



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC)

Minutes

Thursday, February 16, 2023

10:30am-12:00PM

10:30-10:31: Called Meeting to Order – Chair, Dina Perrone

10:32-10:34: Reviewed and Approved Agenda

10:35: Graduate Appeal

- On Friday, February 3rd, we received an appeal to a decision made by the Dean of Graduate Studies. As per the GSAC charge, we are the “body that reviews any relevant graduate appeals for the Dean of Graduate Studies.” (<https://www.csulb.edu/academic-senate/graduate-studies-advisory-committee>).
- Thus, we need to create a subcommittee of volunteers willing to review the appeal and render a decision. To ensure representation of the GSAC body, the subcommittee should be comprised of – at minimum - one faculty member voted by their college, one staff assigned to GSAC, one MPP, and one student.
- Requesting for those who are elected from their college, to avoid perceptions of bias, no representative from the College of Ed (from where the appeal originates) should be on the committee. Dina will spearhead and act as the role of Chair of the subcommittee.

10:35-10:37: Reminder to complete and tell advisors to complete the [Graduate Advisor Survey about Graduate Studies](#). It asks about communications and enrollment deposit.

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10:38-10:50: Graduate Student Pulse: Diamond Byrd & Verena Mikhail

- Diamond shared report with Verena.
- Verena
 - o Diamond met with Kim Scatton, enjoyed her time connecting and learning
 - o Food resources – the Beach Hut should be open soon
 - o Grad students would like improved parking access with discounted prices, and more accessible parking options
 - Dina/Jody looked at the data recently related to graduate students who are on campus during non-traditional hours and found for Spring 2023, we have 367 in-person or hybrid graduate classes (i.e., does not include undergraduate courses) that start at or after 4pm, with the most on Wednesday (91 W only + 30 MW). 5036 graduate students are enrolled in those courses (not mutually exclusive). We have a total of 39 in-person or hybrid graduate classes that are held on Saturday. 861 graduate students are enrolled in those (again, not mutually exclusive).
 - POC: Gene Wohlgezogen – Director of Parking Services gene.wohlgezogen@csulb.edu

10:51-11:11: Graduate Students & Financial Aid: Nicholas Novello (Director of Financial Aid)

- Replacing Nick with Nicholas. Joined CSULB in mid-October, and prior to was at CSUDH 2011-2013, Worked at CPP until 2018, U of La Verne most recently and College of Optometry.
- His philosophy around Financial Aid: Student Centered approach. Most of the services are often impacted by technology, and being a large institution, we rely on systems to deliver aid to 40K students. However, he states that the human element is necessary.
 - o Service to students: important to him are those gaps for particular student populations
 - o His Goal: to look at the operation that is robust and developed, but evaluate efficiencies and appeal processes.
- Questions:
 - o Mary Anne: Students pay for 6 units or less, or 7 units or more. To be eligible for fin aid, students must enroll in 4/8 units. Why? Is there a good way to describe this?
 - Answer: The tuition policy, it's the inflection point. 4 as part-time, 8 as fulltime is "what is the reasonable level that grad students are taking" It is an issue on a lot of campuses.
 - Nicholas describes, "one is tuition and fee policy, and one is programmatic policy" This should be discussed with the Chancellors office.
 - They've simplified the process, but has made it difficult for grad students
 - Status of ½ time and full time is not set by Fin Aid, it is set by registration and catalog – negotiation between academic programs, what is a full time load per program?
 - The Fin Aid are a 'neutral' party in this process. Don't put the cart before the horse
 - o Caitlin: Foreign language is important in History, the degree has a language requirement but its not built into the unit count. In the past, students took the classes and started to see them running into fin aid blocks, they can't count 100 and 200 level classes. Seems to be a moving target for students.
 - Nicholas:
 - Question 1: what are the guidelines
 - Question 2: they are absolutely essential if we want students to pursue PhD – they need Greek and Latin – at the moment, students that have money can accomplish this. Those students that need financial aid, do not have this choice – what do we do about that?
 - Answer: You are correct, students must meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP), and students have a 150% limit at CSULB before students are impacted. So, students have up to 150% before they can appeal for additional aid based on units required in the program.
 - o Previously, had conflicting regulation, in which 150% was the max. He argues that Fin Aid should be adjudicated on a-unit-by-unit basis. And programs should be policing the units, not financial aid. There are folks in the Fin Aid community that would contact the executive branch of the federal government and ask, can we pay fin aid for units that are not listed in the catalog. The Fed Gov cannot tell

