
Absent (Excused): Rodica Curtu, Aniruddha Dutta, Russell Ganim, Sabine Götz, Michael Hill, Benjamin Hunnicutt, Kathryn Lavezzo, Yasemin Mohammad, Thomas Oates, Jacki Rand, Frank Weirich, Marc Wold

Absent: Jill Beckman, Shawn Goodman, Palle Jorgensen, Philip Kaaret, Bob McMurray, Suely Oliveira, Ion Bogdan Vasi, Susan Chrysler White

Guests: Jennifer Bertrand, Joe Kearney, John Keller, Adam Jaschen, Sarah Larsen

1. Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and Dean of the Graduate College John Keller provided an overview of the Review of Doctoral Graduate Programs Final Report, dated May 2016. The review was conducted on 68 PhD programs in 5 disciplinary groups: Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences; Biological and Life Sciences; Physical, Mathematical and Engineering Sciences; and Health Sciences. Programs were rated as Commendable (32 programs, 47%), Sustainable (26 programs, 38%) or Significant Changes Required (10 programs, 15%). Positive trends included reduction in median time to degree, especially in Arts and Humanities programs, and increase in percent of degree completion. He discussed best practices for doctoral programs such as use of an annual individual development plan (IDP) to track student progress, and reviewed recommendations made in the report including moving to a comprehensive 5-6 year funding model and increasing cooperative efforts and interdisciplinary programming.

   Associate Provost Keller also answered questions from the floor, including questions regarding mechanism for feedback from programs, the current fellowship funding model, the value of using time to degree instead of other factors in assessing program health, and the negative effect of the lack of a parental/family leave policy for graduate students on time to degree completion. Associate Provost Keller noted that departments may contact the Graduate College with specific concerns, and agreed to look further at the issue of extended time to degree completion because of parental/family leave taken by graduate students.

   After Associate Provost Keller concluded his remarks, Professor Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Chair of the Faculty Assembly, requested that Faculty Assembly representatives review the issue of parental/family leave for graduate students with their departments so that Faculty Assembly may revisit the issue at a future meeting.
2. Professor Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Chair of the Faculty Assembly, reviewed 2016-2017 Faculty Assembly subcommittee membership. The Chair also noted that the College is seeking faculty members to participate as members of the platform party in the winter commencement ceremony on December 17, 2016, and to serve on the Commencement Student Speaker Selection Committee in late November and early December.

3. The minutes from September 21, 2016, were approved.

4. Associate Dean for Research & Infrastructure, and the Arts, Joe Kearney, presented the draft CLAS Strategic Plan for 2016-2021, approved by CLAS Executive Committee and other elected committees. In response to questions from the floor, Associate Dean Kearney noted that while interdisciplinarity is highlighted in the plan, the College will continue to invest in areas of disciplinary strength, and although promotion of the College’s value to the state of Iowa is a special focus for outreach and public engagement, it is not at the exclusion of showcasing our accomplishments at national and international levels. The plan was approved by voice vote.

5. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Professor Ana Rodríguez-Rodríguez, Department Spanish & Portuguese Chair of the Faculty Assembly