

	<b>Graduate Council</b>	
	<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, September 13, 2023
	<b>Time</b>	3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
	<b>Place</b>	Memorial Union 226 - Pioneer Room and Zoom: <a href="https://fhsu.zoom.us/j/91736338856">https://fhsu.zoom.us/j/91736338856</a>

### Roll Call

#### 1) Introductions

Erica Bittel, Dr. Kenton Olliff, Angela Walters, Dr. Perry Harrison, Les Mackey, Dr. Keith Bremer, Caylan Harris, Dr. Angela Pool-Funai, Blake Roth, Dr. Kim Chappell, Dr. Carrie Tholstrup, Dr. Jerrie Brooks, Rhonda Weimer, Dr. Laura Wilson, Dr. LeAnn Brown, Dr. Janette Naylor-Tincknell, Dr. Janel Harding, Dr. Valerie Yu, Dr. Gary Anderson, Angie Howard, Dr. Brent Goertzen, Dr. Medhavi Ambardar, Dr. Suzanne Becking, Dr. Jian Sun, Dr. Hussam Ghunaim.

### Standing Items

#### 1) Strategic goals for the Graduate School

##### a) Engagement/retention ([Goal 2](#): Student Success)

##### i) Graduate Advisor Training

More sessions are planned to be held later this semester/year. Dr. Bremer is working with Nicole Frank in TILT to schedule these sessions.

##### ii) Policy Update

Policy update done over the summer and the policy updates were sent out to all Deans, Department Chairs, and Admin. Assistants to share with faculty.

##### iii) Handbook update

##### b) Marketing/recruitment ([Goal 3](#): Strategic Growth)

##### i) Les – Recruitment Update

In terms of numbers since 20<sup>th</sup> day numbers are coming up, Fall 2022 we had 2,491 students enrolled and as of now, we have 2,625 students enrolled. We are up 134 students. Overall, the university's undergraduate numbers are down. Dr. Bremer mentioned that Graduate enrollment numbers were also up during the summer, around 5%. Dr. Pool-Funai added that 2<sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks enrollment may increase these numbers as well.

##### c) External funding ([Goal 4](#): Resources & Infrastructure)

##### i) OSSP Report

FY 24

9 submissions totaling \$7.1 million

7 awards totaling \$394,000

FY 23 this time last year

9 submissions totaling \$2.4 million  
7 awards totaling \$2 million

FY 23 year end numbers  
44 submissions totaling \$13.5 million  
37 awards totaling \$6.6 million

ii) Endowed Scholarship Funds

Currently is \$6,940.11 and we need \$10,000 to endow this scholarship, so we are still currently working on raising funds for this and working with the foundation. Dr. Pool-Funai mentioned that this would be a great opportunity for the foundation's pay-it-forward campaign.

**New Business**

- 1) Action Items: Curriculum Committee  
None at this time.

- 2) Action Item: Appeals Policy – Needs a vote

- a. See attachment
- b. Time limit
- c. Covers all appeals (denials, grades, comps, etc.)

This summer included a very active season for admission appeals, initiating some of the updates that have been made based on the feedback we have received. One of the major updates that was needed was a time limit and wording to include clarification since this is the same appeal policy that is used for grades and comprehensive exams.

Angie Howard asked if there was a timeline or if it would be appropriate to include a timeline for students to initiate the appeal for the admission decision? Dr. Bremer said that there is not yet a timeline, but there should be a time limit specified. So far, the experience with the applicants wanting to initiate the appeal process has tended to be immediately after receiving their denial decision. Dr. Pool-Funai stated that as far as the appeals committee, their timeline to reply is 10 working days, so it seems reasonable to escalate the appeal within 10 working days of receiving their decision.

Carrie Tholstrup- recommended an edit- “in which the evaluation occurs” – should be “occurred or within 60 days of the admission decision”. Because the “occurred” is so far from the beginning of that clause, it gets a little muddled for the reader.

