

## **MINUTES**

### **Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies**

**February 1, 2017**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Graduate School Conference Room**

**Present:** Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Dr. Sally Paulson (Chair), Dr. Lujean Baab, Dr. Rajesh Bagchi, Dr. Sudip Bhattacharjee, Dr. Nancy Bodenhorn, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Charlene Eska, Dr. Lesa Hanlin, Dr. Rachel Holloway (ex officio), Dr. William Huckle, Ms. Alex Hyler, Mr. Timothy Kinoshita, Ms. Erin Lavender-Stott, Dr. Kathy Lu, Mr. Brett Netto, Ms. Hannah Parks, Dr. Annie Pearce, Ms. Libbie Sonnier-Netto, Dr. Kevin Carlson (for Dr. Robert Sumichrast), and Dr. Zhiwu Xie.

**Absent with Notification:** Ms. Tara Reel, Ms. Kim Robbins, and Dr. Ying Zhou.

**Absent without Notification:** Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio).

**Visitors and Invited Guests:** Dr. Mike Akers, Ms. Janice Austin, Dr. Rosemary Blieszner, and Dr. Muhammed Hajj.

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Paulson at 3:30 p.m.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was modified to move new business prior to committee reports.

### **Approval of the Minutes from January 18, 2017**

The minutes were approved as presented.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Graduate Curriculum Committee**

Dr. Edgar reported an increase in work is expected as the semester progresses. The minutes were accepted by the Commission.

#### **Graduate Student Appeals Committee**

Dr. Bodenhorn reported an appeal is under review.

#### **Degree Requirements, Standards, Criteria, and Academic Progress (DRSCAP) Committee**

Dr. Huckle provided an update on committee activity. Included in his report:

DRSCAP's initial meeting of the spring semester was held on Thursday 1/26/17.

**Modified Master's Degree Advisory Committee composition:** Associate Dean Blieszner and Dean DePauw have reviewed and clarified DRSCAP's edits to the revised Graduate Catalog statement about the

minimum number of advisory committee members needed for a coursework-only master's program. DRSCAP will present this proposal for adoption upon its second reading at CGS&P on 2/1/17 [see below under Old Business].

Ensuring adequacy of oral English language proficiency for GTAs: DRSCAP is still in an information-gathering mode, with a number of questions posed for further consideration. Would raising our TOEFL minimum (currently 80 aggregate score) be an effective means of achieving greater oral proficiency among GTAs? Many institutions with whom we would like to compare ourselves favorably have higher minima (90-100). Alternatively, for students already admitted, can we identify affordable ways to improve proficiency? In addition, what is the true scope of "problem," *i.e.*, what is the frequency and magnitude of instances where lack of proficiency has been flagged as a limitation to teaching effectiveness? Do individual programs track, via SPOT surveys or some other mechanism, the effectiveness of their GTAs? Are clear expectations set, and suitable mentoring applied, by instructors of record/course directors regarding their GTAs?

For action items, we agreed to:

>>Review comparable institutions' TOEFL standards (compilations are available online)

>>Ask the grad school to review records of applications submitted over the past 5-10 years and determine how many applicants would have been excluded if our TOEFL minimum were higher, e.g., 100 or 90 vs the current 80; and secondarily if particular graduate programs would be disproportionately affected by an increased minimum.

>>Investigate the state of the art on research related to oral English instruction and its assessment.

A call for a faculty member to replace Kay Dunkley was made. Dr. Xie agreed to serve.

## **Constituency Updates**

### Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Ms. Hyler reported the election was held last week. She is the new President.

### Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Ms. Lavender-Stott had no report.

### University Library Committee

Dr. Xie reported that on January 12<sup>th</sup> the library held a successful workshop with 120 participating. A meeting was held yesterday with UVA to discuss collaborative potential and resource sharing.

### Faculty Senate

Dr. Eska reported the Faculty Senate has distributed widely a *Resolution on the Importance of Immigrants and Visitors to Community Diversity and University Success*. A copy will be made available on Scholar.

### Student Government Association (SGA)

There was no report.

## **University Council and Commission Updates**

Dr. Paulson noted that University Council will meet next week.

Dr. Hajj reported the Commission on Undergraduate Studies & Policies had a first reading on a resolution to include identity and equity in the Pathways general education curriculum.

### **Graduate School Update**

Dr. DePauw reported the anti-bullying committee met and shared good information. A resolution of a special graduate concern has been established involving an ETD. An alleged falsification of data was reviewed by a committee. The data appeared to be false but could not be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. A faculty advisor attempted to replicate the data unsuccessfully. The faculty advisor wrote a statement of the outcome of his efforts and that statement has been attached to the ETD. Dr. DePauw discussed undocumented student concerns and the President's Executive Order regarding immigration. She reminded everyone of the information in Dr. Sands letter to the university community and the resources on the website. Dr. DePauw will meet tonight with international students concerned with the executive order. She is interested in learning more about their questions and concerns. Another meeting with the same purpose will be held on Friday. Another open meeting will be held next week. Dr. DePauw provided an update on the graduate application system. The servers did not function as expected during the Martin Luther King holiday weekend. The problem was caught early and a resolution reached. Students have been notified and the application is being waived as students re-apply. Students are also being offered identity protection. A report will be written and shared with the Registrar.

### **Old Business**

On behalf of DRSCAP, Dr. Huckle presented for discussion a document with suggested edits to the Graduate Catalog regarding advisory committee size in coursework-only master's degree programs. A motion was made to approve the changes on the document. Following discussion, the motion was approved.

### **New Business**

Dr. Akers provided an overview of the first reading of the Resolution to Establish a Dairy Science Major within the Master of Science in Life Sciences Degree. The resolution will now be sent to Faculty Senate for review prior to the second reading.

### **Announcements**

Ms. Austin announced that GLC Cares has been instituted to offer students the opportunity to discuss and write or video messages of caring in the GLC Lobby.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Marilynn R. King  
on behalf of Karen P. DePauw, Ph.D.  
Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education