Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Council
Minutes from the April 19, 2012 Meeting

In attendance: John Twyning (chair), Elizabeth Taylor (secretary), Janelle Greenberg, Jeffrey Hildebrand, Adriana Helbig, Jady McConnaha, Michael Morrill, Anne Weis, Thomas Jabro, Jacob Robbins, Alexander Zimmerman

Not attending: Sourav Bhattacharya, Margaret Judd, Richard Moreland, Anna Vainchtein, Abdul Ahmed, Pooja Patel

1. Minutes
Minutes from the meeting April 5, 2012 were approved.

2. New Business
Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Council reviewed a recommendation from the College Writing Board to institute guidelines for courses seeking to meet the Writing-intensive (W) requirement and accepted the guidelines as requirements for future W-course proposals.

Existing courses approved to fulfill General Education Requirements

RELGST 1151 Death in the Mediterranean World – Approved to fulfill the Historical Change and Foreign Culture/International – Regional requirements

RELGST 1241/JS 1241 Gender and Jewish History – Approved to fulfill the Historical Change and Foreign Culture/International – Comparative requirements

ENGLFM 0401 Introduction to Visual Culture – Approved to fulfill the Second Course in Literature, the Arts, or Creative Expression requirement

RUSS 1310 Nabokov – Approved to fulfill the Second Course in Literature, the Arts, or Creative Expression requirement

Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Council
Minutes from the April 20, 2012 Meeting

Attendees: Andrea Aldrich, Daniel Berkowitz, Christopher Bonneau, Julia Bursten, Stephen Carr, Robert Daley, Susan Kalisz, Lauren Oldfield, Nicholas Thorne, Alba Tuninetti, Robert Walters. Not in attendance: Nancy Condee, Adam Shear

1. Review of March 23rd minutes. Accepted and approved by Council.

2. Response of Theatre Arts to TA/TF Report. The Council is requesting a further response from the department to the suggestions the subcommittee enumerated. Or, the Council is suggesting that they department do a further review of the suggestions the subcommittee enumerated and submit a more definite path of accomplishment or success.

3. Selection of the TA Reviews for the Upcoming Fall. The Council decided to conduct these reviews in the Fall instead of Spring if possible, logistics are better. The Departments of Anthropology and French and Italian were chosen. Acting Associate Dean will notify departments in April of their pending review.

4. Discussion of Recent Suspension of Admission and Future Prospects. Dean Carr had a letter delivered to the students in Classics, German, and Religious Studies explaining the school's commitment to continue to provide them with a quality education. A copy of this letter was shared with Council.
Dean Carr also clarified to the Council the difference between suspending admission and closing a department. Suspension allows for the department and school (3 to 5 years) to assist and honor commitments made to students previously. Although this does not present a huge savings, it does allow these departments and their students and faculty to strategize as to opportunities and options. These departments are not being closed.

The Council discussed and commented on a petition from one of its affected students.

5. Dean’s Announcements:

>TOEFL Issues. Of the new admits for the upcoming year, a minimal amount fell within the 80 to 90 range. A reminder was sent to each of the affected departments that next year the new minimum score for admission will be 90. Departments were appreciative of the reminder. Hopefully other schools that have a joint program with our Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences departments will also raise their standards. So far it does not seem as if this will affect our overall numbers too much.

>Banner year for KLI Fellowships. This year we have a total of 18 fellowships. We have been able to double the number of offers we have normally.

>Hot Metal Bridge Program: The program has been expanded to include the Department of Biological Sciences. The number of applications received this year increased by 60%. Also, one of our first HMB fellows went on to become a K. Leroy Irvis Fellow and has just recently received an NSF Fellowship.

6. New business. There was no other business and meeting was adjourned.
requirements: RELGST 1151, RELGST 1241/JS 1241, ENGLFM 0401, RUSS 1310, HIST 1026/WOMNST 1026. Council also reviewed a recommendation from the College Writing Board to institute guidelines for courses seeking to meet the Writing-intensive (W) requirement and accepted the guidelines as requirements for future W-course proposals.

Delanie Jenkins moved to accept the minutes and the report was accepted unanimously.

4. Report from Arts and Sciences Graduate Council (Acting Associate Dean Stephen Carr)

Acting Associate Dean Stephen Carr reported that Graduate Council met on April 20, 2012 and selected new departments for review of their TA training programs over the next year. In the fall, Council changed the TOEFL score required for admission to a graduate program for AY 2014 (Summer 2013) from 80 to 90; there were fewer than 12 people who fell in the 80-90 range in this year's admittees. Dean Carr advised that the application rate is very high for the Hot Metal Bridge Program. Applications in general are up 9%, and accepted applications are about the same as last year.