Dr. Laura Wilson asked if there had always been an appeal process for admission decision? Dr. Pool-Funai stated that it was in the policy, but the appeal itself was geared more towards grade appeals, because until recently, there really haven't

been many admission appeals. In fact, there has been more in the last 6 months than there has been in the last 3 years. Dr. Wilson discussed that she worries that if students appeal not being able to work with a specific advisor or the with the person they want to work with, that targets a specific person/advisor. She did not want faculty to lose autonomy. Dr. Pool-Funai said that this has not been one of the factors, that the reason tended to be more due to an applicant's GPA. She asked if there was a recommendation to word this? Dr. Wilson will think about the wording and send it to Dr. Bremer to consider adding it to the policy. Dr. Janette Naylor-Tincknell asked if this will also apply if a department is "full" or has maxed out their size and can no longer accept any more students? Is there language that could encompass both to include capacity?

Dr. Pool-Funai stated that it is important for a department to include clear criteria as to why an applicant was denied admission. This information is accessible to the applicant in Workday, and it becomes part of their appeal record. If our reason for denial is not clear and if it elevates to the Provost level, she does not have as much to enforce this decision. Dr. Bremer stated that the reason for denial is included in the letter that is sent to the applicant. Dr. Jerrie Brooks asked if the decision is based on GPA or capacity? Dr. Bremer said that the reason for the denial depends on the program.

This discussion was tabled and will be voted on at the next meeting.

3) Action Item: Reading and Review Graduate School Handbook

There has been a lot of clean up and basic editing/formatting updates that were done over the summer. Several old items that were focused on the old systems, such as Lotus Notes and Tiger Central were removed and the handbook was updated with the language for the new processes. This can be found on The Graduate School website and in the Blackboard shell.

a. Update Handbook over the summer

i. GPA Calculations Cumulative vs. last 60 Hours

Right now, The Graduate School policy states that the last 60 hours are calculated and must be a minimum of a 2.5 GPA. What The Graduate School staff are doing now is first looking at the cumulative GPA and if it is a 2.5 or higher, we submit them to the department for review and if it is below a 2.5, then the last 60 hours are calculated to see if we can get an applicant to at least the 2.5 GPA minimum requirement. Doing this has actually worked out in the applicant's favor.

ii. Assistantships

The changes that have been made state that the assistantship is awarded only in the department of the applicant's program and may be renewable for 1 year. This is specifically referring to GTAs (Graduate Teaching Assistants), not GAs or GRAs.

However, for the MFA, since the program is technically the terminal degree and takes longer for a student to complete the program, GTAs for this particular program will be allowed to continue for 2 years.

Dr. Naylor-Tincknell asked since the EdS program is 3 years as well, if that is something that needs to be updated? Angie Howard answered that there are different tracks. The longest track for master's is 2 years, and the longest track for the EdS is 2 years. She mentioned that it is possible that a GTA would be considered for 3 years? Dr. Bremer said that the MFA is just 1 program, not like the MS to EdS where students move from one program to another.

Dr. Laura Wilson asked for example, the students for places like the library are GAs, not GTAs? There are still sometimes where her museum-funded students are "coded" as GTAs. This is something that Caylan is still working on updating as she is going through the hiring and termination process of each Graduate Assistant.

Recommended edit- Add an "s" to semester.

iii. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Limited to 6 hours. Dr. Bremer questioned why it was capped at this? Transfer credits can be accepted up to 15 hours, but 50% of the degree must be obtained through FHSU coursework.

This was tabled for discussion next time for everyone to consider.

iv. No graduation fee anymore

This is now included in the tuition increase that occurred and is no longer an additional payment that students must make prior to graduation. If you have a student who applied for graduation for this fall 2023 and they were charged, they can request a refund from Student Fiscal Services. But, if they paid in a previous semester but did not graduate as planned, they will not be refunded.

v. Non-degree Qualifications

We have changed this requirement to accept a master's degree as well instead of just a bachelor's degree. Currently, unofficial transcripts are accepted for non-degree applicants. Dr. Naylor-Tincknell asked if this would be open to any other degrees. Dr. Bremer stated that those should be acceptable if we are going to accept a masters.

