

## **QEP Committee Minutes**

**Friday, January 13, 2023**

**3:15 p.m.**

Members Present: Piers Rawling (Chair), Philosophy; Casey Dozier, Career Center; Stephen Tripodi, Social Work; Ashley Bush, Business; Toby Park-Gaghan, Education Policy; Gale Etschmaier, Libraries; Dawn Carr, Sociology; Justin Kennemur, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Latika Young, Undergraduate Studies; Athanasios Vouzas, Biological Science; Jayne Standley, Music; Jorge Piekarewicz, Physics; Michelle Rambo-Roddenberry, Engineering.

Members Excused: Beth Hodges, Research; Maxine Jones, History; Jim Whyte, Nursing; Cathy Levenson, Biomedical Sciences; Mark Riley, Graduate School; Jorge Galeano Cabral, Engineering; Cindy Chapa, Communication.

Staff Present: Ruth Storm, Provost's Office; Robert Bradley, Provost's Office; Sara Hamon, Provost's Office; Leslie Richardson, Center for Teaching and Advancement; Tim Logan, Arts and Sciences; James Beck, Graduate School; Charlotte Nafe, Provost's Office; Galiya Tabulda, Provost's Office; Monoka Venters, Provost's Office.

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The Chair convened the meeting and indicated four items would comprise the agenda: a presentation on the Career Center Offerings by Dr. Casey Dozier, the Committee Work Plan, discussion of the subcommittees, and the future meeting schedule. Casey Dozier then presented on the Career Center Offerings and explained that the Career Center is a service available to all graduate students. Her presentation included the services at the Career Center, how they are being used by graduate students, and next steps. The Career Center has a list of career liaisons for each academic department/college and general career advising. The Career Center dashboard (<https://app.powerbi.com/reportEmbed?reportId=4957f821-2496-45e1-90e3-4ce2742c42d3&autoAuth=true&ctid=a36450eb-db06-42a7-8d1b-026719f701e3>; requires special access to be provided on request) shows that there have been approximately 2,000 total doctoral student engagements since summer of 2020. The primary reason students engage with the Career Center is for preparing documents such as resumes and cover letters, followed by aid in applying to graduate schools. The data show a steady increase in the percentage of graduate students accessing services at the Career Center while the number of doctoral students has remained constant.

The types of workshops offered by the Career Center are numerous as any department can request a career presentation. Portfolio Development using Folio is like LinkedIn but goes beyond when aiding students. The Canvas course, Graduate Profession Ready, could be revamped for doctoral students and be tailored for specific fields of study. Big Interview allows for interview training through video and the center hosts 18 Career Fairs throughout the year. Although on-campus recruiting dropped since the pandemic, Dr. Dozier said they are hoping for recruitment numbers to rise soon. The Career Center conducted a needs assessment for graduate students in 2019 and found a broad spectrum of student needs such as aid with resumes/CVs, academic job search, networking, and more. It was found that email is the main way survey respondents want to hear from the Career Center.

The proposed tactics presented by Dr. Dozier were to create a graduate assistant web page or portal as compared with other universities in Florida. FSU has different options in the specifics of this portal as some universities are posting assistantships through HR and others through such a web page. The next tactic is to invest in the Center for Graduate Career Success Platforms (<https://gradcareersuccess.com/>). UF and other universities have invested in this platform which offers services such as live events, an interview library, conferences, updated videos, explore options, job search, 24/7 access, a comprehensive platform for next steps, certification, and live webinars. Dr. Dozier then showed a video highlighting these services and explained how this may meet the need of doctoral students.

The following points were then discussed in response to questions from the committee. The PNR (ProfessioNole Ready) series prepares students with general career competencies, is great for undergraduate students, but the center is trying to find a way to tailor it for doctoral students (that is why the Center for Graduate Career Success Platform is recommended). Students may benefit from utilizing the center beyond their respective department through moral support and advising on the technological aspects of applications. The Career Center is supplemental help to departmental faculty.

Concerns were voiced on whether the University-wide assistantship availability dashboard would be worth investment, as most assistantships are reserved for students within their specific departments. It was discussed that there may be a role for this dashboard as assistantship opportunities are not always limited to one college. It was considered that the dashboard would be helpful but not necessary for every department. Colleges would need to be careful about whether there is a waiver available for such assistantships. The committee decided this topic should be thought about more as they were not all convinced that it would help matters as this dashboard could be flooded with inappropriate applicants.

The current meeting time will remain the same moving forward as it works well with members' schedules and ties in with the proposed work plan. The work plan sets a long-term agenda for the committee, beginning with the survey for graduate/doctoral students being finalized by next week. Chair Rawling indicated he will share the draft of the survey with the members, and they should send any suggestions for improvement to Sara Hamon by Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. He informed the committee that the Westcott 201 conference room has been reserved for the rest of the semester, QEP website is about to go live, and introduced Monoka Venters, a new staff member who will be working on writing the QEP.

It was then brought to the committee's attention that the SWOT analysis is coming up, a summary of best practices for degree completion is being produced, and that the committee intends to survey current FSU faculty with graduate faculty status. Although the QEP cannot address the low stipend problem, the committee will investigate the scope of the problem. The Chair provided clarity on potential funding available to support the QEP initiatives. While several million dollars is likely to be allocated, the Chair emphasized that additional funding might be available for strong and well-justified initiatives. One suggestion was to come up with a priority order for budgetary items.

There was discussion about ensuring that the outcomes are measurable and can be accomplished within a reasonable time. One idea would be to give money to students to write a dissertation chapter over the summer. Another idea would be to use data to find places where doctoral students get lost, assess whether there are administrative barriers, and fund efforts to address the administrative barriers.

Some voiced interest in reducing the time it takes students to progress from doctoral candidacy to completion of the degree. Improving time to degree is different between departments, and the university may want to try to standardize tracks so it can be known if students are on or off track. Such standardization would encourage students to progress faster, identify those who are struggling, and inform

our efforts to help students who are struggling throughout their degree progression. This may be done by quantifying metrics and tactics. It was understood that sometimes differing track lengths do not come from lack of money or support, but from department policy. A reform in policy might be recommended to define matters such as whether a doctoral program includes the master's degree and doctoral degree together or doctoral alone.

It was noted that the differing completion times of doctoral programs may be a symptom of issues that might not be solvable without increased stipends. There is some question about capacity issues regarding both campus space and faculty that may occur when expanding the number of doctoral students at FSU. It was brought up that some departments take a while for students to graduate because there are higher standards required for careers than in the past. It was said that the committee is looking to minimize stragglers rather than expedite the degree process. It was agreed upon that there is no singular correct answer for all doctoral departments, thus the task is challenging. The committee plans to define realistic and measurable goals for the next five years, perhaps through infrastructure rather than increasing doctoral students.

Chair Rawling introduced the proposed sub-committees: Survey, Data, Initiatives/Assessment, and Budget. He asked committee members to email Charlotte Nafe about their committee preferences. Further discussion involved the necessity of advising students in the right direction regarding their doctoral pursuits to have an expedient degree process. After receiving the survey data, the committee discussed the possibility of brainstorming 20 to 30 initiatives then whittling down from there. Chair Rawlings said that the plan is to begin discussing the initiatives on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and informed the committee that the next meeting would be on January 27<sup>th</sup>, in the Westcott 201 conference room, at 3:15PM. Upon motion of Chair Rawling, the Committee adjourned at 4:40PM.

Handouts:

Meeting Agenda

Career Services for Graduate Students

QEP Committee Agenda and Work Plan