The report was approved unanimously.

5. Update on the Budget

Dean Cooper reminded the Committee that the cuts in the Commonwealth appropriation proposed by the Governor correspond to a $41 million reduction in the University Education and General budget for next year, and that the combined effect of the Governor's recommendation and the base reduction in the appropriation last year would be a two-year reduction of $73 million, 43% of the FY 2011 appropriation. When combined with uncertainty regarding the possible impact of recent security threats on student retention and recruitment, the overall picture is one of exceptional budgetary uncertainty for the University. The impact on the Dietrich School is substantial, especially since the Commonwealth appropriation has been focused on support of Pennsylvania undergraduates.

Dean Cooper distributed data packages generated earlier in the term with respect to financial support for graduate students. The data covered the past five years, and covered both the cost and scale of programs. Cost was measured by TA, TF, GSA, and FF years of support per doctoral student graduated, and scale by doctoral degrees granted. The programs included all of the doctoral majors in which students graduated over this time period, including disciplinary majors, interdisciplinary majors, and joint programs with the School of Medicine. In terms of scale, programs ranged from one student graduated in five years (from an interdisciplinary program with the School of Medicine that is under review with that school), to 148 students graduated in five years, with costs ranging < 2 units of support per doctoral graduate to > 17 units of support per doctoral graduate. The middle two support quartiles ranged from 4 to 7 units of support per doctoral graduate.

As background information, the Dean shared a list of the top undergraduate majors in terms of enrollments in the fall of 2007 and the fall of 2012, together with additional information about how growing undergraduate enrollments have affected enrollments in majors across divisions—over the past five years, natural science majors are up 35%, social sciences majors are up 23%, and humanities majors are down 8%.

The Dean discussed qualitative factors affecting interpretation of the data, including the fact that one department is in the process of addressing comments from external reviewers with regard to its graduate programs.

A thoughtful and extensive discussion ensued.

The Dean emphasized that the school is committed to ensuring that students currently enrolled get full support (both financially and in terms of graduate instruction) to complete their degrees in a timely manner, and Associate Dean Carr reported that Graduate Studies is honoring admission offers for this fall on which students have placed reliance in formulating their plans even when the offers were informal.

There was discussion of the fact that the suspended graduate programs are in the humanities—the Dean pointed out budget reductions will affect all divisions, and that start up reductions will differentially affect the natural sciences, and that the reduction in senior hiring will differentially affect the social sciences.

The Dean commented that faculty in the affected departments can continue to contribute to doctoral education in other disciplinary and interdisciplinary majors, and stated that graduate courses would continue to be supported where there is student demand.

If suspension were to translate into closures of programs there would be financial impacts and those were discussed.
Savings would accrue slowly, but as graduate students completed programs there would be a reduction in TA support that would reduce costs even when instructors and lecturers are hired to replace needed teaching capacity. The core of these savings arise because NTS faculty teach six courses a year, while graduate students teaching stand-alone courses teach two courses a year.

6. Other Business
With no other business the meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.
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The Dean discussed qualitative factors affecting interpretation of the graduate data, including the fact that one department is in the process of addressing comments from external reviewers with regard to its graduate programs.

A thoughtful and extensive discussion ensued, in which the Committee began by reflecting on the impact on current and former students of the suspension of the doctoral program in which they are or were enrolled.

The Dean emphasized that the school is committed to ensuring that students currently enrolled get full support (both financially and in terms of graduate instruction) to complete their degrees in a timely manner, and Associate Dean Carr reported that Graduate Studies is honoring admission offers for this fall on which students have placed reliance in formulating their plans even when the offers were informal.

There was extensive discussion of the fact that the suspended graduate programs are in the humanities—the Dean pointed out budget reductions will affect all divisions, and that start up reductions will differentially affect the natural sciences, and that the reduction in senior hiring will differentially affect the social sciences.

The Dean commented that faculty in the affected departments can continue to contribute to doctoral education in other disciplinary and interdisciplinary majors, and stated that graduate courses would continue to be supported where there is student demand.

The financial impact of suspending programs were discussed—savings will accrue slowly, but as graduate students complete programs there will be a reduction in TA support that will reduce costs even when instructors and lecturers are hired to replace needed teaching capacity. The core of these savings arise because NTS faculty teach six courses a year, while graduate students teaching stand-alone courses teach two courses a year.

A motion was made to support how the Deans had applied and implemented the criteria in the Planning Document for reallocation for graduate education resources. The motion was seconded and endorsed unanimously.

6. Other Business

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.