

SAGE Minutes

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Wescoe 4050

Attending: Jana Tigchelaar, Erin Williams, Pat Phillips, Paula Prisacaru, Erin Conley, Meghan Kuckelman, Jennifer Nish, Jeremy Miller, Rob Topinka, Margaux DeRoux, Audrey McDonald, Colin Christopher, Daryl Lynn Dance, Ann Martinez, Nate Williams, Kristen Lillvis, Jane (Hui) Meng.

Call to Order, Minutes approved; Conley moved, Christopher seconded.

Officer Reports.

a. Presidents' Report:

1) Updates on meetings with Harrington and M. Caminero-Santangelo: a) pay issues are due to lecturers not filling out a particular online application, so the university didn't have record of their employment. The transition from GTA to lecturer will be smoothed out eventually; b) GRA lines will now be offered next year; change to forms and application; students must have 18 units in order to qualify and cannot work as a student worker or lecturer. Now GRA lines will qualify students for one full semester off. It is still unclear what became of Behre's GRAship. To prevent this from happening again, in the future there will be a list of backup students who will be next in line for GRAships if a student turns theirs down for whatever reason. E. Williams asks for clarification on who qualifies to apply for GRAships. c) comprehensive exam/dissertation defense procedures. They discussed the possibility of assembling a list of "best practices" for comps and dissertation that will help establish uniformity. Martinez and Lillvis will be soliciting experiences anonymously. Tigchelaar suggests putting together an anonymous online survey to serve this purpose.

2) Combined MA/PhD proposal (vote). Phillips introduces the issue by asking for questions. A lengthy discussion ensues. Conley asks for clarification regarding the delineation between the terminal MA track, MA in preparation for PhD, and the simultaneous MA/PhD track. Conley: Does the new MA in preparation for the PhD program carry the same number of hours as the MA/PhD? Phillips: only difference is the 6 hours of writing (a paper intended to be published as an article) in the MA/PhD program. Conley: How does this compare to the number of hours required for the MA now? Phillips: Requirements are the same. Conley: Is it designed for either of the new MAs to complete in two or three years? Phillips: There would be the possibility of finishing in 2 years depending on first-year funding. In the combined program, the additional requirements for the PhD are cut dramatically, which is a concern... Miller: What's the purpose of having all three options? E Williams: It sounds like it is further institutionalization of the choice between the MA exam and thesis. It sounds like the decision will be made for us. Phillips: Part of my rationale for proposing the different ends is that there need to be built in responses for the continued pressure on graduate students to publish. As it stands students aren't given opportunities to publish through

course work. That six hours of independent research at the end of the MA is meant to help. E Williams: Is this different from thesis hours? Phillips mentions the difference in length requirements of the written work. E Williams mentions the change in the graduate handbook to length requirements for MA Thesis. Conley adds that different advisors might have different requirements for MA thesis length. Lillvis mentions this would be the kind of issue addressed in the best practices. Phillips clarifies, asking whether students are wondering if we need all three tracks. Conley, E Williams and Miller suggest that we only need the MA/PhD with the option of opting out. Phillips says he thinks it would be easier to get this proposal passed if there were a way for the MA/PhD to be more strict in its admission practices than the terminal MA. Conley: If these programs come into existence, what does this mean for the student coming to KU with an MA in hand? Phillips: Some transfer credits would apply but they would be in a different position. Several students voice concerns with this situation. Conley: Would it be more efficacious to decrease the MA time in some way? This is followed by widespread discussion of distinctions between MA MA/PhD, etc. Phillips concludes this discussion by explaining his desire to put together a document that will work for our professors. Dance asks about whether these transfer credits will count with the university (not just the department). E Williams says it's at the discretion of the department, that it must be approved by the director, and is called on before graduation. Miller recommends Phillips talks to Sousa, who has solicited information about graduate programs from his students in the past.

Lillvis recommends we move to either call the question or table the issue. Phillips says he will keep the form, compile suggestions from graduate students, and then bring it forth to graduate committee.

Lillvis moves to table the issue until February. Topinka seconds. Motion passes.