The recommended edit on p.20 of the handbook would be to include "A master's or Graduate degree with a 3.0".

- vi. Last date to add a student – need to add to handbook; who can add a student; absolute last date to add a student;

This is currently not in the handbook but needs to be. Currently, for a 16-week course, a student can add/drop/swap within the first 2 weeks of classes beginning. There are different dates on the academic calendar that give the dates of drop dates for refunds. Students can be added to classes at later dates if the professor agrees to that and they are supposed to be added by The Graduate School or the Registrar's Office, but Workday will allow Department Chairs to register a student. Moving forward, we want to put a date for the absolute last day a student can be added, so this situation does not happen anymore. This needs to be done by The Graduate School, that way if there is an issue that arises, we can have adequate records.

Once a student is added to a course, if it is after the final day to withdraw "W" day, they cannot drop the course. They must stay in the class and a bill is generated. The students are then responsible for paying that bill, and there is no way to undo this except to go through an appeal process. In the meantime, a student could be sent to collections if they do not pay. If a student is registered after the "W" day, there is no way for the student to get out of the course and will be responsible for paying the tuition. Even at that late date, they wouldn't get their money back, but at least they could at least receive a "W" instead of a grade. Dr. Pool-Funai added that the challenge with having a department chair adding a student to a course without The Graduate School knowing is the gap between Student Fiscal Services and the student record. From the Workday side, the permission that a department chair has to do this is tied to their ability to register students in general and cannot be edited.

Dr. Jerrie Brooks asked what the last day to register for 8-week courses is typically? After looking at the academic calendar, the last day to withdraw from an 8-week course is the 28<sup>th</sup> calendar day- found on the Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy page: <https://www.fhsu.edu/registrar/Semester-Course-Drop-and-Withdrawal-Policy/>.

Dr. Bremer asked what would be a situation where a student would need to be added to a course after the final withdrawal date? Dr. Jerrie Brooks answered that if a school has an emergency hire and a school district needs to have to fill that position filled and situations like this do occur every semester. These do not happen often, but she estimated that there were approximately 5 this fall.

Dr. Carrie Tholstrup had experienced this situation and added that the situation would have been mitigated by a policy if one existed. She could have referred to the policy and denied the student entry into the class. Dr. Pool-Funai did add that

there can always be an exception to policy if the need truly arises, but the challenge in this situation occurred when a student stated that they wanted to register and were added to the class by the department chair, but then the student changed their mind and now they have the bill to pay.

Dr. Pool-Funai recommended that we state the policy but add wording to allow exceptions. Dr. Bremer noted that a comment that includes exceptions will be added. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

4) Notification: University “I” policy

- a. “I Incomplete: Assigned at discretion of instructor when work is of otherwise passing quality but incomplete, usually for reasons beyond the student's control. (See Removing an Incomplete.)”  
<https://www.fhsu.edu/registrar/academic-policies-and-information/#gradeandgrdpoints>.
- b. Please make sure that you are using this in accordance with this policy.
- c. Zero course credit for an “I” is a possibility.

Dr. Bremer asked that this notification of what the “I” should really be used for to be taken back to all the committee member’s departments and make sure that when giving an “I” that it meets the requirements of the policy that is currently in place.

Depending on the circumstances that are beyond the student’s control, an “I” should not be given unless necessary. For example, in the situation that Dr. Brooks mentioned with a school district having an emergency hire and that hire needing to be enrolled in certain courses, this is something that is out of the student’s control and would be acceptable for them to receive an “I” to allow time to make up their coursework.

