

GRADUATE DEANS' GROUP
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2008, 2:00–3:15 P.M.
PAYROLL CONFERENCE ROOM, ANDY HOLT TOWER

Attending:

Mary Albrecht (Chair), Bruce Bomar, William Dunne, Sarah Gardial, Thomas George, Jan Lee, Sally McMillan, Buddy Moore, Matthew Murray, Masood Parang, Rita Smith, Pia Wood, Carolyn Hodges, Mohanan M. K., Kay Reed, Richard Tucker.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Mary Albrecht, Chair.

1. Graduate Council Bylaws

Matt Murray, Graduate Council Chair, presented the following:

- Thanks were given to William Dunne, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Sybil Marshall, Nicholas Cook, and Kay Reed for serving on the committee to review the bylaws.
- The draft of the new Graduate Council Bylaws contains formation of an executive committee which would include the Chair, Vice Chair, Past Chair and the chairs of all standing committees.
- Matt Murray will take the draft to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for comment.

A concern regarding the credential approval process was raised. Matt Murray suggested that the issue of approving faculty to direct dissertations be put on the agenda for another meeting. The credentials committee welcomes feedback from the Graduate Deans' Group.

2. NRC Doctoral Survey Update

Linda Painter discussed numerous problems with collecting and reporting the data for the NRC report (Attachment 1).

3. Data Collection

Richard Tucker, Assistant Vice Provost and Director of Institutional Research and Assessment was introduced. Richard Tucker shared some data collection procedures used at Northwestern University that could be implemented at UT.

- A central depository for data which will be uniform individual level database. It will allow ways to capture milestones and set benchmarks.
- Colleges to work with departments to acquire quantitative and qualitative statistics of peer institutions to create benchmarks.

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- Advanced statistics of the data can be analyzed.
- Databases showing additional information such as professional activity, external awards and incentives, and academic placement, etc. can be created.
- Exit interview surveys, such as the one developed by CGS, will be conducted. Other surveys should be instituted, such as graduate student satisfaction surveys, admitted student choice surveys, and non-matriculating student surveys (why students chose not to attend UTK), etc.
- Information on postdocs can be collected.

4. Joint Degree Policy Proposal

Masood Parang presented the joint degree policy proposal to be presented to the Graduate Council for inclusion in the Graduate Catalog. The purpose of the policy is to attract more doctoral students, recruit top graduate students, and to cut expenses by sharing the cost with other universities.

Group members raised several questions about the limitations of the proposed policy and its focus on research at UTK.

5. Strategic Planning Update

Carolyn Hodges gave an update on strategic planning. The committee should complete its task for March. More information is on the Provost's website.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gay Henegar
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group

ATTACHMENT 1

NRC Research Doctorate Programs UTK Data Collection Issues – Linda Painter January 10, 2008

1. General Observation: Survey revealed that while we have some general data to report, it was not as specific as needed for the NRC report. Identified many areas where need to improve data collection, and in some cases, change our procedures. University has to make major improvements to our graduate data bases if we hope to track students as required for the NRC report.
2. Faculty: For inclusion, Core faculty must have formal designation as faculty in program, New Faculty must be currently employed at the university, Associated Faculty must have current appointment at your institution. Number of programs submitted persons as faculty with no UTK appointment or formal affiliation.
3. Associated Faculty: No central database for faculty service on doctoral committees by department/program.
4. Determining when a student started the PhD program so we could identify our cohorts: University collects data on a student starting graduate school not by graduate level. A graduate student progressing from Masters to PhD is not identified in our database as a new PhD student but as a continuing graduate student with the student level of early doctorate.
5. Number offered admission and number who enrolled (C3): Required manual intervention to provide data for departments with no historical data. Not sure how reliable.
6. Programs that are Concentrations: Concentration data on admissions only recently captured on the application form (beginning in 2005 with upgrade of SIS system). Concentration is required field on electronic application, but not on paper version. No data available centrally on concentrations for years in NRC study; no GRE scores by concentration.
7. Student ID/SSN: Number of international students admitted without an SSN, were given a PIN, then assigned another identification number when SSN was available. These students difficult to track from date of admission through to candidacy and graduation.
8. Admission to Doctoral Candidacy: Procedural issue. *Graduate Catalog*: “Admission to candidacy must be applied for and approved by the Office of the University Registrar at least one full semester prior to the date the degree is to be conferred.” In practice, Registrar’s Office was evaluating admission to candidacy forms the term a student scheduled to graduate. Thus, no data available centrally on admitted-to-candidacy students. (Required for Student Questionnaire, for Program Questionnaire completion tables in C16, C17)
9. Program Questionnaire, C16, C17 – Completion Tables: Data Anomaly Reports showed number of inconsistencies in our data (NRC reported 2086 of total 5249 programs, ~40%, had inconsistencies in completion tables). Completion table required the following by gender by year for 1996-2006: Number of entering doctoral students; number of students who left the program without a master’s or doctoral degree; number of students who left the program after receiving a master’s degree; number of students admitted to doctoral candidacy; time to completion for students admitted to candidacy.
10. Full-time Student: Survey looked for median time to degree for all full-time and part-time doctoral students, and for those who were full-time throughout the program. Had to defer to program if student met the criteria.
11. Institutional Questionnaire: Required composite of all program data by race/ethnicity on just the U.S. citizens or permanent residents by five broad fields. Resolving inconsistencies with data submitted in Program Questionnaires was a major effort.