you that, they are enforcing the law, not interpreting the law.

- Nicholas has stopped all efforts of Fin Aid adjudicating on a class-by-class, basis. Fin Aid are not advisors; it was a gross overstepping of the process. He has not implemented this, but knows his team has done so in the past – He's ended this practice. If you see this sort of thing, let Nicholas know.
 - The only niche area for adjudication – COE Pell Grants – the narrow exception that CA can offer the Pell Grant to credential students.
 - He has a much more lenient approach, there were conservative reads, but if you see something questionable – let Nicholas know.
- Jody in Chat: Lower Division (LD) courses do not contribute to academic progress for grad students Therefore when students take LD courses early, it affects academic progress. if they take LD courses later, it won't have as much of an effect
- Babette: As part of the current Graduate Equity Fellowship solicitation, each college needs to verify fin aid eligibility of nominees (one nominee per college must have eligibility). So, my question was if we should be emailing Nicholas for that info or if there was going to be another staff member.
 - Answer: Use Nicholas as the 'Centerport' – and he'll direct where to go from there. Need to know basis. We're all professionals, we have to take FERPA and Accountability Structures, Fin Aid does not need to put more barriers in front of the process.
- Jody: Unit Load Policy: <https://www.csulb.edu/academic-senate/policy-statement-14-02-student-load-maximum-and-full> - we look at a full load being 15 units, by upping from 12 to 15, then it would change ½ time unit load. If this is something we want to recommend changes to the Senate (I think academic senate), we can.
- Dina: students who are doing credential plus a master's degree. Consistently the challenge is fin aid, CED has historically chosen to NOT do that... Highlighting the challenges associated with – when students want to earn a master's degree, they apply and are matriculated.
- Answer: Fin Aid is based on the number of units to complete the degree (30 units, Fin aid determines 100% and 150%). But Some want to earn the credential with the masters, which is 45 additional units. In CED, they strongly discourage Masters in Ed from trying to pursue the Teaching Credential, that they should do one, then re-apply for the teaching credential.
- Rebecca: Credentials are different from certificates, this may need to be added into the catalog.
 - Single subject credentials are only eligible for Pell grant if not completing another post-bacc. If a student is simultaneously in graduate and credential program, its required to apply the 'highest level of education' which is then the grad program, which then declines the Pell grant.
 - Answer: Fin Aid (We) need to, been asked and demanded by DOE to make judgement calls and not put it on the legislatures. Fed says, focus on the policy and apply/interpret. Some Fin Aid offices are fearful of making judgement calls, but Nicholas not.
- Jody: Our certificate policy defines the double counting that is allowed between a certificate and degree. The credential is viewed more as a degree, it doesn't fit

within the current certificate policy. Double counting therefore not allowed. That said, CED has a pilot program that will allow 12 units double counting that should help

- Thanks Nicholas! When Dina was the Grad Advisor, Fin Aid was such a complex process, knowing Nicholas is available to us and speak to all of us that support the graduate students is appreciated.