The issue with the “I” is these have been used too often and students are not completing them or coming back years later wanting to finish. This can be difficult if the instructor they were working with are no longer with the university, and especially if there are not any notes from that instructor stating what needed to be completed. Additionally, students who come back and want to finish and The Graduate School does not know that they are working with their advisors to do this. When a student claims that they have completed their “I” and want to graduate, but several of their courses have expired because it has been so long, the student gets upset because they thought they would only need to complete their “I” in order to graduate. Another issue is with the APC itself and Workday. If a student is completing an “I”, but is not registered for a course in the semester that

they file an APC, Workday does not see them as a student because they do not have courses.

One option for a student to complete their “I” would be to enroll in a zero credit course. Zero course credits would have no tuition associated with the course. Dr. Naylor-Tincknell asked about if this would be something that could be used for a thesis course? Dr. Bremer stated that no, for a thesis the student has to be enrolled in at least 1 credit hour until they are finished. Dr. Naylor-Tincknell asked if they could continue to give students an “I” for the thesis course until it is completed. Dr. Bremer said that students should receive a grade for that semester and then enroll in another credit to finish.

Dr. Kim Chappell asked about a capstone course. If a student receives a grade on their final capstone course, they may think they are done and then appeal as to why they are not graduating. Dr. Bremer stated that a student should not receive a passing grade if they have not completed a course. There was some concern about the student receiving a “U” and effects their GPA. But, if they retake that course to complete their requirements to graduate, that grade will replace the “U”.

Dr. Wilson mentioned that a thesis course could be taken any semester and not graduate that semester, so it is not a condition of graduating. Students can take the course a year in advance. She used to give them “I”, but students would go years without completing them so now she gives them “U” if they don’t do any work on their thesis when they are enrolled in those credits.

Students can retake the Thesis class and the “U” will get replaced with the passing grade they receive. There is a failsafe in our office because the course will not be completed until the degree analysts receive the signed thesis that has been signed by the advisor and the Dean, which then gets uploaded into the student’s Workday.

Dr. Brooks asked if this would hurt anything with the students taking an additional course for their degree? Dr. Pool-Funai said that for reporting purposes, it doesn’t look great for students to take longer to finish their program, but it does not hurt anything. Dr. Bremer added that for financial aid purposes, students are allowed time & a half, so for students for a 30 hour program they are allowed up to 45 hours, so if they went over this it would be an issue.

If an “I” is used for a class, the instructor needs to enter a comment noting why they received an “I” and what the student must do to complete their course and receive a passing grade.

Dr. Anderson asked about the PPAT Test. In the Transition to Teaching program, there is a 2-credit hour course associated with the PPAT test required for licensure offered only in the spring. If a student does not pass the PPAT in the spring, they receive an “I” and can retake the PPAT part in the fall. Is this going to require the department to require students to enroll in an additional course? Dr. Bremer asked why the students are receiving an “I” when they did not pass part of the course? Why would that not be a failure of the course. Dr. Brooks added that there are 2 more submission windows in April and May and one in the fall, but it is all part of that one assessment. Dr. Bremer recommended that maybe the department needs to tighten their guidelines and state that a student must take the course and pass it at a certain time in order to be captured in that class. Dr. Anderson said that they have been using the “I” as a marker to alert them that the student has not passed all of the requirements for that course. They may pass all of the other requirements of the course and with assignments might have an A or B, but would receive an “I” if they have not completed successfully the PPAT. Dr. Brooks added that her department uses the same assessment and have them enroll in a 1-hour problems course the following semester. Dr. Bremer stated that since this was a misuse of this policy, the course needs to be redesigned. Dr. Pool-Funai added that if the student received a “U”, then once they passed the test, the grade can be replaced, the class would need to be retaken.

Dr. Brooks added that the comprehensive exam is embedded into the class. Dr. Bremer recommended looking at removing this as part of the course and using only as a comprehensive exam. This is a policy that we need to “dig” into a little more. Dr. Bremer will follow up with Dr. Anderson to look a little more in depth to see where everything stands.

## **Old Business & Updates**

### 1) Continuing Review: Exit Survey

- a) See update on Blackboard
- b) What 3 questions does your program want to ask?

This is in Blackboard for review as well. This survey is needed for a couple of reasons. One is for HLC, and the other is to be able to see what our Graduate students are doing post-graduation.

