



Minutes of the Graduate Board

Thursday, February 21, 2008

3B Conwell Hall, Main Campus

2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Members Present:

William Aaronson, Saroj K. Biswas, Boris Datskovsky, Dimitrios Diamantaras, Edward Flanagan, Thomas Gould, Marc Lamont Hill, Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek, Renee Hobbs, Barbara Hoffman, James Korsh, Jagannathan Krishnan, Dan A. Liebermann, A. Marjatta Lyyra, Mary Myers, Wes Roehl, Michael Sachs, Dennis Silage, Pablo Vila

Ex-Officio Member:

Aquiles Iglesias, Dean, Graduate School
Zebulon Kendrick, Associate Dean, Graduate School

Graduate School Staff:

Cheryl Jackson, Assistant to the Dean
Kathryn Petrich-LaFevre, Director of Graduate Information
Michael Toner, Research Associate

Approval of the Minutes:

Michael Sachs motioned to approve the minutes of January 23, 2008. Dimitrios Diamantaras seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was unanimously passed.

Business:

The meeting opened with a review of the definition of full-time graduate student. The Dean noted the need to bring consistency across University offices. The revised definition can be found under Policy 02.25.12 of the Graduate School. It is expected that the change in definition will permit some 300 to 600 students who were formerly undercounted by the University to now be included in the number of full-time graduate students at Temple.

The next topic for discussion was fellowship awards. The Dean stated that members of the Graduate Board reviewed between 11 and 39 nominations depending on their assigned section. Given those numbers, the question of equitability was discussed. Asked how many fellowships are awarded annually, the Dean noted that 72 were provided in 2007, with 50 of those being new fellowships; more offers were extended with the expectation that not all would be accepted.

Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek stated that if the goal is to strive for excellence, the current fellowship award process should be reviewed since it delays offers to top candidates. James Korsh suggested that one or two fellowships be made available to each department for use as a recruiting tool. The Associate Dean acknowledged that there are more departments than fellowships. Pablo Vila further noted that simply allocating fellowship awards to departments lowers standards overall. William Aaronson observed that limited resources constitute a perennial problem and suggested that funds be diverted to programs that are “on the move” in an effort to build excellence.

The Associate Dean informed the Board that some colleges, including the College of Engineering and the College of Science and Technology, offer candidates additional funds during negotiations to attract top candidates. He then asked if the deadline date for fellowship nominations should be moved up. This idea was met with unfavorable responses. Dr. Korsh suggested having two pools of funding: (a) awards based on excellence to attract the best candidates, and (b) awards extended by departments in an effort to improve themselves. Renee Hobbs voiced her concern that graduate education is not a focus of discussion in the drafting of the University's Strategic Plan. Dr. Hirsh-Pasek noted that private institutions offer free tuition to those who qualify and questioned what effect that action will have on public institutions. Dr. Hobbs asked if it would be better to offer fewer fellowships of higher value. The Associate Dean noted that the fellowship awards from the Graduate School are the minimum to be awarded, reiterating that the College of Science and Technology, for example, offers its assistantship candidates an additional \$2,000 to \$3,000.

The Associate Dean committed to forwarding to all Graduate Board members the link to Georgia Southern University's presentation entitled "Characteristics of a Good Graduate Program." He had previously shared it with the Policy Committee and the Associate Deans.

Discussion focused next on the allocation of graduate assistants across the University. The Dean asked what would be a strategic distribution keeping in mind that the purpose of these funds should be to enhance the careers of our graduate students. The Associate Dean posited that graduate assistants should be funded throughout their tenure as graduate students provided they stay on track with their studies and meet time-to-completion requirements.

The topic of conducting Graduate Board business during the summer was next broached. The Associate Dean noted that the Board of Trustees' deadline is set for early September. All business that is to be presented to the Board at that time must be completed by early August. How then, should the Board vote on work approved by the Graduate Board's Program Review Committee: in face-to-face meetings in the summer or by electronic vote? The Dean assured all that he and the Associate Dean work extensively with proposal writers to ensure that their best product is brought forward to the Graduate Board. It was suggested that an executive summary that clearly and fully explains the proposed program be submitted for each proposal. Further, in an effort to keep proposed projects from languishing as they await approval by the Board of Trustees, the Associate Dean noted that a proposal is being presented that would have some aspects of the Graduate Board's work moved for approval at the level of the Provost and/or President. Approval of that proposal is expected. He pointed out, however, that all new programs must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

In "other business," the Dean explained that data will be forthcoming from Academic Analytics as the monies have been approved to pay for the service. He provided examples of how these data could be used to strengthen existing programs.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned @ 4:00 p.m.

The next Graduate Board meeting will be held on Main Campus, 3B Conwell Hall, on Wednesday, March 19, 2008, @ 2:30 p.m.