11:12-11:42: Commencement (Christopher Reese, AVP University Relations)

- Sally is a Director of University Events, Carmella is Assoc Director that manages commencement. Carmella is running at full speed during the ceremonies.
- Details can be found at <https://www.csulb.edu/commencement>
 - Key deadlines and FAQ's are updated and info for family and guests as well.
 - Grad Fair: March 13 – hosting a senior sendoff on April 18
 - May 13: Beach Family and Friends Day (Saturday) Meet Elbie and Campus Open Houses. Paired with cultural graduations and Angels Stadium.
 - Shifted the middle of the day programs to start at 2pm to get out of the “heat zone” – by splitting CLA and CHHS – should make it easier since its not as long a ceremony. Evening programs will be lit up and parking lit up as well.
 - Looking for vignettes while people are entering into the venue – to liven up the atmosphere. The outside is a big party, but the inside was low key.
 - Carmella works with the College Coordinators to go through:
 - 350 tasks and 50 deliverables – focusing with colleges on scripts, seating arrangements, marshals, department banners processional process. Want to give as much college specific look and feel while working in the parameters of the executive teams' boundaries. There is leeway, but small features can be added in.
 - Tiffany:
 - Will there be communication coming directly from the university in terms of the decisions made, or why the decisions have been made around commencement.
 - Chris: Likely not going to justify the why.
 - Hooding opportunities at Angels Stadium:
 - Last year, the offer was given to College Deans and Coordinators to hood at the ceremony. Will that be done this year?
 - Chris: It is theoretically possible. Three depts did in HHS – there is a cost in both practical terms (AV/Seating/Staffing). Looking to build a stage under the big A for 500 guests – there are 7 different locations for hooding options.
 - Reality: staffing within his team, and commitment from the college for staff support.
 - Cleaning gaps between College Ceremony that could provide - we have an hour prior to the first ceremony, two hours after first ceremony, and a few options between 2nd and 3rd ceremony.
 - During the existing college's ceremony: there is an equity issue, and a timing issue.
 - Examples: Social Work, for the largest of the hooding, we would use large stage or the Big A. Biggest challenge was reading a long statement for each student, we'd have to limit the hooding ceremonies to 1 hour long max.

- Jody: There is room for families in these spaces at Angel Stadium, it could be departmental or multi-departmental. There is a stage, names would be read, hooding would be done.
- Colleen: when there are additional costs, who pays?
 - Chris says that commencement is in the red – that is why the fee keeps on going up. If we can coordinate and have multiple uses and multiple sites, Chris can talk to Scott. Each location costs 10K to stage.
- Margarete Williams is helping with COB's plans:
 - Because COB was moved to early morning, they are opting for something more information the weekend prior back on campus. A lot of families go to lunch afterwards, so families that are in town can see the hooding.
- Tiffanye: when is the hooding information needed?
- Rebecca and Colleen – the College will need to coordinate college wide, consensus needs to come soon.

<https://www.mlb.com/angels/ballpark/events/venues#homeplatepad>

11:42-11:50: Graduate Center: Kim Scatton

- Thanks to those who attend the Graduate Center Welcome, thanks for your ideas and exploring resources such as the GradMentor Program and Grad Travel Fellowship.
- This semester starting to offer Drop-In Support for students applying to Grad School
- Surfaced the Statement of Purpose CV/Resume Review to the homepage. Open to current CSULB and those community members looking to apply to a CSULB program.
- Use of LIB 201 – Determining a booking process, can be used for program presentations, guest speakers, student thesis defense practice
- Cards for each college, content revisions so we are highlighting the most accurate information on master's and doctoral programs per college.

11:50-11:55pm: Announcements

- February 17 - April 7, 2023: Spring 2023 Thesis Signature Page Submission Period
- [Grad Travel Fellowship](#)
- March 10: [Research Competition](#): Judges needed, email: src@csulb.edu
- March 15, 2023: [Grad Equity Fellowship](#) (attached)
- March 24, 2023: Graduate Dean's List Due to Dean of GS
- March 23, 2023: Deadline to submit for [CSULB Grad Slam Competition](#) (\$500; \$300; \$200 awards)
- March 28, 2023: [Graduate Writing Retreat](#), 10am-6pm, LIB 2nd Floor

12:00: Adjourned

Next GSAC meeting: Thursday, March 16, 2023, 10:30-12:00pm