Please review the document and add 3 questions for your program- this is in Qualtrics so a program can be selected and those 3 questions for the specific program can be answered. Since this survey is a little long currently, Dr. Bremer would like to cut down on some of the questions. So, if there are some questions in there that you feel



are not necessary, please bring back comments to the October meeting so a vote can be made in the November meeting.

2) Update: HLC Reaccreditation Process Site Visit

Dr. Pool-Funai updated that the assurance argument is due at the end of this month, and she is working on final edits now. Accompanied with that are evidence files that speak to that assurance argument. This will be submitted to 5 peer reviewers, not from Kansas. Monday October 30<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday October 31<sup>st</sup> the site visit team will be on campus. At some point during their visit, she asked the site visit team to hold 2 separate sessions for faculty/staff open forums, a student open forum, and a virtual option for faculty off-site to be able to include their voices. The agenda has not yet been approved by the site visit team, so the exact times for these are not currently available. As soon as the team approves the agenda, it will go onto the Provost's accreditation website. Participation would be appreciated from all who can attend. This is a 10-year review, so those who have been at the university, it would be great to be able to include your story of the changes and accomplishments that have been occurred.

3) Update: Graduate School Website

Some updates have been made to changes if functionality. The Current students tab still has the same information. The most important ones are the deadlines. And the OSSP webpage has been linked to The Graduate School page.

Dr. Pool-Funai asked to make sure what a student's declare date in Workday is and the program of study. If a student applied in 2022, and the department updated their curriculum in 2023, it does not apply to that student because they started the year prior.

Dr. Jerrie Brooks asked for clarification on the length of time a student must complete their program. Example, if a student starts in the Fall 2023, that is considered their first semester, and the timeline begins and the student has 8 years to complete the program in which they are admitted.

4) Other items for the good of the group?

Dr. Bremer added that this will need to be added to the handbook soon. There are several universities that have approved new bachelor's programs that are 3-year programs (condensed programs). They are accredited programs by accrediting bodies like HLC. Currently, in our policy it is not stated as to whether we would accept a bachelor's degree only if it is 120 hours or more, just that it comes from an accredited institution. KBOR's current policy does define a bachelor's degree as being 120 credit hours. This is something to bear in mind as we may see this more with upcoming applicants.

Dr. Bremer stated that The Graduate School does review that an applicant's bachelor's degree does come from an accredited institution that we accept before their application is moved to the department for review. We will accept those if they come to us.

Dr. Pool-Funai wanted to add updates from the Curriculum committee. This committee has worked to streamline the course approval process. The current process with Workday is very linear and has had some issues including the submitter not being able to add requested changes once the course approval has been submitted, or if it gets routed to the wrong person a new form must be submitted. The KASE ticket system has been tested and it worked very well. Going forward if this system is used there would be a web form developed. A similar concept is being tested on program submissions.

### Coming Up

- 1) Next G.C. Meeting – October 18<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM; Memorial Union 226 - Pioneer Room OR via Zoom: <https://fhsu.zoom.us/j/91736338856>
- 2) Tilford Conference: Graduate School has funding for students to go. Up to \$125 for each student (reimbursement). Have them email Les Mackey for information.
- 3) Graduate Scholarly Experience (GSE) is open and due Friday Sep. 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **Important Deadlines**

#### *Application for Program Completion (APC)*

Final Date to Sign Up	10/13/23
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#### *Comprehensive Exams*

Final Date to Sign Up	10/02/23
Exam Results Due (Written and/or Oral)	12/18/23

#### *Master's Theses and Ed.S. Field Studies*

Final Copy Due	11/24/23
Oral Examination Report over Theses or Field Studies	11/24/23

### **Attachment 1:**

#### **Graduate School Appeals Policy**

A graduate student who believes that a course grade, a professional disposition decision, the result of a learning experience (e.g., academic dishonesty allegation or penalty, comprehensive examination, fieldwork, etc.), or an admission decision has been assigned in an arbitrary and capricious manner by the instructor or program may pursue a resolution of the dispute by submitting an appeal. **The time limit for filing this appeal shall be within six months of the end of the academic semester in which the evaluation or within 60 days**

of the admission decision has occurred, whichever is applicable. The student should carefully consider their own performance or application prior to submitting an appeal. The process is designed to resolve disputes at the lowest possible level, and attempting to resolve the dispute with the instructor or program is the first necessary step before further action can be initiated.

