

Minutes
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies
March 4, 2009
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Graduate School, GLC, Conference Room

Present: Dr. Don Leo for Dr. Richard Benson, Dr. Paul Deck, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. Joe Eska, Ms. Laura Freeman, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Sue Murrmann, Ms. Amanda Olejarski, Ms. Hannah Swiger

Absent with Notification: Ms. Megan Armbruster, Dr. François Elvinger, Mr. James Freeman, Mr. Thomas Gorman, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Ms. Penny McCallum, Dr. Patrick Miller, Dr. Kerry Redican, Dr. Cliff Shaffer

Absent without Notification: Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Thomas Martin, Dr. Michael Mortimer, Ms. Evelyn Richardson

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

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

Approval of the agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes from February 18, 2009: The minutes were reviewed.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The actions from the February 12th meeting were discussed at the February 18th commission meeting. The commission received a hard copy of the minutes at the at the March 4th meeting. The below addendum was added:

Addendum:

- 1. Both the 4000-level and 5000-level course proposals for conjoint courses will be submitted to and reviewed by CUC and GCC. [In the case of a new class at one level, to complement an existing class, course proposal including catalog description, learning objectives, proposed texts, and syllabus, for the existing class must be submitted as supporting materials.]*
- 2. CUC/GCC will request creation of a box/area on the cover sheet to allow designation for the following options:*
 - a. create conjoint 4000-level/5000-level courses*
 - b. create new 5000-level course as complement to existing 4000-level course*
 - c. create new 4000-level course as complement to existing 5000-level course*
- 3. CUC/GCC will add an additional area on the course proposal outline requesting a description and explanation of differences between the two versions, i.e. 4000- and 5000-level versions, of the proposed course(s), to justify creation of new course(s).*
- 4. This new procedure will apply to any NEW course(s) proposed for a fall 2009 effective date and beyond.*

Members present approved the addendum but will wait until a quorum is present to formally approve the addendum.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP):

Ms. Merrill reported that the committee is continuing to work on various issues that relate to on or off-campus employment for students who receive assistantships.

Dr. DePauw discussed the progress of work being done on the “Fair Use Document”. She asked commission members to consider the question: *Does a table from an article or book need copyright permission before it is used in a student’s thesis or dissertation?* For example, do you need permission for using a part of a poem? Dr. Eska said his department [English] requires copyright if more than 10% of the poem is used. In general, the commission believed that copyright permission is required for publication. Dr. DePauw asked the commission if they hold the same publication standards for ETDs, and to consider the answer in terms of “Fair Use” as approved by the commission.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA):

- The GSA elected new officers at their last meeting; Laura Freeman was elected president.
- Recently, the GSA has been working on a long term disability policy and health insurance
- The travel fund deadline is this Friday
- Laura Freeman reviewed the results of the Graduate Student Survey on health insurance. The survey had a large response and revealed many students were dissatisfied with the current health insurance coverage. Ms. Freeman reviewed the GSA recommendations for a revised health plan.
- There is a discrepancy in coverage for students who begin spring semester instead of the fall semester. Also, the referral process is cumbersome.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): No report.

University Council: Dr. Paul Deck reported that he presented the resolution on Defending Student Status for a first reading.

Old Business:

Working Group / Task Force on Culture for Graduate Education

Dr. DePauw posted materials on Blackboard which explained the need for the task force. Task force members will be asked to review the documents to get an understanding of the problem. The task force would make recommendations to help prevent the problem behaviors and identify, and continue with, behaviors that work. Dr. DePauw would like a report from the task force by December 2009. Dr. DePauw already has volunteers from Northern Virginia, student volunteers, and staff and faculty volunteers from the Blacksburg campus. Initially, the Task Force will work with Dr. DePauw.

Undergraduate / Graduate Proposal

Dr. DePauw presented a revised proposal to the accelerated undergraduate / graduate proposal. Some minor changes to language were made and the commission approved the content of the proposal. The proposal would be effective fall 2009. Dr. DePauw will put the proposal in resolution format.

New Business:

Student Life Policies report & response

Dr. DePauw and the commission discussed the report and response. The recommendation of the report was that the current system is “one system” and should stand. Item number three recommends involving the Graduate School in student hearings. Item four recommends conduct officers in Judicial Affairs should include graduate students. Item number five recommends a clear policy delineating Virginia Tech’s responsibility in off-campus behavior. The commission expressed unanimous agreement that students living off-campus should not be penalized twice; once by the Blacksburg police, and again by Judicial Affairs. In addition, it is possible for a student to be found “not guilty” off-campus, but “guilty” by Judicial Affairs. The Graduate School recommends that Virginia Tech undergraduate Judicial Affairs records *not* follow the student into their Virginia Tech graduate student records. This recommendation is under review. Dr. DePauw noted that Judicial Affairs can rule that an academic degree not be awarded.

GPA Calculation for Graduate Degree

Currently our policy for admission is a GPA of 3.0 or better in the last half of the undergraduate degree [last 60 hours]. If a student has 12 hours of graduate credits, then the GPA for the graduate work is used. If they have a graduate degree, we’ve been calculating the GPA, and in some cases, the GPA is below 3.0.

The commission discussed whether the existence of a graduate degree is sufficient for admission to the Graduate School. It can happen, by exception that a plan of study may have a 3.0 or better, but the overall GPA is below 3.0.

Announcements: Dr. Paul Deck announced that at the March 18th meeting the commission will elect a chair and vice-chair for 2009-2010.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Ms. Nancy B. Feuerbach, on behalf of
Dr. Karen P. DePauw, Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education