

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

November 5, 2008

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate School, GLC, Conference Room

Present: Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Paul Deck, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Dr. Joe Eska, Ms. Laura Freeman, Mr. Thomas Gorman, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Don Leo for Dr. Richard Benson, Dr. Thomas Martin, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Patrick Miller, Ms. Evelyn Richardson, Dr. Cliff Shaffer, Ms. Hanna Swiger

Absent with Notification: Mr. James Freeman, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Dr. Michael Mortimer, Dr. Kerry Redican

Positions needing to be filled: Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan needs a replacement for fall 2008

Absent without Notification: Ms. Megan Armbruster, Mr. Gabe Goldman for Ms. Amanda Olejarski, Dr. Muzzo Uysal for Dr. Sue Murrmann

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

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

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from October 15, 2008: Approved with minor corrections.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from September 25th, October 9th, and October 23rd were approved.

Graduate Student Appeals: One appeal is completed; one appeal is underway. Dr. DePauw will give a very general report when an appeal is completed which will let the commission know whether or not she accepted the recommendation of the committee.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP):

Dr. Shaffer is writing procedures describing what circumstances might allow/justify claiming “fair use” in ETDs. The document is an attempt to educate students to be reasonably knowledgeable about fair use. He hopes to have a proposal for discussion at the next commission meeting. He gave credit to Gail McMillan for her research into this issue.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA):

At the October 30th meeting:

- A resolution on an alternative meal plan [for graduate students who live on campus] was passed
- A resolution on diversity was tabled. Representatives will bring this issue to their departments for consideration.

- The GSA president proposed a new resolution on graduate students' opportunity for input into the tenure process
- A GSA social is planned for November 14th. Faculty are invited and encouraged to attend.
- GSA is continuing to work on health insurance and fees

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): Dr. Hitchingham reported that the committee had its first meeting. Three issues were discussed: (1) ULC committee reporting structure and membership, (2) funding, and (3) CLAHS's library committee.

University Council: No report.

Old Business:

Interdisciplinary Graduate Education and Research

Dr. DePauw outlined a list of possible issues the commission could consider:

1. Develop a website as a resource where students & faculty can search for courses in other departments by topic, as well as searching for student & faculty collaborators, thus encouraging interdisciplinary work
2. Annual progress of graduate students; how do we systematically incorporate interdisciplinary efforts
3. A general mechanism for students who want to do interdisciplinary research that is outside what we already have
4. Modules concept for graduate courses could be used in interdisciplinary research/studies
5. Co-advisors and committee members. Requiring an outside committee member(s)?
6. Co-authorship on ETD
7. Credits on the plan of study, whether they are inside or outside of the department
8. One designation? Cross listing? Who gets credit for teaching?
9. Assistantships across departments and units
10. In course approval process, across disciplines, how do we develop "set standards"?

New Business:

Graduate Student Summer Status: The GSA has been working on the summer status issue since last year. A new proposal would require students currently on assistantships to enroll in the summer for at least three credits, and not be redefined as regular wage employees during the summer. Students would pay the university fees that would allow them to use university services; tuition would be handled as "tuition remission". Commission members participated in a discussion about the potential value this could have for students and faculty.

Budget Reduction and Graduate Education: Dr. DePauw asked the commission if they had any questions or concerns about the current efforts to reduce the budget. She assured the commission that she was trying to protect graduate students, and graduate education, from budget cuts.

SACS update/qualifications for GTAs: Dr. DePauw reminded commission members that graduate students may not teach graduate courses. According to SACS, graduate students who teach undergraduate courses must have 18 credits in their discipline, or a masters' degree.

Enrollment Management Strategies: Each year, we must predict our enrollment to SCHEV. We are well over our goals. But one question that was posed recently to the Academic Affairs committee was, “What does Virginia Tech want to look like?” To assist with this process, Dr. David Ford asked the committee to consider the below items:

- Define the profile of the Learning Domain (academic programs)
- Define the student profile (undergraduate/graduate/professional)
- Define instruction (faculty, instructors, adjuncts, graduate assistants)
- Define modes of instruction (traditional, distance learning, hybrids)
- Consider teaching loads, professional advancement, quality of life issues
- Consider campus locations, classroom facilities, library, student affairs, IT, Discovery mission, Engagement mission, Alumni Development

Dr. DePauw asked the commission for feedback on the above items.

Announcements

The winter CUS&P and GCS&P summit is scheduled for the afternoon of January 23rd.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted:

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