

Muhammad R. Hajj

Annual Activity Report

Graduate School

Dates included: August 10, 2014- August 9, 2015

Description of appointment:

My appointment is 50% at the graduate school as Associate Dean and 50% in the department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics. My presence at the graduate school is usually during the afternoons and during weekly meetings on Tuesday and Friday mornings.

Duties & accomplishments for Graduate School January-July, 2014

A. Transformative Graduate Education

1. GRAD5004 GTA workshop for Spring and Fall 2015 –

- Enrollment of about 200 students in Spring 2015 (Offered for the first time in a spring semester.)
- Record enrollment in Fall 2015 that exceeded 725 students.

a. Coordinated enrollment-

- Worked with GS staff members to make sure that the internal enrollment system functions as necessary and to load the enrollment into Banner;
- Communicated with GPC to use the enrollment system;
- Dealt with exceptions or individuals who could not be present for Phase I of workshop with contracts for alternative plans.

b. Invited presenters and developed workshop schedule-

- Requested proposals for sessions, organized into schedule, communicated with presenters throughout the year;
- Recruited presenters for some of the sessions;
- Introduced a new topic in Phase II of fall 2015 on Implicit Bias and Privilege;
- Introduced a new presentation in Phase I of fall 2015 by graduate students on “Practicing Excellence and Leadership as GTA;

c. Worked with Monika Gibson and Lauren Surface to prepare the leaflet, reserve rooms, refreshments and meals for Phase I in both semesters.

d. Initiated a way to pre-register students in sessions using Canvas

e. Responded to frequent queries from GPC, GPD and enrolled students before and during workshop.

f. Worked with the GA who will assist with verification of attendance, record attendance, communicate with students, and grade assignments.

g. Met with students who received “1” in previous years to develop remediation plans to change the grade as needed.

h. Worked with Jeremy Sippel on streaming the presentations of Phase I in fall 2015 to an overflow room and the National Capital Region.

2. GRAD5304: Preparing the Future Career Professional

- a. Invited Dr. Pat Artis, a VT alumnus and a Professor of Practice from the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics to assist students with

defining their objectives, writing resumes, preparing for interviews, etc. Dr. Artis participated also in the identification of speakers.

- b. Refined course syllabus and assignments from previous years. This year's class continues to be based on inquisitive learning.
 - c. Worked with students on developing a list of questions about job search, mentoring, leadership, networking, entrepreneurship, diversity, communication, teamwork, ethics, and work-life balance.
 - d. Invited relevant speakers related to discuss the above topics.
 - e. Evaluated student assignments and final project.
 - f. Based on student's interest, the sessions during the past spring semester were more related to entrepreneurship than in the previous year.
- B. Attended and participated in standing committees and commissions
1. Deans' meeting and staff meeting in Graduate School.
 2. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (twice per month)- participated and voted on behalf of Dean DePauw.
 3. Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies (twice per month)- attended but did not vote.
 4. CARS-CAGS (monthly lunch meeting) - participated as a member.
 5. Meetings with candidates for the position of Vice President for Research and Innovation.
- C. Continuing Education & professional service
1. Attended the CGS meeting in Washington, DC (December 2014)
 2. Attended the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (March 2015 New Orleans, LA)
 3. Traveled to Qatar University with Dean DePauw in November 2014 and assisted in the signing of Memorandum of Understanding.
- D. Graduate School programs & policies
1. Annual progress review of graduate students
Requested and received reports from departments, worked individually with departments that had questions or needed help in developing a system of evaluation.
 2. Coordinated Graduate School awards
Outstanding Dissertation Award, Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Award, Graduate Student Service Excellence Award, Outstanding Graduate Student Awards (one MS and one PhD from each college), Outstanding Interdisciplinary Student Award, Outstanding Graduate Alumni Achievement Award.
 - Worked with Monika Gibson and Pat Goodrich on the selection process for awards.
 - Invited and coordinated the selection committees for each award (except Outstanding Graduate Student Awards as this done directly and independently by each college)
 - Communicated with nominees and winners.
 3. Coordinated CGS and CSGS award nominations. One person won the MS thesis award in STEM fields and received it in New Orleans.
 4. Assisted with Graduate School on-line catalog approvals after submission by programs and colleges—degrees, program description and facilities.
 5. Assisted with development of forms and translation of policies, as needed.

- E. Daily graduate school decision making and student counseling
 - 1. Course withdrawals after deadline
 - 2. Course justifications
 - 3. Approval of non-VT members to serve on graduate committees
 - 4. WG approval
 - 5. Resignations
 - 6. Approval of Special Study requests
 - 7. Requests for tuition relief
 - 8. Grade changes
 - 9. Issues with student progress

- F. As needed
 - 1. Participated in alumni meals, celebrations, reunions, and other graduate school functions
 - 2. Assisted with strategic planning discussions for Graduate School.

Future Goals

1. Develop more elements, e.g. videos, for the sessions and presentations of the GTA workshop, GRAD 5004.
2. Use recorded videos to generate material for advertising topics covered in the GTA workshop.
3. Continue to work with speakers on different topics for both phases of the GTA workshop.
4. Continue to provide blog site material relevant to GTA to explain responsibilities and provide as much information as possible about policies and resources.
5. Continue to transform GRAD 5304 into a more coherent course that covers specific aspects on a regular basis in addition to having invited speakers.
6. Work with Drs. Rosemary Blieszner and Kenneth Wong on offering GRAD 5404 – Research in International Contexts – in spring 2016.
7. Develop a unified cover page along with guidelines for student evaluations.