The Appeals process has not been designed to produce changes which are the result of a reevaluation of an instructor's or program's professional judgment about academic performance, admission criteria, or the substantive content of assignments completed by a student. In other words, the focus of the appeal is procedural due process (e.g., course management, errors in application of the course grading arrangements, review of professional dispositions, admission procedures, etc.), and not about the rightness or wrongness of the faculty member's or admission committee's content expertise, admission criteria, judgments about the relevancy of assigned readings, choice of materials, etc.

When a student feels that an assigned grade, result, or admission decision has been applied with arbitrary or capricious standards or procedures, and when the initial informal student-instructor or program level consultations have failed to resolve the situation, the following steps and procedures will be utilized:

1. Appeal to the department chair. (Note: In the case of MLS, MPS, & MBA appeals, a course appeal will be reviewed by the department chair in the department offering the course. A program appeal will be given to the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences for the MLS, the Dean of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences for the MPS, and, in the case of the MBA program, the Dean of the College of Business and Entrepreneurship with advisory copies routed to the academic department chairs involved. Other programs that may not clearly be assigned to an academic department shall be clarified by the graduate dean.) The student will submit the approved Graduate School Appeals Form to the department chair with attachments to support their case. The department chair will investigate the issue by interviewing all parties involved. Although legal counsel is not considered appropriate or necessary for such proceedings, the appellant may request the presence of an advisor or advocate. The advisor or advocate must be a graduate student at FHSU at the time of the appeal. The purpose of the inquiry is fact-finding. The department chair will then communicate their recommendation to the student in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeals form. This documentation will be attached to the Graduate School Appeals Form and become part of the record of the appeal. This written communication shall be sent by electronic mail to the

e-mail address provided by the student on the appeal form. If the student wishes to continue the appeal process, they may proceed to step 2 below.

2. Appeal to the graduate dean via e-mail with a written request to continue the appeal. The department chair will forward the record of the appeal to the graduate dean. The graduate dean shall investigate the appeal by establishing a three-member hearing committee consisting of university graduate faculty. The graduate dean shall convene the committee, issue a charge, and then withdraw from the proceedings.

Although legal counsel is not considered appropriate or necessary for such proceedings, the appellant may request the presence of an advisor or advocate as defined in step 1 above. The purpose of the inquiry is fact-finding. The appeal committee will make a recommendation to the graduate dean. In response, the graduate dean shall issue their recommendation to the provost with copies to all involved parties and the appropriate college dean within ten (10) working days. This documentation will be attached to the Graduate School Appeals Form and become part of the record of the appeal. This written communication shall be sent by electronic mail to the e-mail address provided by the student on the appeal form. If the student wishes to continue the appeal process, they may proceed to step 3 below.

3. Appeal to the provost via e-mail ([Provost@fhsu.edu](mailto:Provost@fhsu.edu)) with a written request to continue the appeal. The provost shall consider the record of the appeal, and the recommendations of the department chair, the hearing appeal committee, and graduate dean to render a written decision. Copies of this document will be sent to all parties involved in the appeal, including the student, instructors, department chair, and graduate dean. The decision shall embody one of the following:

- a. Agreement with the instructor, program, or committee's original assignment of grade, sanction, result, or admission decision.
- b. A change of the original assigned grade, sanction, or result. A change of grade will be noted on the grading record as an administrative grade change by the provost
- c. If possible, a retake of the course with another instructor.
- d. Other remedy determined by the Provost to be reasonable in light of the circumstances of the appeal.