



May 21, 2020

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Zoom

Theme: Monthly Meeting

Attendance: 54

Welcome and Introduction: Jon Bullock, AGPA President and Graduate Programs Coordinator, Knowlton School.

Graduate School Updates: Alicia Bertone, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School.

- Robust fellowship acceptances this year; more than they anticipated. They are up substantially and plan to honor those commitments. Goal is to bring all those students if possible.
- In executive summaries, the enrollment gap was down, but as time has passed, the gap has narrowed. The declines are narrowing down. The goal is to have a full cohort of master's and PhD students in fall.
- The wait now is to have the June 15th decision on the autumn semester. A lot of work is going into planning for the fall.
 - She sent out an email dealing with the post-pandemic task force and there are sub-task forces also working on different separate topics, dealing with classrooms, residence halls, etc. They are optimistic that the document will be on June 15.
 - Discussion of deferrals because program coordinators are submitting these requests. Deferrals are a case-by-case basis depending on the date. There will be a period in the summer when they will begin looking at deferrals—the process isn't yet decided, and so input is invited.

Graduate & Professional Admissions Updates: Jennifer Marinello, Associate Director

- For defers, GP Admissions prefers coordinators to use the defer request form on the GP Resources page.
- Jennifer sent around an email about Duolingo for students in China and Iran for Autumn 20. She is discussing the ways scores match up to TOEFL. This has been allowed only for those countries. Students in other countries should take the TOEFL home edition.
- The deadline to admit is June 16 and the deadline to submit financial documents is June 30.
 - **Debbie Weldon**, Manager, Financial Review, GP Admissions:
 - There is potential to move the dates back as much as two weeks (admission and financial document deadlines for international students) with being able to get documents to students within the 30-day deadline. The process is easier for students with full funding, who quickly submit documents. Students have to act quickly, and any delay in accepting admission and submitting documents will delay their time to get the visa. The extensions would change these dates. Normally visa creation documents need to be out by July 1.





Questions & Discussion:

Dean Bertone:

- Change of GA start date has been pushed out to the December time period she believes, due to the delay in Workday implementation. So, that won't start this August.
- Still in discussion about GRA students being able to be online in the autumn but accept the GRA, so she can't answer questions on this topic yet.
- Many questions are still in discussion, including courses online/in-person sync. Still open-ended questions financially and security-wise about GRA stipends. Goal is to have students start classes in the fall online or in-person.

Jon Bullock: Question about the deferrals in the fall and country of origin.

- **Dean Bertone:** They are looking more at process than at specific groups/countries. They are looking to the June 15 decision. Regarding fellowships and deferrals, typically it is much less likely students will attend if they defer the fellowship for a year. They are looking at the circumstances facing students. Easier to defer to January than to a year later, but they are seeing requests to defer for a year.

Jon: What advantages does she see/things that can carry forward with online?

- **Dean Bertone:** COVID pushed decisions to be made that were in discussion for five years or so, like online oral defense exams, online dissertation review, etc. There are advantages of in-person discussion. COVID is making them review recruitment.

Jennifer Marinello: (Additional updates)

- I-20s are only going out once a week, and paper transcripts are picked up twice a week (in case people are seeing delays).
- She encourages students to send electronic transcripts if possible. She says students need to make a good faith effort to obtain the transcript, and to send information from the school (i.e. web site screenshot) if they are not able to get the transcript.

Office of International Affairs (OIA) Caroline Omolesky, Program Officer for Sponsored Programs and Academic Liaison and Amanda Yusko, Program Manager, International Student Services

Caroline: Question in the chat about getting a visa by fall.

- U.S. consulates are still closed around the world. Students are able to schedule appointments, but she has heard from students that appointments are being rescheduled or delayed. There is variation between and within countries about what students are experiencing.
- **Amanda:** At this point, no one is currently issuing visas, so there is question about when things will go up and running. There are also travel restrictions in the U.S. There is supposed to be an update about the Presidential Proclamation in a few days. When things are able to get up and running, there will be a rush.
- **Caroline:** She has heard from students in countries that typically have shorter visa appointment waits and there is still an issue about them having to wait. Also a concern if students will have to quarantine when they arrive.

