

**MINUTES**  
**The Graduate Council**  
February 21, 2007  
Johnson Hall Conference Room

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**Members Present:** Yvonne Braun, Li-Shan Chou, Marian Friestad (ex officio), Lori Kruckenberg, Huaxin Lin, Brook Muller, Harry Price, John Russial, Mark Watson (ex officio)

**Members Absent:** David Chard, Michael Hames-Garcia, Ellen Herman, Mark Johnson, Richard Linton (ex officio), Wayne Mikkelson, Ron Mitchell, Corbett Upton

**Graduate School Staff in Attendance:** Kassy Fisher, Debra Otley

*Harry Price (Council Secretary) called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. The minutes from January 17, 2007 were reviewed. Under Old Business, an error was noted in the TOEFL score discussion, the score of 540 was changed to 550, and the minutes were approved as amended.*

**Old Business**

- Changing the minimum TOEFL score and establishing a minimum IELTS score for UO graduate admission

Harry Price introduced guest speaker Cindy Kieffer, Director of Academic Programs and Research at the American English Institute, and visitor Abe Schafermeyer, Assistant Director for International Student and Scholar Services at the Office of International Programs.

Ms. Kieffer distributed several handouts, including a list of ETS TOEFL score guidelines, summaries from two research articles, a table created by ETS to compare the TOEFL with the IELTS, a summary of graduate students attending AEIS courses, and lists of writing and speaking samples of UO students with varied TOEFL and SPEAK Test scores. Ms. Kieffer's main points were that TOEFL and IELTS are not ideal predictors of academic success, that raising minimum scores will result in a loss of international students, and that a better choice might be to increase the support provided to the students (e.g., reserve one AEIS 112 writing section for graduate students). The Council asked Ms. Kieffer what she recommended regarding additional support. She would like to see screening regardless of score. Brook Muller reminded the group of a previous discussion about raising the minimum score as well as the range of scores requiring AEIS testing.

Dr. Price asked how many students raising the minimum would affect. Kassy Fisher reported that based on the population of 61 students entering Fall terms, 2003-2006, a minimum of 550 would have eliminated about 6-7 each fall admit term, and that at 575, this would eliminate about 15 students each fall admit term. The students in question came from a wide range of departments. Dean Friestad shared the responses she gathered from five of the six departments with minimum TOEFL scores set below 550. The representatives from all departments, with the exception of Art, were in favor of raising the university minimum for graduate admissions. Kate Wagle in Art said she'd discuss the scenario with fellow faculty, but raised a question about the potential impact on the UO's initiatives to collaborate with China.

Mr. Schafermeyer added that the UO faces quite a bit of competition for international students among other English-speaking countries like the UK and Australia. There was a discussion of the extent to which higher TOEFL (and IELTS) scores would affect the applicant pool. The discussion was stopped due to the need to address new business.

**New Business**

- Proposal for the Initiation of a New Instructional Program Leading to a Professional Master's Degree in Strategic Communications submitted by the School of Journalism and Communication

Two presenters from the School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC) were in attendance: Kim Sheehan, Associate Professor, and Al Stavitsky, Professor and Associate Dean and Director

of the Turnbull Portland Center. Dr. Sheehan began by describing the initiatives in the program in Portland. Dr. Stavitsky spoke about the Turnbull Center. According to the proposed budget, the program will be self-sustaining in 3 years, but Dr. Stavitsky mentioned that he was unsure how much of the tuition and fees generated from the program would go back into the program and how much goes to university administration. The courses would largely be adjunct-taught and he has been in contact with the dean of the business program at PSU, regarding faculty involvement.

Council members had a series of questions for Drs. Sheehan and Stavitsky related to the qualifications of the adjunct staff teaching master's level courses, UO faculty workload and fatigue (given the drive to Portland), whether the UO Business School would be involved in the program, and the time by which the SOJC wanted to start.

Mark Watson shared a written response from the Library regarding the SOJC proposal. The report proposed that a one time contribution of \$20,000 followed by yearly contributions of \$5000 would be needed to adequately support the program as PSU and Multnomah County Libraries are the only other option for students. It was noted that the working professional population for this program would likely gravitate more toward electronic resources and databases, and the students' own corporate libraries as well as the Public Relations Society of America might also have useful resources. Before the presenters left, Dean Friestad advised them to enhance the section of the proposal that deals with the differences between the programs offered by PSU and this new program, explaining why they do not conflict.

The Council discussed other questions and issues, including the budget, the ratio of old courses to new courses, staffing concerns (faculty and support staff), the relationship with PSU's business program rather than UO's, and the proposed Monday-Thursday schedule. Dean Friestad requested that the Council look over the proposal in more detail and send her questions and note areas that need strengthening. After collecting Council feedback, Dean Friestad will forward it to SOJC.

### **Committee Reports**

- One of the scholarship and awards committees will begin reviewing the UO Doctoral Research Fellowship nominations; the academic grievance committee has met once this term.

### **Dean's Updates**

- Accreditation  
Dean Friestad told the group that the report is at the printers and that the visiting committee will be on-campus April 16-18.
- NRC  
Dean Friestad noted that the NRC study is moving along.

*The Council adjourned at 5:05 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Harry Price, Secretary