3) Possible proposal for rationales. Martinez and Lillvis have been approached by a professor who is interested in making the rationales optional, decided by the student and his or her committee. Martinez calls for feedback. E. Williams mentions that it might devolve into the matter that shapes students' selection of director or committee. Dance points out that some universities have a combined comprehensive exam/rationale/dissertation proposal. E. Williams suggests that we should have clarification about the reasoning behind the rationales. Martinez thinks we should have the "best practices" outline the rationale. Kuckelman mentions that the purpose of the comprehensive exams and rationales aren't clear or kept to the same standard across the board. Focus should be on standardization.

b. Secretary's Report. No report.

c. Treasurer's Report. Our account currently holds \$290.00 in the treasury.

d. FY Liaison Report. No report.

Committee Reports

a. Academics Anonymous. Conley says that Misty Schieberle and Anna Neill have been lined up for next semester. They'd like to do another session this semester with a student who is doing dissertation work and who would like to do a presentation on his/her work. Conley asks interested students to contact her.

b. Advisory Committee. N. Williams states that the Grad Committee proposal revising the submission of dissertations will not go to voting department. The Advisory Committee also discussed how Amy Devitt's grammar class will be a pilot for online courses (subsequently discussed & approved at last Voting Dept). And the new MFA Director position was made an ex-officio member of Advisory.

c. FSE Committee. E. Williams says that the committee will be meeting tomorrow (Nov. 5) to approve revisions to 102 and 200 level goals that have come out of the assessment work FSE dept is doing now. The workshop series that was to continue this month will be postponed until next semester. Conley has been talking to students who have been teaching 200-level courses this semester, and mentions many would like more training on teaching 200-level courses that goes beyond the mentorship. E. Williams: At what point would you like this training? During 801, 802, as a separate course, as a workshop series? Kuckelman recommends a two-day summer training in a similar style to the V6 training (a mini-orientation) that would focus on teaching literature. N. Williams asks if this would be a requirement. Conley responds that it seems like it would be a good idea. Martinez: Maybe it would be beneficial to have two separate things, one focused earlier on selecting books and texts and one later that focuses on instructional techniques for teaching literature. E. Williams wonders how this requirement would be implemented or enforced.

d. Graduate Assembly: Topinka discusses several issues: 1. One recent debate has been about a Web site that tracks instructor's grades online and is made available for pay; KU is considering paying for all students to access the site for free. Topinka mentions some concerns that have already been raised; Conley: Is there some sort of FERPA violation here? Topinka: I don't think it would be connected with students' names and information. Grade distribution is available under the Freedom of Information Act. Kuckelman mentions that this demonstrates the university's concern with grades, not with scholarship and learning. Out of concern for time, Topinka quells the discussion and asks that comments be emailed to him.

2. Grad Studies in talking about introducing a new No Progress grade to keep people from disappearing without making progress. Dean Rosen will be at the GPA meeting; again, Topinka asks those with comments to email him.

e. Graduate Committee: Jackson emailed; no report.

f. GTAL Committee. E. Williams states there has been a subcommittee meeting but no other business.

g. Lecturers/Readers Committee. Sugimori emailed; no report, but he would like to thank those who attended David Treuer's Eberhardt lecture last Thursday.

h. Library Committee: Behre emailed; no report.

i. MFA Committee No report

j. Professionalization Workshops Committee. No report

k. Public Face/Alumni Relations: No report

l. SAGE Advice: No report

m. Social Committee. Prisacaru thanks Amy Hume for hosting the SAGE party for Halloween as well as thanking those who costumed up. Lillvis and Martinez introduce the idea of a new fundraiser during the holiday party in December: silent auction of creative works by graduate students, friends and family.

n. Summer Institutes Committee: No report

o. Supplemental Funds Committee: Turner emailed: No report

p. Sustainability Committee: No report

q. Webmaster's Report: Thomas emailed: The website is currently up to date. If anyone has pictures from the SAGE Halloween party, please send those to Thomas at skeet83@ku.edu. Please also state who is in each photograph (if known).

Old Business. none

New Business. none

Motion to adjourn: Topinka moved, Phillips seconded, approved.

Meeting Adjourned.