



Minutes of the Graduate Board

Thursday, November 14, 2013

3B Conwell Hall, Main Campus

2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Jasim Albandar, Elizabeth Bolman, Deborah Confredo, Joseph DuCette, Daniel Funk, Sally Harrison, Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek, Barbara Hoffman, Jagannathan Krishnan, Irina Mitrea, Paul A. Pavlou, Vallorie J. Peridier, Michael Ryan, Michael Sachs, Sandra Suárez, Lawrence Venuti, Kimberly Williams

Ex-Officio Member:

Zebulon Kendrick, Vice Provost, Graduate Education

Graduate School Staff:

Cheryl Jackson, Administrative Coordinator

Kathryn Petrich, Director of Graduate Information

Michael Toner, Associate Director for Graduate Enrollment and Data Management

Approval of the Minutes:

Jasim Albandar motioned to approve the minutes of October 16, 2013. Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes was unanimously passed.

Business:

The Vice Provost began with an update on doctoral dissertation and terminal master's project completion grants. He announced that 40 grants were awarded across nine schools and colleges, plus one to the Center for the Humanities.

Next, the Vice Provost provided an update on the proposed download of Temple transcripts from Banner for current students and alumni applying to graduate programs at Temple University. He noted that such action violates various laws. Chief among these is the prohibition on using Banner academic records for non-academic purposes, of which an admission application is one. Favorably, Temple transcripts will become available online beginning in Spring 2014.

The Vice Provost then announced that the Graduate School is sponsoring a demonstration on the processing of application documents early next week. Tools utilized by Temple's Undergraduate Admissions Office will be demonstrated to show how staff input applicants' paper documents into Banner and admissions counselors review an application once it is complete. Invitations were sent to the deans as well as graduate admissions staff in the schools and colleges. The goal is to improve the efficiency of Banner updates at the graduate level.

In old business, discussion turned to the devolving of graduate programs. The Vice Provost explained that the deans are interested in open admissions. No minimum GPA would be stated, making it unnecessary for the Graduate School to grant admissions exceptions. He noted that departmental webpages would need to be explicit in their admissions standards, program by program, with the Graduate Bulletin remaining the only legal documentation. He concluded that the

Graduate School would retain responsibility for tracking dismissals of students who do not maintain academic good standing.

Board Response:

Concern was expressed that the quality of education at Temple University may be compromised in the struggle between increasing revenues and ensuring intellectuality. One Board member asked if all applicants would be admitted. The Vice Provost responded that seats would be limited. Another asked for the rationale behind dispensing with minimum standards. The Vice Provost stated that standards are seen as a hurdle, that the standards may dissuade some high-quality students from applying. A third member noted that some established selection criteria are not valid predictors of success. He alluded to the GRE's first-year GPA predictor and wondered why the GRE is required of doctoral students. The Vice Provost stated that there is no strong consensus whether to maintain minimum standards or adhere to a portfolio approach. It was recommended that a minimalist approach should not be adopted; instead, departments should state exactly what is required for a successful portfolio. Toward this end, another Board member noted that the departments will need to maintain evidence of why an application was rejected in the event that the applicant challenges an unfavorable decision.

In new business, the question of fellowship monies for 2014-2015 was raised. Fellowship funds have historically been distributed to the schools/colleges. When funds are moved to the schools and colleges under the new RCM budget model, is the money then just for fellowships in those schools/colleges? It was suggested that some funding be devolved to cover current commitments, but that the bulk of the monies be held by the Graduate School for administration of Future Faculty Fellowships.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned @ 3:55 p.m.

The next Graduate Board meeting will be held on Main Campus, 3B Conwell Hall, on Wednesday, January 15, 2014, @ 2:30 p.m.