

Role of Lecturers as Master Thesis Advisors

Faculty continued discussion regarding lecturers as master thesis advisors.

It was agreed there was language in the Graduate Handbook that allowed lecturers to be advisors, specifically in section 3.2.1, Full Members, and 3.3, Appointment Procedures.

It was agreed the language regarding lecturers and clinical faculty can be improved for clarity and inclusion.

Concerns were recognized regarding a lecturer's qualifications and the burden of additional service when the primary role of a lecturer is to lecture.

Joe Conway will draft new language for the handbook to be considered and will distribute among the council for edits and comments.

Alabama Asset Update

Yeqing Bao indicated he heard from Business and AHHS regarding possible future asset programs.

It was emphasized current programs can easily be transformed, but each college should innovate and also think of interdisciplinary opportunities beyond what is currently available.

The programs should be made available online so students across the state have access.

The labor market is the primary target and an individual enrolled in a created program should gain a quality education to be knowledgeable enough to be a specialist or authority in the area of study.

The Alabama Asset program could also be used as an opportunity to attract more students to our campus.

English Language Tests

Dr. Bao explained a task force met to discuss alternative language requirements for international students who are unable to take current TOEFL or IELTS language tests due to the pandemic closures.

The alternatives that were agreed upon include the TOEFL and IELTS home test, as well as Duolingo, PTE Academics, and Pearson Versant English Placement Test.

Because these are home tests, the desired test scores were increased to offset any at-home testing advantages.

Graduate Fellowship Matrix

David Berkowitz did not receive any alternate test score suggestions for the fellowship matrix.

He's asked the faculty to continue exploring options that would enhance the capabilities of the matrix so students can still be eligible to receive funding until the GRE/GMAT/MAT tests become available.

NEW BUSINESS

Athens State University's Upgrade in Institutional Level

ACHE has approved Athens State's request to upgrade their institutional level so they may offer additional graduate programs.

Previously, Athens was approved to provide only three masters programs in religious studies, global logistics and supply chain, and career and technical education.

Their new distinction was followed shortly with three NISP proposals for masters in TESOL, leadership and business analytics, and strategic management in human resources.

The change of their institutional level will provide competition to UAH.

Although the members felt UAH provides a better quality education, they understood students may pick an alternative school based on cost and online flexibility.

Recruiting Update

Dr. Berkowitz encouraged faculty to engage with students when they are contacted to increase enrollment and retention.

International students want to attend this fall but factors such as consulate closures, inability to obtain transcripts, limited flights, and possible quarantine upon arrival have caused many students to decide to defer their entry term.

International numbers will be very small this fall and the students are likely from Canada or ones who have remained here in the US from previous terms.

Recruiting efforts have included several Zoom meetings with potential international students and an open house for US students is scheduled later this May.

There has also been a focus to have online meetings with international agents to educate them on our undergraduate and graduate programs so they can influence potential students.

It was announced four US Senators have drafted language to cancel J1 Visas, H1B Visas, and OPT. This change would be detrimental to international recruitment.

Dr. Berkowitz met with administration and asked that they notify the UA system so there would be a unified counter to the proposal along with other universities across the country.

A question was asked regarding assistantships for international students and what should be done if the student may not attend.

Dr. Berkowitz suggested having frank conversations with the students to understand the likelihood of their attendance. It would then be up to the departments to decide to hold the assistantships for the student until spring or perhaps suggest they apply again at a later time.

The vacant assistantships could then be used for domestic students.

June 15th was the recommended date to decide.

Assistantships funds will continue to be supported at the current level.

Meeting ended at approximately 3:10 PM