

University Faculty Senate

Graduate Academic Programs and Research Committee

M. Scott Goodman

Fall Plenary, Binghamton

October 18-20, 2018

Committee Charge

The Committee serves as a source of professional advice and guidance to the Senate on matters relating to the quality, operation, and encouragement of graduate programs and research. To these ends, the Committee may be concerned with the procedures, criteria, and support of existing and new graduate programs within the University. The Committee may review and recommend policies and procedures relating to moral and ethical concerns of research and graduate studies and other matters involving the furtherance of research and graduate studies within the University.

Committee Members

Diane Gal (ESC), Rohin Mehta (Upstate), Annie Rohan (Stony Brook), Ira Blader (UB), Laura Martello-Rooney (Downstate), Katherine Thweatt (Oswego), Fred Walter (Stony Brook), Shirley Girouard (Downstate), Willima Walker (Oneonta), Julie London (Delhi), Jennifer Rosseland-Bates (UB), Sergios-Orestis Kolokotronis (Downstate), Kathleen Caggiano-Siino (SUNY RF), Ann Hawkins (System Admin), Aloaye Tisor (Student)

Summary of committee actions since previous plenary

The Committee met to discuss the 2018-2019 agenda in Saratoga Springs on September 20 and 21, 2018. Since that time the committee has worked on finalizing two resolutions for the Fall Plenary and is in the process of organizing subcommittees for the year.

Items under consideration in 2018-2019

Graduate Incentive Program. The incentive program to award graduate students who submit NIH F30 and F31 grants has been de-funded by the RF. Based on the report completed last year, the committee has written a resolution to re-activate the program.

GRE requirement. Committee members raised some concern about the GRE and requiring it for admission to graduate programs. This aligns nicely with the Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Committee's plans to write a resolution suggesting that standardized tests should not be required for undergraduate admissions. We will work with EID on a joint resolution to bring to the Senate for the Fall Plenary

Promotion of Graduate Student Research. The Graduate Student Research Day has been cancelled this year. The Committee discussed and endorsed an alternate plan put forward by Jim Campbell. We will try

to identify 3 graduate students to give 15-minute talks on research loosely centered around a theme. The talks will be scheduled for a lunchtime meeting with legislative staff members in late Fall or Winter. Costs should be limited to travel costs for the students. The committee needs to:

- set the date
- discuss the format of the event
- develop a theme
- identify the student speakers.
- work with the students and Jim Campbell to organize the event

Diversity Post-Doc Fellowship Program Resolution Follow-up. The resolution was passed in Winter 2018, but the interim Provost suggested that it is in the “good idea, no funding” bucket at SUNY. She also doesn’t accept the idea that these programs work to increase faculty diversity. Recently, there have been efforts announced by the Chancellor to increase faculty hiring in such a way that we will increase diversity of the faculty across SUNY. We will continue to watch the situation closely to see if the ideals expressed in our motion (and other UFS initiatives) will find a place in the Chancellor’s plans, and we will follow-up if necessary.

Graduate Student Stipends. The committee was charged to look at the issue of graduate student stipends at SUNY. The committee agrees that students on stipends should expect enough compensation to comfortably pursue their education. Mandatory student fees should be considered when examining this issue. Some data has been requested from SUNY. The committee decided that generating a SUNY-wide report on graduate student stipends would be far too large and complex for a UFS committee, particularly considering the known differences between how stipends are funded at the program– and campus–levels. Instead, the committee will consider how we might make a general statement that encourages all SUNY campuses to pay stipends at a level that enables grad students to pursue their studies without resorting to loans and/or second jobs (a “living wage”).

Promoting Research in the Comprehensive/Tech Sectors. After some work on this last year, and reaching out to Grace Wang, we reached an impasse. The Committee discussed what “research” at SUNY really refers to, and decided that “funded research” is the metric that SUNY would like to increase. This is somewhat at odds with most research and creative activities at Comps and Tech schools, where faculty value working with students on unfunded projects. We will continue to consider how we might approach this issue.

IPE/Conversations in the Disciplines grant. After members of the committee helped write a partially successful proposal last year (\$2800) and receiving some additional funding from the UFS (\$2200), the conference needs to be organized. Members of the SUNY IPE Consortium are spearheading this effort, but we will be involved with distributing the funds and assessing the conference.

Outcomes/queries for UFS Senators to share with their campus

The committee will be gathering information on graduate student stipends from the campuses.