



The College of Graduate Studies Fall 2023 Dean Meeting

Reintroduction

- Laurel Richmond | External Legislative Assistant | sgaela@ucf.edu
- Sebastian Quiroga | College of Graduate Studies Senate Seat 1 | sga_grst1@ucf.edu
- Arianna Carter | College of Graduate Studies Senate Seat 2 | sga_grst2@ucf.edu

Open Floor for the Dean

- SG helped recently in respect to research week
 - Scholarships for students
- Partnered with faculty senate so graduate students can serve on committees
 - Increases graduate student representation
- How many graduate students are in Senate?
 - ELA Richmond: 2 out of 10, is there anything we can do to reach more graduate students?
 - Dean Response: Meetings are too long, being 6 hours a week. Is there a way to make it 2 hours a week so grad students could participate. Maybe you could tweak the agenda to have it divided by undergrad and grad. Is there anything we could do to stratify this?
 - ELA Richmond: Speaker Holmes is trying to have meetings go by quicker, being strategic with the meeting, ending by 11pm.
 - Dean Response: It's still hard to get people to agree to that time commitment.
 - Dean Response: What about online students? Are they excluded?
 - Senator Carter: No but fall and spring semester are in person.
 - Dean Response: What about funding?
 - ELA Richmond: Clubs can come via Zoom to request funding.
 - Dean Response: We have 2 senators; we need 8 more.
 - Senator Carter: Up to discretion of Speaker Holmes to have a hybrid modality.
 - Dean Response: No one will apply for Senate if they are fully online students. Very beneficial to have online option. Students live far.
 - ELA Richmond: Will talk to Speaker Holmes and keep you updated.
- Graduate Housing
 - No one seems to care where grads live, concerned with the price of rent.
 - Other programs are doing better than UCF having agreements for rent control, allocated grad school housing, scholarships, and other options
 - Senator Carter: MIT offers grad housing and opportunities to socialize.
 - Dean Response: First university I've worked at that does not have grad housing.
- Increase Stipends
 - For food costs, housing, etc.
 - Funding and food are the two major topics College are concerned with



- Academic Integrity
 - Policy that says grad students will be dismissed if they breach the academic integrity policy
- Ensuring Policies align with Practices
- Concerned with the success of international students
 - Provost has given engineering to grow the size of engineering programs. Turn to international students, because domestic are turning to MIT. Do a poor job of serving international students
 - Admissions Process - need funding to change
 - Foreign Influence - law passed by FL that requires college to conduct a full background check of anyone wanting to come and do research (only 1 has violated the background check)
 - Visas - global takes care of
 - What do we do to build community
 - Are there things that we can do to provide more support. Implemented writing courses for students whose first language is English. Potential potlucks to build relations.
 - International students have nowhere to live - goes into housing issue
 - No temporary housing units. Tried to do Celest, didn't work. People don't have resources needed for housing.
- In summary all initiatives come down to how do we support international students and how to help grad students who are not following rules find something else
- Wants to meet with all Grad RSOs once a year
- ASF Budget cut money allocated fund to Grad students
 - More activity money the more opportunities we have to do for grad students
 - Mocktails
 - Grad student Basketball game
 - Next year, football game
 - Tailgate joint with BHC
 - Trying to do things, but budget was cut
 - Great if we could leave OSI out and get funds directly from ASF, because we all know the rules
 - Why does money have to go to OSI? We know how to follow spending rules. Great if we could present to you and cut middleman out, controlling the money.
 - **ELA Richmond: Will ask.**
 - **Dean: They haven't said no. Feels like they're telling us what to do. Scared of budget cuts too.**

Initiatives

- Funding First Year Graduate Students



- Little funding (grants, GTA positions) available for first semester graduate students
 - Establish first-year graduate student scholarships
 - Increase accessibility to research positions
 - Offer GTA positions to second semester graduate students, not just second year graduate students
- Increase awareness to positions
 - Increase communication between advisors and students regarding opportunities
 - Establish a website that lists opportunities
 - Workday is not easily accessible, confusing to find what opportunities graduate students are eligible for
- **Dean Response: Program dependent. When we send offers for aid sometimes includes GTA. May be specific to your program. Are you talking about GTA positions that teach the course? Makes sense if you're talking about lack of funding for master's students. Higher GTA positions for different disciplines, really depends on your discipline. You both are Master students so that makes sense, but if you had more Doctoral students you would get a more balanced view. Make Senate more accessible to Doctoral Students. Handshake is good, although it is not perfect. Thinking about becoming matchmakers for opportunities. Students get positions through connections, which makes it difficult.**
- **Accessibility to Potential Thesis**
 - Offer research positions to first year graduate students
 - Offer GTA positions to second semester graduate students, not just second year graduate students
 - Allows students to gain knowledge regarding what they want to research
 - Students feel overwhelmed and as if they are just thrown into Graduate School
 - Find advisors on your own
 - Find research opportunities on your own
 - **Dean Response: Chair for thesis should be grad faculty member in your program. Can have external members (3rd member). Part of the problem is oversight of dissertation and thesis is program specific. It all falls on your program director to see what they recommend. We can mandate rules for who chairs but can't arrange marriages. Marriages have to be made at department level. What we should really do is employ academic analysts to matchmake but restricted in usage. We could ask them to do it for major areas.**
 - **Senator Quiroga: College of Engineering has profile, but don't have technical backgrounds. Not helpful for me.**
 - **Dean Response: We have interdisciplinary studies, but less lucrative.**
- **Access to Dissertation Advisors**
 - Crucial to research process
 - Program Director has very limited availability
 - Establish a process fitting students with specific advisors that are knowledgeable to the subject the students are interested in



- It would increase guidance for thesis and is likely to get more students to complete the thesis track of their respective programs.
 - **Dean Response: At department level.**
- Library Disposing of Books
 - Concern of issue introduced by Graduate Student Association
 - Graduate students should be kept in loop of what is happening with the library
 - Crucial to research process
 - A great body of literature is needed for the research process and general knowledge
 - Resources provided by the University are accessible to graduate students
 - **Dean Response: Pleading the 5th. Dean of Library took all the steps to make sure it's done correctly.**
 - **Senator Carter: Concerned with losing valuable information for niche topics.**
 - **Dean Response: Talk about Microfiche. My recommendation is to talk to Library Dean and push them for answers. We were promised when arch was being built, there would be dedicated graduate space, but that did not happen. Agitate for graduate student space.**
- Deans Speak at Open Forum Once a Semester
 - To provide an update to Senate on the initiatives
 - **Dean Response: Just don't keep me there till 12am. Happy to come.**