Program Coordinator Luncheon
9/15/2014

Information Presented by Grad School:

Margaret Hanson: Margaret Hanson: Introduced Pam Person with the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (http://www.uc.edu/nca.html). The office helps students find relevant awards/fellowships and guides them through the process of creating a strong application packet. Often, graduate students are unaware of the award/fellowship opportunities for which they are eligible – or the students learn about the opportunities too late to apply. We wish to start building a culture in departments that includes communicating and supporting these opportunities to their graduate students more regularly and in a timely manner.

As an example, UC has a disproportionately low number of NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program fellows (UC has only 3, while OSU has 14, MSU has 12, Northwestern University has 38!). We’ll be recommending that eligible programs target outstanding prospective students to apply for this fellowship by including an invitation to apply, with guidance from the program through the summer, for the NSF GSRP fellowship alongside and with the initial acceptance letters in early spring. Waiting until these students arrive on campus in the fall is too late to prepare a competitive proposal for a fall submission. Similar procedures or other ideas to increase the number of Fulbright and other fellowship applications submitted will be developed and shared with programs.

If interested in finding out more about award opportunities applicable to your program, contact Pam Person, 556-4741/ Pamela.person@uc.edu, or Cara Pickett, 556-4236/ cara.pickett@uc.edu.

Virginia Dennis: There are no policy/content changes to the 2014/2015 Student Handbook. The only changes are to some of the wording and clarification of information. **Since the luncheon we have added a new Individual Development Plan (IDP) section for NIH- and NSF- funded students. This can be found at: http://grad.uc.edu/student-life/graduate_studenthandbook/institutional_rulespoliciesandprocedures/idp.html.

Program coordinators should note that IDPs are encouraged, but NOT required, for NIH- and NSF-funded graduate students – but when these IDPs are created, they should be done via http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/. Also changes in wording and the pages numbers in the handbook are attached.

Tim Bybee: Tracking Graduate Assistant Hours - Please remember during the academic year Graduate Assistants should not be working any more than 20 hours/week in their GA appointment. If they have multiple appointments they may not work any more than 24 hours/week. Below you will find the link to instructions to a fairly new report in UC Flex that allows you to easily track GA hours. Please utilize this report frequently so there are no surprises at the end of each semester. The Graduate School will be doing random checks to make sure that all areas are enforcing these rules. If you have any questions on the report, please contact Cheryl Yarborough in HR. https://help.ucflex.uc.edu/gm/folder-1.11.49863?originalContext=1.11.46662
Carol Gundrum: For Summer term graduation there were over 1500 applications and 1100 total certified.

Megan Tischner: If faculty/staff would like to receive the GradCurrents newsletter (to see what their students are getting) they can ask me to be added to the uc-gradcurrents@listserv.uc.edu listserv. The only emails that go out to this listserv are the GradCurrents issues – one a week every Tuesday during Fall and Spring semesters, and every other Tuesday during the summer.

Amy Robinson: Graduate Recruitment Weekend is March 5–7, 2015. The Graduate School provides hotel accommodations, travel, and entertainment reimbursement expenses for the top 4 program candidates. Email Amy Robinson with questions.

Chip Montrose: Dean of the Graduate School introduced himself and asked for help as he is learning his new role. He explained that he relies on the Graduate Contact list on the Graduate School website https://gradapps.uc.edu/ContactDetails/ContactDetail.aspx, which is a wonderful resource when accurate. He is asking for assistance in updating it. Please look at the contact list for your program/college and if you have changes to any of the contact information please email Chip at mhm@uc.edu with that information and he will disseminate to the right people to make the corrections.

Question/Answers with Staff

1) Programs asking for unofficial transcripts in the application/acceptance process would reduce the number of transcripts needing to be processed through our department. Some programs are already doing this; others don’t want to do this for concern that unofficial transcripts are not accurate. However, it is important to note that when the final transcript arrives if it is different from the unofficial one the student submitted that would be grounds for dismissal. So the student may get in the program but they won’t get very far.

2) International students are given a limited number of sealed envelopes with their transcripts so if they use one for the program Dr. Hanson doesn’t want them having to use another one for us. We can take the one from the program provided you verify that the transcript was sealed and that you opened it. Please just put a note on the transcript when you send it to us explaining that you opened the sealed envelope.

3) Some Universities, particular in China and India have two separate documents one which shows a degree conferred vs. a transcript that shows the courses/grades. We actually need a document that states the degree has been conferred which might be better than a transcript that just lists courses/grades. Programs need more regarding courses but the State of Ohio just needs that a Bachelor degree or higher was conferred. We just need one showing the degree.

4) Please don’t keep the transcripts in fear they will get lost. Make a copy for your own records if you like, but pass them on to us. We get about 15,000 transcripts a year and can’t think of any that were lost. We send them on to the registrar’s for uploading into on base.

5) Do program coordinators have to put anything in the system that we received transcripts? If you put yes into the system that you received the transcript, that allows students to check their progress online and can see that their transcript was received. This will cut down on phone calls
to our office as well. Also, if you put the student’s M# on the transcript before sending it to Samantha that can really help speed the process too. However, you do not have to put anything in the system.

6) However, in the peak time of early and mid-December it can take longer. We try to do it in 24 hrs. but it could take a couple of days. Dugan was behind like 3-4 days before at peak time and the grad school staff helped process transcripts to speed things along. This only really happens for a couple of weeks in December.

7) Is there a plan to make the scanning process with the registrar’s office a little faster? Usually it takes a couple of days, sometimes 24 hours to get them in once they are sent to the registrar’s office. We don’t really have any control over that process however.

8) Is the grad school website up-to-date with current staff’s names and duties? Yes.

9) Even if you would send an email to the wrong person it’s not a big deal for us to forward it to the right person. Feel free to contact anyone of us at the grad school for anything.

10) A lot of applicants ask why they need GRE scores (perhaps it’s been awhile since they took the GRE, maybe they were in graduate school and are returning, etc.). You don’t need to verify the GRE with the graduate school or in the system. This is a program requirement not a grad school one. Only 3 requirements for the graduate school: 1) they have a Bachelor Degree or higher, 2) they have a 3.0 or higher (can be flexible on this depending on if it’s been awhile since the student was in school, perhaps they have experience that will help), and 3) they can speak English. Everything else is at the program level.

11) Program Director/Coordinator handbook will be updated next, now that the Student Handbook is complete.

12) With more programs going to the unofficial transcript for application purposes the number of official transcripts coming to us (weeding out those that aren’t actually accepted and planning to attend) will be reduced and help with the load. Let us know if you are having trouble.

13) Are program directors automatically given access to GradTracker? If at the time they had automatic certified online program director access Emily gave them access to GradTracker. If they did not or since that time Emily manually entered them.

14) When will the new student information system start. The first module will roll out in May. The application process will start with the new software for students applying for fall 2016 this spring. Everything will need to be in place for the 2016 Fall class. Applications prior to that will be in the old system. Not changing the application system for students applying for fall 2015. The two applications will be running parallel. So it will just depend on which term a student is applying to in terms of which application will be used.

15) Thanks were sent to the grad school staff for all their help over the years.

16) Thanks for coming and email us at the grad school any time you have any questions.