**GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**September 10, 2019**

**The following members were present:** David Johnson, Chair, English; Lynn Panton, Human Sciences; Ron Doel, History; Sudhir Aggarwal, Computer Science; Stanley Gontarski, English; Cater Hay, Criminology; Evan Jones, Music; Steven Johnson, Law; Tomi Gomory, Social Work; Jamila Horabin, Biomedical Sciences; Vasubandhu Misra, Chemistry; Mai King, Nursing; Jessica Ridgway-Clinton, Jim Moran School of Entrepreneurship; Gary Burnett, School of Communication; Jim Lile, Theatre.

**The following members were absent:** Jeannine Turner, Educational Psychology and Learning Systems; Woody Kim, School of Hospitality; Stacey VanDyke, Nurse Anesthesia, Applied Studies; Vanessa Dennen, Educational Psychology and Learning Systems; Mei Zhang, Industrial Engineering; David Orozco, Business, RMI-REE; Patricia Born, Business, RMI- REE; Audrey Heffron Casserleigh, Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

**Also present:** James Beck, The Graduate School; Mark Riley, The Graduate School;Jennifer Buchanan, Office of Faculty Development and Advancement; Samantha Kunin, Law, Graduate Student Representative; Kristine Harper, History, Faculty Senate President; Manuel Utset, Law; Shawn Bayern, Law; Susan Porterfield, Nursing.

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 P.M. by Dr. David Johnson, Chair.

**Previous Meeting Minutes** –With no revisions or additions in mind, the meeting minutes from April 29, 2019 were approved.

**Election of GPC Chair(s)**-Dr. Harper (Faculty Senate President) introduced herself and explained how important the GPC is to the quality and academic effectiveness of graduate programs at FSU.

She notified the committee that Dr. David Johnson has volunteered to remain serving as the sole chair of the GPC because Dr. Ulla Sypher, the previous co-chair of the GPC, will be taking a year off to go on sabbatical.

Dr. Harper opened the floor to new nominations. No other nominations were made. All were in favor of Dr. Johnson serving as the chair of the committee.

**GRE/MAT Waiver Request- Doctor of Nursing Practice Program (DNP)-** Dr. Porterfield provided a brief overview of the GRE Waiver. She explained that the College of Nursing is requesting a waiver of the GRE/MAT as an admission criterion for outstanding applicants to the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. The DNP degree is designed to prepare nurses for the highest level of clinical practice in the profession of nursing as a nurse practitioner. The DNP degree has three majors, Family Nurse Practitioner, Adult/Geriatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, and the post-master’s Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner major. The following criteria would apply to the DNP program starting Fall 2020 admission cycle.

**GRE/MAT Waiver Criteria:**

The GRE requirement will be waived for outstanding applicants meeting ONE of the following criteria:

* **A completed master’s degree with a 3.0 or better GPA from an accredited institution**
* *In waiving the GRE in lieu of an applicant’s attainment of another professional degree, we will be able to admit applicants who have already demonstrated their success in professional schools and are likely to continue their success in professional doctorate program.*
* **A completed BSN with a of 3.5 GPA from an accredited institution 60 hours of nursing or RN to BSN courses.**
* *Nursing schools demand students to be successful in the academic setting as well as pass the National Council Licensure Examination at the completion of nursing school before becoming a Registered Nurse. BSN prepared RN have already demonstrated a high level of success in undergraduate school and are likely to continue their success in graduate program.*

Applicants must provide evidence to satisfy the criteria being applied. Note: Applicant with a competitive GRE or MAT score will still be able to apply to the program and will not be held to these additional criteria. Note: For those accredited institutions that are competency-based (no GPA assigned) the applicant must submit a GRE/MAT score.

Dr. Porterfield explained that a growing body of research has demonstrated that the GRE is not a trustworthy predictor of student success. She indicated the GRE places substantial limitations on students that are poor, female or part of an underrepresented group, and the requirement may severely limit the number of highly capable men and women that have chosen to be registered nurses.

Further, she stated that the program has found no evidence that students with GRE sores below the current minimum required score (and requiring an exception) perform any differently than other students, based on their GPA in the program, graduation rate in 3 year, and their DNP evidence based projects are on par with others with higher GRE scores.

The College of Nursing is also converting the DNP program with 3 majors to online starting fall 2020. Waiving the GRE requirements will allow more qualified applicants into the 3 majors without reducing the quality of graduates.

Dr. Johnson opened the floor to discussion.

