Meeting Minutes
Graduate Academic Affairs Committee
December 10, 2020 (online via Zoom, 1 PM)

Present members, adviser, and guests: Christopher Eliot (Chair), Daniel Miller, Dimitrios Gounelas, Michael Dores, Stephen Hernandez, Renee McLeod-Sordjan, Elfreda Blue (Provost's Office), Suzanne Pike (Provost's Office), Evan Koegl (Registrar), Jean Peden-Christodoulou (Student Affairs), Monica Florio (Graduate Recruitment), Mitch Kase (Guest, EdTech, ITS), Joe Bartolotta (Guest, Special Cmte. on Ed. Tech)

The minutes of November 13, 2020 were approved unanimously.

Announcements

a. For Spring, Senate meetings and Full Faculty meetings will move to the Monday common hour, starting at 1 PM.
b. FPS 11 and 11G are coming back to the Senate just to allow the Provost's Office reasonable times to handle appeals.
c. Faculty Affairs Committee will probably consider whether Hofstra's Mentor of the Year Award should receive the same degree of recognition the Teacher of the Year receives. Provost Berliner suggests that it should, only if that is approved by the Senate and Faculty. So, FAC will take it up.
d. VP Melissa Connolly is reforming Hofstra's Continuing Education offerings. Faculty across all Hofstra units will be invited to produce short, non-credit-bearing, online, module-based, mostly-asynchronous courses. The focus will be largely—but not exclusively—professional development. SEC Chair Bill Caniano is forming an ad hoc Senate committee to help plan this; he requests that faculty offer to join it.
e. University website is being restructured. Graduate admissions and graduate program information will be integrated. Faculty should check Bulletin content regularly for accuracy.

1 Universal Design for Learning research/promotion

The subcommittee considering this designed a survey (Attachment 2). The Senate Execute Committee rejected this approach to promotion and assessment of UDL as more general guidance. They recommend (1) promotion, first; (2) coordinating with Chair's Caucus; (3) coordinating with EdTech (Steve Fabiani, Mitch Case).

Note EdTech's Winter Online Teaching Workshop, taking place in January (Attachment 3).

EdTech support for online instruction

Mitch Kase (Director, Educational and Research Technology Services (EdTech), Hofstra Information Technology Services) presented to the committee, joined by Joe Bartolotta (Special Committee on Ed. Tech and Research).

Mitch Kase described a five-module course facilitated by the instructional design team, at least one module of which includes ideas about UDL. In addition, EdTech has hosted one-time UDL workshops.

He noted that there is overlap between UDL and inclusive pedagogies that could be leveraged, e.g., "culturally-responsive pedagogies." He suggested there is an opening to start talking more about culture in online instruction.

An idea to consider is an ongoing series with faculty showcasing examples of successful online instruction. We should consider whether there are other, good ways to disseminate models. Mitch Kase noted that Hofstra Library offers a LibGuide, and a Blackboard course shell on Hybrid and online Learning. He also did a survey about teaching methods for which he has begun compiling feedback.

Joe Bartolotta noted that his new special committee (ET&R) replaces the Academic Computing Committee. Their committee has asked How would we measure quality of online instruction? And How could we train better? He hasks us What sort of things in UDL are more relevant to graduate students?

2   Graduate student research support

The subcommittee considering this designed a survey (Attachment 4). The Senate Execute Committee rejected this approach to researching the challenges. One reason is that mismatches between desires/expectations and what is reasonably possible may generate unhelpful responses. They recommend a focus group, with representatives solicited from programs rather than schools, asking questions in the form of "Are you supported in terms of …."

Renee McLeod-Sordjan reported that one main kind of support requested by graduate students in Nursing is technology support, and ITS adequately has this need covered. She also meet with Cornell Craig (Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer) about whether there is any broader kind of support.

Suzanne Pike noted that graduate student orientation arose out of a survey of graduate directors. Though it is currently imperfect, it could be a starting point. Suzanne also noted that the Center for Academic Excellence currently serves only undergraduates.

3   Online exam security

Daniel Miller has done some research, and others have done some thinking; may present next time.

At least one committee member has used Lockdown Respondus and Suzanne reports that a student is known to have bypassed it.

4   New business

No new business was introduced.

The meeting adjourned at 2 PM.