

University Faculty Senate

Graduate Academic Programs and Research Committee

M. Scott Goodman

Winter Plenary, Cobleskill

January 17-19, 2019

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

M. Scott Goodman (Chair, Buffalo State), Diane Gal (ESC), Annie Rohan (Stony Brook), Ira Blader (UB), Laura Martello-Rooney (Downstate), Katherine Thweatt (Oswego), Fred Walter (Stony Brook), Shirley Girouard (Downstate), William 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 progress on the 2018-2019 agenda on December 7, 2018. The committee discussed progress on these topics: graduate student stipends, promotion of SUNY graduate student research, the Interprofessional Education Conversations in the Disciplines Conference, and promoting research in the comp/tech sector.

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 wrote a resolution to re-activate the program. This resolution was approved by the UFS at the Fall Plenary in Binghamton. Recently, Chancellor Johnson provided a positive response to the resolution and has committed to identifying funding sources and restarting the incentive 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 produced a joint resolution (with EID) to make SUNY a "test-optional" system, which was approved at 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 are identifying 3 graduate students to give 15-minute talks on research loosely centered around the theme “Healthcare Disparities”. The talks will be scheduled for a lunchtime meeting with legislative staff members in February/March. Costs should be limited to travel costs for the students. The committee is actively working to:

- finalize the date
- 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 didn’t accept the idea that these programs are effective at increasing 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 related UFS initiatives) will find a place in the Chancellor’s plans, and we will follow-up as necessary.

Graduate Student Stipends. The committee was charged to look at the issue of graduate student stipends at SUNY. The committee agrees that students supported by stipends should expect enough compensation to comfortably pursue their education. Mandatory student fees should also be considered when examining this issue, since these can cost students thousands of dollars. The committee is now focused on working with the SUNY Student Assembly on determining how we might craft a resolution that encourages all SUNY campuses to pay stipends at a level that enable graduate students to pursue their studies without resorting to loans and/or second jobs (i.e., a “living wage”).

IPE/Conversations in the Disciplines grant. Members of the G&R and Operations Committees wrote a CID proposal last year (partially funded for \$2800) and then received the promise of some additional support from the UFS (\$2200). The CID conference is now being organized, and will use a virtual format anchored by UB with synchronous participation at approximately 7 satellite campuses around the system. Members of the SUNY IPE Consortium are spearheading this effort, but the Committee will be involved with distributing funds, assessing the conference, and using the outcomes to inform our next steps on IPE.

Outcomes/queries for UFS Senators to share with their campus

The committee will be promoting the CID conference as the date of the event draws closer.