

## Graduate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2024

MEETING LOCATION: Odum Library 1480

Present: Becky da Cruz, Debra Gresham, Ann Greenfield, Dixie Haggard, Zhong (Beibei) Lin, Lenese Colson, Michelle Ritter, Md Ruhul Amin, Lynn Crump, Matt Grant, Mitch Lockhart, Connie Porcaro, Keith Lee, John Lairsey, Fred Knowles, Arsaian Wares

Proxy: Zhong (Beibei) Lin for Arrington Stoll

Guests: Rebecca Petrella, Crystal Marshall, Tyler Cospers and Darli DeVane

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Becky da Cruz at 2:00 pm.

Minutes from November 16, 2023 were approved. Fred Knowles motioned to approve. Matt Grant seconded. Motion passed: 16 approved - 0 opposed – 0 abstained

### **College of Nursing and Health Sciences**

#### **Department of Health Sciences**

*Request to Deactivate Major (Catalog):* Master of Science with a major in Exercise Physiology. The decision to close this program was based on decreased enrollment in the major combined with budget and staffing reductions in the college. Fred Knowles motioned to approve. John Lairsey seconded. Motion passed: 15 approved – 0 opposed – 1 abstained.

### **College of Sciences and Mathematics**

#### **Biology**

*Request for New Course-(catalog):* Biotechnology Techniques. The National Science Foundation estimates that 80% of the jobs available during the next decade will require math and science skills, dictating that programs in biochemistry and molecular biology must be transformative and use new pedagogical approaches and experiential learning that prepares students for careers in industry, research, education, engineering, health-care professions, and other interdisciplinary fields (Black 2020). To achieve this goal, it is critical that we now develop holistic training programs that provide students with an inter-disciplinary experience with special focus in hands-on training. Be it the R&D segment of any government institute or the private companies, the most important question a recruiter asks is what are the techniques known by a candidate. While the training in basic laboratory techniques is default, this course also offers lecture and laboratory experience in breakthrough technique such as CRISPR to ready the next-generation of bio-professionals. This course will nicely complement any course offered in the Biology dept. that requires the understanding and substantial training in key molecular biology and biotechnological tools. After teaching this course in Summer 2023 (Special Topics: BIOL6010), student feedback before and after the completion of the course shows significant increase in student learning and confidence towards any a diverse career including traditional routes such as medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and non-traditional such as teaching, medical sales, bioinformatician and laboratory technician. Therefore, there is a strong demand of developing this type of interdisciplinary course to cater the demand of growing market in application based scientific training. Matt Grant motioned to approve. Michelle Ritter seconded. Motion passed: 15 approved – 0 opposed – 1 abstained.

#### **Sub/Committee Reports**

- **Graduate Student Success** –Spring Kick-off went well. The Fall kick-off is being planned now.
- **Doctoral Program Sub-Committee**- No Update
- **Graduate Appeals**-The committee will meet on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

- **Graduate Faculty Scholarship**-The deadline to apply for funds is February 9<sup>th</sup> (for travel between Feb 20<sup>th</sup> -June 30<sup>th</sup>). A reminder email will be going out to the committee. The Scholarship committee will meet on February 14<sup>th</sup>
- **Graduate Faculty Membership**- Applications are due March 8<sup>th</sup>, a reminder email will be sent to those faculty whose membership has expired or will soon.
- **Symposium Nomination**-The nomination forms are due February 16<sup>th</sup>. Dr. da Cruz informed the committee that the 3MT presentation will take place at 3pm in the Student Union theater and the GA of the Year awards will follow and the Symposium will be held in the Ballrooms from 4-6pm.

#### Other Business/Topics from the floor

- **Graduate Admissions Update**- Rebecca stated she is working on the applications and getting them out to the departments.
- **Graduate Assistant Update**- Dr. da Cruz stated the GA of the Year nomination form has been sent out and the deadline to nominate a GA for this award is February 14<sup>th</sup>. She also stated there will be a new GA allocation model in which every college and division will be allotted a certain number of GA's based on need.
- **Grad Scrum-Programs with capacity: Ways in which to grow w/few or no resources**-Dr. da Cruz shared the Grad scrum report with the committee seeking to generate action plans for growing graduate enrollment. The report showed Short-term, Mid-term and Long-term ways in order to grow the Grad programs. Short-Term: get undergrads into 4+1 programs, expand the state border waiver, and to increase GA stipends. Mid-term: Move programs fully online or hybrid that have growth potential, offer dual degree options, hire agent's or recruiters for international student recruitment. Long-term: Establish a cycle of cost-benefit analysis of graduate programs, Add/update unique graduate programs.
- **International Students**-Dr. da Cruz reminded the committee that in order for an online program to accommodate international students who need to maintain their VISA status, the program will have to at a minimum offer 2 courses per semester as "partially at a distance" which is 5% minimum face to face course meetings during the semester.
- **Marketing**-Dr. da Cruz shared some information from the Integrated Marketing Council. This council was tasked to market and increase enrollment for VSU. She shared the Ad performance results; she stated Strategic communications was looking for students to share their VSU story. She also provided guidance on how departments should improve the Website.
- **AGS & SGA Updates**- Tyler informed the committee that the next AGS meeting will be Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup> they plan to do a vision board. He also stated they were going to have a Trivia night at Wooden Nickel on Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- **Items from the Floor**- Dr. da Cruz asked if departments found an increased number of students who were dropped for non-payment. The Bursary failed to notify the Grad school beforehand, so the Grad School did not send out emails notifying these students like they had in the past. Dr. da Cruz will be discussing this with the VP in her next meeting. Dr. da Cruz informed the committee that an external consultant work group by the name of RNL was coming to campus. There is going to be a Graduate work group committee. She asked Rebecca to be a part of this group and informed the committee if any of them were interested in sitting on this committee to let her know.

Motion made to adjourn at 3:35 pm

Next AC Meeting: February 12, 2024

Next GEC Meeting: February 15, 2024

X *Darli DeVane*

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Darli DeVane  
Administrative Coordinator

X *Becky K. da Cruz*

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Dr. Becky da Cruz, Associate Provost  
for Graduate Studies & Research