

QEP Committee Minutes

Friday, November 4, 2022

3:15 p.m.

Members Present: Piers Rawlings (Chair), Philosophy; James Clark, Provost; Ethan Venzas, Biological Science (Doctoral Student); Beth Hodges, Research; Casey Dozier, Career Center; Stephen Tripodi, Social Work; Ashley Bush, Business; Jim Whyte, Nursing; Maxine Jones, History; Jayne Standley, Music; Jorge Piekarewicz, Physics; Susan Rogowski, Math; Jorge Galeano, Engineering; Sindy Chapa, Communication; Mark Riley, Graduate School; Toby Park -Gaghan, Education Policy; Cathy Levenson, Biomedical Sciences; Michelle Rambo-Roddenberry, Engineering; Dawn Carr, Sociology; Latika Young, Undergraduate Studies/Doctoral Student; Gale Etschmaier, Libraries; Devin Soger; Jeff Philips.

Members Excused: Tracey Douling, Career Center; Latika Young, Undergraduate Studies/Doctoral Student;

Staff Present: Ruth Storm, Provost's Office; Robert Bradley, Provost's Office; Leslie Richardson, Center for Teaching and Advancement; James Hunt, Institutional Research; Sara Hamon, Undergraduate Studies; Tim Logan, Arts and Sciences; James Beck, Graduate School.

The Chair requested that each member of the Committee provide a brief introduction, convened the meeting, and indicated three items would comprise the agenda: a review of the updated Presidential Goals, a Presentation on the libraries, and the Congress of Graduate Students (COGS) offering presentation. The Provost requested each member to read the revised goals of the President for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and indicated that the reason for revision was to ensure all needed language was included for the President's yearly evaluation by the Board of Trustees. The Committee agreed that student success, academic excellence, diversity, equity, and inclusion continue to be critical areas of the Strategic Plan. It was made clear that the timeline for the more specific outcomes of the broader strategic plan would align well with the QEP, with yearly targets being set this upcoming January, working alongside the overall five-year plan. There were questions raised on the Hispanic Service Institution (HSI) designation for the University and it was found that the school is a couple of years away from receiving this designation due to a lag in review time. It was made known that there is a formal planning committee for enhancing HSI that is moving to work in a more formal and robust way, seen as part of the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) efforts.

Then, Devin Soper and Jeff Philips did a presentation on the libraries, focusing on Community Space, Research Collections, and Specialized Research Services. They offered the unique perspective held by the library, that they think of students not just as undergraduates, but students at the beginning of their doctoral careers and research processes. They then showed the results of a nationwide university library satisfaction survey held in 2021 that allowed the pain points and gaps in satisfaction to be seen. The main area of concern was that the FSU (Florida State University) library is not meeting minimal electronic satisfaction by graduate students for research processes. This unsatisfaction is not shown in the survey to be felt by graduate students at other universities and this is the first time there has been such a large gap in satisfaction, although this survey has been done several times in prior years. The libraries' focus is centered on access to research materials and to fill the gaps in education that are not reached in classroom time.

In community space, FSU has four graduate group study rooms and fifty graduate individual study rooms. These rooms' availability depends on the time of the semester, graduate office space, and hours office buildings are open. Gale Etschmaier and her colleagues are advocating for an additional library because, based on the number of students at FSU, there should be double the amount of learning spaces than there are currently. It was also brought to the Committee's attention that both the Dissertation Boot Camp and the Graduate Social are declining in attendance. FSU's general research collections involve the use of Interlibrary Loans (ILL) for graduate students accessing journal articles, LEDS (Library Express Delivery Services), Special Collections, and Archives. FSU libraries offer specialized expertise in their staffing, research data services, and open publishing. The pain points expressed by graduate students through the survey were the insufficient number of journal collections as the minimum expectation is not being met and students are not able to conduct their research. It was brought to attention that there is two to three million dollars of unmet needs in the libraries that the university does not have the funds to support, students are not educated in navigating the digital library landscape, and FSU has relatively low library expenditures when compared to other universities.

Jorge Galian, Ethan Venas, and Susan Rogowski then presented on the COGS offerings for doctoral students highlighting what COGS is and the main concerns from graduate students. They informed the Committee that COGS' primary goal is to serve graduate students, that they are a part of SGA, and that they represent the graduate student body. COGS' spending goes towards over one hundred professional and cultural RSOs (registered student organizations), conference grants, and FSU Childcare. Funding for both RSOs and conferences has increased over the years. Grants for conferences are not merit based, are first-come-first-served, are given in the form of reimbursements, and no more than two grants or \$600 is given per student per fiscal year.

The Committee was informed that, based on a quick and informal survey, the main concerns from graduate students are those of retention, international students, teaching assistants (TAs), and money. It was presented that there is a retention issue due to students not having the support they need, international students with families do not have support with housing, and TAs are having issues with undergraduates and are lacking support. The work-research balance was recognized as a university-wide issue that is worse in some departments than others. Additionally, graduates claim they are struggling to meet the standards for health insurance, are receiving low stipends, facing high fees, and have concerns with paying the costs for research and conferences. The speakers requested backing from the committee to perform another survey with a larger sample size for better representation of concerns.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending, informed the committee that the next meeting would be in two weeks in the same conference room, and, upon motion of the Chair, the Committee adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Handouts: President's FY23 Goals, Agenda