Amanda:

- Regarding research, they (OIA) need to know if research students are doing abroad relates to thesis/dissertation and they notate this in their record, so it is easier for the student when they return to the country. Historically, a week or so before classes is when





students come into the country. They expect more late check-ins than normal this year because things are still up in the air. They need to check-in with OIA, get enrolled within thirty days of the start date. They tell Grad students they need department permission to delay entry beyond two weeks (after start of term) for check in.

Caitlin Naber (AGPA Technology Team Lead, Graduate Program Coordinator in Sociology)

Question: Her general of understanding of students on an F-1 is that they can only take a limited amount of courses online. Will students face issues in the fall?

- **Caroline:** The typical rules for international students and online instruction have been waived. For continuing students, they would be able to take an online courseload (and be here), but for new students, they would have to stay in their home country to take a full online courseload and OIA would have to defer their I-20.
- **Amanda:** Continuing students include students who are transferring from another U.S. institution. The new students mean initial students. She thinks they will get additional guidance from SEVP as it relates to fall.

Question from Zoom attendee: Change of visa status in the country.

- **Amanda:** There are two ways to change visa status, either leave the country and come back to change status (consulates are all closed right now). The other is to change status with USCIS, but this is a slow process: i.e. 9 to 15 months. Some visa holders can take courses incidental to their visa status (depending on visa type).
- **Amanda:** Discussion of CPT (Curricular Practical Training) process: OIA is sending documents remotely right now. They are processing CPT as normal remotely. They need to know where the student is working (remotely or in-person), but the process is largely the same.

Jon: Question about the Autumn 2020 semester from students (i.e. what will the format be).

- **Taylor White** (AGPA Technology Team Lead, Graduate Program Coordinator in School of Environment and Natural Resources): He sent out an e-mail in May letting students know that the program doesn't know yet, and provided the June 15 decision date.
- **Dina Galley** (AGPA Education and Engagement Team Lead, Graduate Program Coordinator in Civil, Environmental, and Geodetic Engineering): She sent out a similar email/FAQ to touch base with students. She is happy to share with anyone who is interested. She thinks students were responsive and appreciated the contact.
- **Amanda:** They (OIA) sent out their first pre-arrival email yesterday, to discuss virtual orientation and let students know if they are fully online in the fall new (initial) students will need to defer to January.
- **Caroline:** This is available on the OIA web site under International Students and Pre-Arrival Orientation: <https://oia.osu.edu/pre-arrival-and-orientation.html>

Matt Swift, Strategic Communications Program Manager, Graduate School: (Noted in Chat)

There is a sub task force on University communication and marketing.

Jon: Question to Caroline/Amanda: What good do you see coming out of this/going forward processes?





- **Caroline:** They are offering an all-online check-in and orientation in the fall and this has forced them to do this earlier than they would have ordinarily. Students can refer back to this information in the pre-arrival period. This has been really challenging for students with the uncertainty.
- **Amanda:** The transition to Sunapsis allows them to do more online/paperless functions. They've been able to use Zoom advising as well.

General Discussion:

Jon: His programs (in Knowlton) will be going online mid-June for orientation in Carmen. Is happy to share any information about the Knowlton Carmen orientation course.

Taylor: Started doing orientation online last year based on Knowlton's model. They would usually have an in-person, more casual meeting, but he is planning to do a remote Zoom meeting. He is offering to let people into his Carmen course.

Matt Swift: Asking if there are any digital accessibility coordinators on the call. There is a meeting coming up about this. They need to make sure that these Zoom calls are accessible (i.e. closed captioning). There is an exception process. Any video that goes out from the university needs to have closed captioning as an option. Staff members will have an accommodation process. In a live event scenario, you need an exception approval request to post the video and have a later transcription. Their staff accessibility coordinator needs to have a plan on file

Jon: He shared Council of Graduate Students message from Kayla Arnold (they just had a presentation about this).

Kerry Hodak (AGPA Student Life ex officio, Assistant Director for Graduate and Professional Student Services in the Office of Student Activities) is working on a virtual/hybrid option for graduate/professional orientation.

For more information and resources from the Association of Graduate & Professional Administrators, visit <http://u.osu.edu/agpa/>