Dr. Gontarski explained that over the course of a decade, the GPC has seen several of these GRE waiver requests that center around the argument that in lessening the GRE requirement it improves the quality of students. He noted that in the proposal it states the following: “waiving the GRE/MAT requirement will allow more qualified applicants into these 3 DNP majors without reducing the quality of the graduates.” He questioned this relationship and asked Dr. Porterfield to provide some additional information on how the program will ensure this goal. Dr. Porterfield stated that the DNP program was created in 2009, but before that time the GRE/MAT was required for the master-prepared nurse practitioner program. Ten years of data has been collected. She affirmed that the program has carefully compared the GRE/MAT data and GPA scores over this extended time period and does not anticipate a future “dilution” in the quality of graduate students if they were to waive the placement exams.

Dr. King emphasized that the ten years worth of data collected in the College of Nursing serves as evidence that the GRE/MAT placement exams are not a significant predictor of nursing school success in becoming a nurse practitioner. Additionally, there is also national data that suggests that the GRE/MAT are not predictors of accomplishment in a graduate nursing program. She explained that this waiver policy will help increase enrollment in the nursing program as well as take down an unnecessary potential roadblock for outstanding applicants who have a 4.0 GPA in a master’s program but are reluctant in taking the GRE/MAT. She also affirmed that for the accredited institutions that are competency-based with GPA assignment that the applicant must still submit a GRE/MAT score.

After some further discussion, Dr. Johnson called for a motion to accept the proposal.

**With no further discussion, a vote was placed. All were in favor of the proposal.**

**PASSED**

**Proposal to Offer an Existing On-Campus Graduate Degree in an Online Format- Business Law (LL.M.)**- Dr. Utset provided a brief overview of the proposal. He explained that the LL.M. program is designed for lawyers who are seeking additional advanced study in

business law, securities regulation, corporate finance, and financial regulation to enhance

their professional credentials.

Dr. Utset stated that the existing LL.M. in Business Law program will continue to operate side-by-side with the proposed online LL.M., with both face-to-face participation and online participation available for students in the program. Students in the on-campus LL.M. will be able to take the classes offered online. These classes focus primarily on financial regulation, employment law and HR issues in businesses, and the intersection of business and regulatory issues in health care. Online students who are in or near Tallahassee can take any of the campus-based business law courses.

The general operations of the LL.M. in Business Law will not be affected or have to be modified

in any material way to ensure the feasibility and complementarity of both the on-campus and

online LL.M.’s. However, they will offer special short classes during spring break that will be

available to on-campus and online students. This will provide a venue for online students to

meet and interact with on-campus LL.M. students and JD students.

Dr. Utset noted that the program anticipates enrolling a minimum of 10 students in the first cohort. By year three, the unit anticipates having 30 new students each year—in three cohorts, of 10 students each, staggered over the year (one beginning in the summer session, the second in the fall, and the third in the spring). An attrition rate of 5 – 10% is expected (based on anecdotal evidence from the online JM and other similar programs).

The online LL.M. in Business Law can be completed in 2 – 5 semesters. Given the projected

attrition rates, the program anticipates graduating 8 – 9 students from the first cohort. Once the 4 number of students reaches 30 new students a year, we anticipate graduating between 27 and 29 students annually.

Dr. Johnson opened the floor to discussion.

Dr. Aggarwal asked if the students taking the LL.M. in Business Law have a completed J.D. degree. Dr. Utset explained that the students have either a J.D. or an equivalent degree and noted that the LL.M. in Business Law is open both to students with a J.D. degree and to foreign lawyers.

Dr. Burnett asked if the online LL.M. in Business Law program will be primarily asynchronous. Dr. Utset agreed and stated that all the 2-hour courses are standardized asynchronous sections with a 1-hour module/video with discussions, assignments, quizzes, etc. He explained that the online LL.M. in Business Law will not have any required courses, but it is expected that online students will take at least 16 credits from the courses specifically designated as “Business Law Courses” and the rest of the courses specifically designated as “Electives: Topic Related to Business Law.” Online students who live in the area may also take in-person courses that meet the business course requirements. Unlike the in-person LL.M. in Business Law program, students in the online program will be required to complete a zero-credit comprehensive exam that will test the student’s knowledge of core business law and finance concepts as well as the advanced business law area that has been the focus of their studies.

Dr. Bayern noted that each of the online courses incorporate high levels of student-to-student interaction through the discussion boards in the course modules. In addition to posting their own responses to the questions, the professor poses for discussion and the students are asked to provide a substantive comment on at least one classmate’s post. The discussion board grading rubric includes this form of interaction as a factor.

**With no further discussion, a vote was placed. All were in favor of the recommendation.**

**PASSED**

**With no further business to be presented, Dr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:20 P.M.**