

Academic Policy Committee
Minutes
November 8, 2016

Members present: Sarah Ash, Alton Banks, Marina Bykova, Jeremy Feducia, Kerry Havner, Greg Young, Paul Huffman, Donna Carver, Neal Parker, Sophia Kathariou

Members Absent: Chang Nam, Jennifer Kuzma

Guest: Peter Harries, Senior Associate Dean for the Graduate School

Topic: The graduate school application fees: What do they pay for?

Below are the key responsibilities of the graduate program staff

1. Manage the application system (via Apply Yourself, which requires a yearly fee; is distinct from undergrad software) —interactions between the various NC State systems.
 - a. Lots of data movement and management
 - i. Making sure that all info (e.g., GRE scores; letters of reference) get matched to the right student.
 - ii. Validation that documents have been posted in a timely manner
 - iii. Management of other fees (e.g., enrollment of deposits)
 - iv. Can be differences in data required between colleges – need to make sure that all relevant data is collected.
2. Validation of admissions materials
 - a. Transcript review
 - i. Are minimum and other requirements met
 1. E.g., GPA, test scores, residency, bachelor’s degree, background checks; reclassification re residency (includes undergraduates as well).
 - ii. Review special admits (low GPA or test scores; provisional admission)
 - iii. Communicate with students/departments as necessary.
3. International Clearance/Review
 - i. E.g., financial and visa documentation (I-20 and DS-2019 paperwork), manage 3+X programs, manage CashNet system; coordinate with OIS.
4. Document Imaging
 - i. Scanning, downloading all application-related documents, especially for SACS review.
5. Troubleshooting
 - i. E.g., answer emails, phone calls, walk-ins; live chat
 - ii. Fix application errors daily
 1. Some of application fee pays for an IT to be on-call
6. Fees also pay for admission staff members, liaisons who keep graduate students on track. There is a lot of post-enrollment work that gets done by the graduate school that is funded by the application fee.

Comparison to peer institutions is complicated by differences in domestic v. international students. Some have much higher fees for international students (as much as \$30 more v. the \$10 more at NCSU). NCSU is \$5 more than the median of a representative sampling of other schools (\$75), for domestic, about \$5 less for international students (\$85).

- Why was this issue raised?

Huffman: In Physics, there is concern that high domestic application fee keeps students from applying. Also seems that the departments do “most of the work” to select the students v. the undergraduate side, in which the decision is made outside the department.

Harries: The graduate school has given money to programs to help with recruiting. But is hard to be competitive with other domestic programs. There is not a large enough pool of students. There is actually some evidence that a lower application fee can reflect poorly on a school while a higher fee suggests a “better” program to some.

Parker: Should the graduate school determine the true actual cost differential between domestic and international students?

Harries: What complicates the matter is that many international students will be denied so they are not going thru the whole process.

Current ratio is 3:1 –international: domestic --for applications.

Fee is waived for some students (automatic basis for some groups, e.g., McNair scholars; others on individual basis).