

Students must be eligible for TBP in order to qualify for HIBP benefits. Departments must be aware of the possibility that a student being brought in for a TA position might not qualify, (i.e., international students with language issues). Alternative plans for health care coverage should be in place in the event that a student doesn't qualify for HIBP benefits.

The cost for adding an annual check-up was found to be unreasonably high, especially since all students are unlikely to use the service. The Graduate School is creating a reserve so that in the future students may request a voucher for a check-up.

4. Electronic Forms and Submissions Update

Jennifer Bangerter reported that a PeopleSoft module is in development to allow electronic submission and tracking of all graduate records. Testing will begin in 3 – 4 months, using three departments. Campus-wide implementation is planned for early 2009.

The Graduate School IT team is looking at electronic submission of theses and dissertations in other institutions for guidance.

5. Graduate Council Program Reviews – Council Feedback

David Chapman noted that the external reviewers for the most recent program review felt that the Graduate Council Program Review at the University of Utah is one of the best organized in their experience doing external reviews at universities and colleges around the country.

Fred Rhodewalt gave a brief overview of the review process, and asked the council for suggestions to improve the process.

The first issue noted was that the quality of the Ad Hoc report is driven by the quality of the internal and external review reports, as well as overall consensus between the reports. If the reports are contradictory, the Ad Hoc Committee attempts to reconcile the differences. The challenge will be regulating consistency and quality in the reports.

Ad Hoc Committee members attending the Exit Meeting with the external reviewers is extremely helpful in understanding the reviewers' concerns, and then addressing those concerns in the Ad Hoc report. Exit Meetings are scheduled as late as possible on the second day of the review, based on the travel schedules of the reviewers. Notification for Exit Meetings is being sent as soon as the meeting time is finalized.

To facilitate the external reviewers in writing their report, it was suggested that they have a 1 – 2 hour period of time to start drafting the report while they are together in Salt Lake City. Ideally, the evening of the first day would be used for creating a draft report, but often, the departments schedule dinner with faculty.

It was suggested that reviewers meet with faculty in groups of similar position, in order to compare areas of concern and/or satisfaction between the groups. Scheduling time for the reviewers to meet with the dean toward the end of the review offers the reviewers an opportunity to address issues brought up by faculty and administration.

ACTION TAKEN: No formal action taken.

6. Graduate Student Suspension/Dismissal Procedures

The question of policy change regarding Graduate Student suspension/dismissal procedures was brought to Dean Chapman by an interdisciplinary program wishing to eliminate the hearing at the college level, keeping the process within the program. Dean Chapman requested feedback from the Graduate Council in order to offer an informal opinion, as change in policy would be heard formally by the Academic Senate.

Policy and Procedures 9-5.6 lists the required steps for dismissal. The process is lengthy, and could realistically span a semester. A Graduate Council member who has gone through the process of dismissing a student noted that scheduling is the greatest constraint, and collapsing the current number of days to complete each step could be problematic.

Eligibility for a student dismissed for academic or behavioral misconduct to apply to other programs was questioned. The admissions application states “Failure to list ALL institutions previously attended or degrees pursued may result in loss of credit and dismissal from the University of Utah.”

The Graduate Council unanimously agreed that allowing a program or department to bypass the college-level procedures for suspension or dismissal would seriously compromise objectivity.

ACTION TAKEN: No formal action taken.