April 4, 2017

To:  Susan Cochran, Chair
      Academic Senate

From:  Jessica Cattelino, Chair
       Graduate Council

Re: Draft Presidential Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Policy

At its meeting on March 17, 2017, the Graduate Council reviewed and discussed the draft Presidential Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) policy. Because some graduate students use drones in preparation for their research, some members were concerned that the policy, as proposed, would make it more difficult and cumbersome for graduate students to carry out their work. Specifically, members would encourage proposers to consider how the procedures outlined will impact the timeline of graduate students’ progress towards a degree given the steps required to obtain approval for operating use. In the same vein, members questioned whether the draft policy would be a new level of red tape or yet another hurdle to cross, rather than serve its articulated purpose of creating minimum standards for the safe use and operation of UAS and Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment.

cc:  Estrella Arciba, Graduate Council Analyst, Academic Senate
     Linda Mohr, CAO, Academic Senate