

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2016
Commons Aurora
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

X	Jerry McMurtry		Ben Hunter	X	Alistair Smith
X	Julie Amador – phone	X	Jill Johnson	X	Greg Turner-Rahman
X	Alex Corredor	X	Scott Minnich	X	Tao Xing
X	Lisa Carlson		Gordon Murdoch	X	Elowyn Yager - phone
	Kathy Canfield-Davis – phone		Ankan Guria		Jeff Bailey

- I. Approval of the minutes from March 30, 2016
 - Turner-Rahman moved to approve. 2nd by Johnson.
 - Approved unanimously.

- II. Announcements and reports
 - McMurtry talked about the Innovation Showcase and the 3 Minute Thesis competitions. He encouraged councilmembers to participate as judges next year.
 - He played the video of the winning 3 Minute Thesis presentation.

- III. New Business
 - A. Discussion Items
 1. International Admissions – Rance Larsen (Graduate Admissions)
 - Smith shared research he did of the international graduate admissions requirements of the top 100 universities, noting that if we aspire to be R1 we should follow what is working for other R1 institutions.
 - McMurtry shared best practices on international graduate admissions from AACRAO (American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers) and NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling). McMurtry discussed the fraud risk involved in shifting practices and why we follow what is considered best practice from the professional associations. McMurtry mentioned the fraud that has been caught by graduate admissions to date. Larson also strongly supported following practices which would reduce fraud.
 - Consensus amongst councilmembers is they would like to see the definition of “official documents” be loosened up a bit. They feel that if a transcript is embossed and/or on official university letterhead and sealed in an envelope with stamps and/or a signature across the seal, then it should be considered official whether it is mailed directly from the institution to UI or hand-delivered by the student. Graduate admissions would have license to request a professional transcript evaluation if any documents didn’t appear to be issued by the institution.

- Smith suggested language be added to the catalog stating that “official” and “unofficial” documents will be compared, and any differences between the two will be cause for automatic dismissal.
- Members asked whether transcripts could be sent electronically if sent directly from the institution. Answer: No, we cannot accept international transcripts sent electronically. No trustworthy system in place.
- Larson said the new system does not yet have the ability to accept uploaded transcripts. McMurtry noted that it should be in the next iteration of the applications. Over 200 to change.
- 2 main issues were identified:
 - 1-What is considered official?
 - 2-Issuing of I-20.
- Recognizing that the I-20 is an immigration document and not an academic document, Johnson moved to issue the I-20 on unofficial documents to expedite the process for students to schedule an interview with the embassy to gain their visa. Turner-Rahman seconded it.
 - Approved unanimously. No abstentions.
- Members suggested adding language that states applications with official documents sent directly from the issuing institution will be expedited in the admissions process.
- Members suggested language be added stating that if an international student earns a graduate degree at a U.S. institution and wants to earn another degree at UI, then the requirement for an official transcript from their undergraduate degree should be waived, and they should be required to submit an official transcript from the U.S. institution and unofficial transcript from the international institution.
- Consensus amongst members was that documents delivered by agents would be considered unofficial and could be used for review but the student would still need to send directly from the institution official copies or bring them with them if accepted.
- Definition of “Official” transcript as agreed upon by Graduate Council members: Transcripts that are sent directly from the institution or are embossed and/or on official university letterhead and sealed in an envelope with a university stamp and/or a signature across the seal will be considered official.
- Smith moved to approve with changes suggested by councilmembers and sent back out for email review and approval. Turner-Rahman seconded.
- Catalog language will be voted on via email once changes have been made to insure all members have a chance to review the best practice documents and fully understand the ramifications of the shift.
- Catalog language was finalized and sent to all Graduate Council members for an email vote. Members voted on the motion to include the following in the catalog: *Transcripts that are sent directly from*

the institution or are embossed and/or on official university letterhead and sealed in an envelope with a university stamp and/or a signature across the seal will be considered official.

- This passed with unanimous approval via email vote conducted May 11-13.