timely declaration of major policy.

Members suggested that the blended programs policy could allow application to blended programs later than 60 units so long as the timely declaration of major policy was not violated. Having 90-unit deadline would allow several groups to enter blended programs who would not be able to with a 60-unit deadline: transfer students, students who change majors, and students who become excited about a subject when they take upper division courses.

Heather reported that it is possible for programs to establish criteria for maintaining status in a blended program, and suggested that the policy should include language on this topic.

- *the minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 for admission to blended programs is too low.*

Xiong indicated that this is a requirement from Title V and that some graduate programs accept students with a 2.5 minimum cumulative GPA.

- *the requirement that students who drop out of a blended program after completing the BA/BS aren't allowed to use blended units towards the MA degree even if admitted for a later term. Is this fair? How does this relate to existing policy allowing students to count up to 6 units of graduate courses taken as an undergraduate towards a graduate degree?*

During discussion, members discovered that the definition of "blended units" had changed during the drafting process. Originally, it had been used to refer to graduate units taken while in undergraduate status. Members decided to revert to the earlier definition, which eliminates the issue previously raised, and noted that Coded Memorandum AA-2012-01 required students in blended programs to take graduate units while in undergraduate status.

- *at what point would graduate-level policies apply to students in blended programs?*

Xiong indicated that this would occur when students changed to graduate status. Members suggested that this should be indicated in the policy.

Heather will revise the policy to reflect the several changes suggested by this discussion. Members noted several other concerns:

- it is unclear whether students in blended programs who transition to graduate status are counted towards admission slots;
- they expressed concern about the equity of potential recruitment processes and whether those processes may result in the exclusion of qualified candidates;
- the rationale for blended programs needs to be revised.

b. New Business:

Wassmer and Topping agreed to draft language describing doctoral programs for inclusion in this policy.

c. Other Business

There was no other business.

**Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 a.m.

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Julian Heather, Chair, GSPC

## Appendix A