

## Minutes

### Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

February 18, 2009

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate School, GLC, Conference Room

Present: Ms. Megan Armbruster, Dr. Don Leo for Dr. Richard Benson, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Paul Deck, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. Joe Eska, Dr. François Elvinger, Ms. Laura Freeman, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Mr. Thomas Gorman, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Dr. Thomas Martin, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Patrick Miller, Dr. Michael Mortimer, Dr. Sue Murrmann, Ms. Amanda Olejarski, Dr. Kerry Redican, Dr. Cliff Shaffer

Absent with Notification: Mr. James Freeman

Absent without Notification: Ms. Evelyn Richardson, Ms. Hannah Swiger

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Linsey Barker, Ms. Ennis McCrery, Ms. Jacqueline Nottingham

Dr. Paul Deck, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**Approval of the agenda:** Approved.

**Approval of minutes from February 4, 2009:** Approved.

### Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): Dr. Elvinger reviewed the committee meeting actions from February 12<sup>th</sup>. At the meeting, invited representatives from the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee participated in a discussion on the approval process for conjoint courses.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP):

*Defending Student Status for Qualified Graduate Students*

The commission reviewed and discussed a proposed revision to the current Presidential Memorandum No. 97. The revision (below) was approved and will be presented at the next University Council meeting.

#### ***Revision and Clarification of Policy on Defending Student Status for Qualified Graduate Students Adopted by Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies***

***Whereas***, Policy Memorandum No. 97 originally defining Defending Student Status is unclear on the issue of deadlines and does not match current implementation, and

***Whereas***, students who register "for defense only" have completed all other degree requirements and are generally not on financial support, therefore be it

***Resolved***, that the status designated DEFENDING STUDENT be available during the semester of graduation when a student:

- *has fulfilled all residency and course requirements and does not take or audit any courses that semester,*
- *has scheduled and received confirmation from the graduate school for the date of his or her final examination by Friday of the third week of classes, and*
- *is not on assistantship during that semester.*

### **Let it further be**

**Resolved** that qualifying students need not register for any credit hours but instead would pay a Defending Student's Fee.

**Resolved** that students approved for Defending Student Status meet normal deadlines during the semester for defending and submitting the thesis or dissertation to the graduate school for approval.

**Resolved** that the Defending Student Status fee not exceed the cost of one credit hour.

### **Other Reports**

#### Graduate Student Assembly (GSA):

Results from the graduate student survey on health insurance will be presented at the next commission meeting.

The GSA is working on (1) a resolution which would address [policy on] long term health problems, and (2) Graduate Research & Development funding. The GSA will be hosting a social on February 20<sup>th</sup>.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): No report.

University Council: Dr. Deck reviewed the recent activities of the University Council. A revised smoking policy was presented at the meeting. There was also a discussion about A/P faculty and teaching.

### **Old Business:**

#### *Undergraduate / Graduate Proposal*

The commission reviewed and discussed a draft of a document (below) which was the result of a conversation that took place at the Winter Summit as well as feedback from the commission at the February 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

*The accelerated UG/G program would include the following for both tracks:*

- *Open to qualified individuals – detailed description of and criteria for “qualified” to be determined by the admitting academic unit. Among the considerations of qualified would be student status, gpa, motivation, career objectives, student portfolio, faculty mentor/advisor, funding arrangements, and more for each track. Faculty would need to identify the process to be followed by the admitting academic unit.*
- *Admission would be required prior to taking any coursework requested for use toward a graduate degree (i.e. double counted credits).*
- *Only courses taken during the final two semesters of the undergraduate degree can be used for a graduate degree.*
- *A mentor/advisor must be designated and a tentative plan of study included in the admission recommendation; formal approval of the PoS is not required for admission.*
- *No undergraduate required courses can be used toward the graduate degree; graduate degree is primary and all requirements must be satisfied.*
- *Only 5000 level courses taken as an undergraduate would apply on both the graduate and undergraduate degree programs*
- *Maximum of 12 (5000 or 4000) credits taken before completion of an undergraduate degree can be applied to a graduate degree*
- *Students can utilize the UG/G across departments with the approval of the department*

- *Students cannot be in more than one UG/G track. Students cannot shift from one track to another and maintain their UG/G options to use courses toward both undergraduate and graduate degrees.*
- *Departments would need to indicate tracks they will use to the Graduate School (to maintain an official record of such accelerated programs) and to list the availability of those tracks in the departmental graduate policy documents.*
- *In the research track, graduate students can earn a thesis master's and/or a doctoral degree.*
- *In the research track, 5000 [level] credits taken as an undergraduate can be used for both the master's and doctoral degree as might be appropriate and approved by the department.*
- *Minimum GPA requirements: 3.5 for research track. 3.25 for professional track*

Dr. DePauw noted that this is a significant change and will need to go through governance. She will incorporate discussion points into a revised document

**New Business:**

*One-Year Masters of Science in Engineering Degree with a Focus on Cyber Technology*

*Masters of Engineering in Geospatial Engineering*

The above masters appear on the Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD). They are not new degrees, but are existing degrees to be offered in a new location, the National Capital Region.

Dr. DePauw briefly reviewed the most recent IPGD.

*Working Group / Task Force on Culture for Graduate Education*

Dr. DePauw would like to establish a working group who will work on examining the graduate education culture at VT and try to improve the environment in general. Articles will be posted on Blackboard which illustrate some of the issues which affect graduate student culture and choices. Dr. DePauw invited commission members to serve on the task force. Dr. DePauw would like the task force to begin meeting this spring.

**Announcements:** None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted:*

Ms. Nancy B. Feuerbach, on behalf of

Dr. Karen P. DePauw, Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education