Meeting Minutes
Graduate Academic Affairs Committee
November 20, 2019 (411 Axinn Library, 1:55 PM)
DRAFT OF NOVEMBER 24, 2019

Present members and adviser: Christopher Eliot (Chair), Stephen Hernandez, Zoran Sunik, Nick Mercado, Liudmila Patokina, Elfreda Blue (Provost's Office)

Guests: Monica Florio (Graduate Recruitment)

The minutes of October 23, 2019 were approved unanimously with the following amendments:

a. Nick Mercado was pressent; Renee McLeod-Sordjan was not.

1 Graduate Program Handbook Guidelines proposal

The committee considered an updated version of the guidelines, presented as a checklist of items to be included in Graduate Handbooks. Members raised concerns about handbooks becoming quickly outdated, and therefore wrong, especially if printed. Moreover, conflict with Bulletin must be avoided. Members discussed whether handbooks should be required for graduate programs at all. The committee decided to send forward our best version of the guidelines, to see whether the senate and faculty will want to adopt them.

The proposal passed unanimously.

2 Global initiatives

The committee discussed next steps for investigation and outreach to colleagues about global initiatives.

One suggestion had been funding student attendance at conferences with international scope (as opposed to taking place in other countries). The committee suggests the Provost's office consider whether it would be useful to track this feature of conferences when it receives funding requests.

Nick will look at whether other universities have mechanisms for funding students in global initiatives. Other members are asked to check for similar solutions.

Chris will meet with EdTech representatives to consider what kind of tech resources might be available for remote interaction with students, researchers, and similar in other countries, and what the limits on its availability might be. If appropriate, the committee might work with EdTech to promote the availability of those resources. We are also interested to learn how faculty should request access to resources.

3 Online instruction review

The committee discussed next steps for evaluating online instruction guidelines for graduate courses, carrying over from a brief discussion at the previous meeting.

Among the committee's questions are:

   a. What does EdTech list as best practices or standards for online courses?
   b. Does EdTech list any best practices for hybrid courses?
   c. Has the Academic Computing Committee reviewed standards for online or hybrid instruction?
   d. What standards does NY State list for these?
   e. Standards for evaluation of online undergrad courses were recently developed; are parallel standards for grad courses needed?
   f. Beyond current guidelines, do faculty require any further guidance for online or hybrid instruction?
   g. Do faculty have concerns about the quality of online or hybrid instruction that might be addressed by further guidance?

Liu wil investigate NYS standards. Chris will discuss these questions with EdTech, the Academic Computing Committee, and the Senate Executive Committee. Other members are asked to check whether any academic units below the university level have standards or guidelines for academic computing, and to informally ask colleagues about items (f) and (g).

4   New business

No new business was introduced.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.