

**Minutes**  
**Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies**  
**February 15, 2012**  
**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**  
**Graduate School Conference Room**

Present: Ms. Shaimaa Abdallah, Dr. Carolyn Copenheaver, Ms. Natalie Cruise, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. Mark Halsey, Dr. Bernice Hausman, Dr. Jennifer Hodgson, Dr. Karen Hult, Akiko Nakamura, Dr. Wayne Neu, Dr. Mayuresh Patil, Mr. Greg Purdy, Ms. Katelyn Shugart-Schmidt, Dr. Victoria Soghomonian, Dr. Dan Thorp

Absent with Notification: Ms. Janice Austin, Mr. Marc Brodsky, Dr. Susan Short, Dr. Tyler Walters

Absent without Notification: Mr. Mohammed Jalili, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunann, Dr. Patrick Miller, Mr. Leighton Vila, Dr. Jim Yardley

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Michelle McLeese, Dr. Janet Rankin

Dr. Victoria Soghomonian, Chair, called the meeting to order.

**Approval of the agenda:** Approved.

**Approval of the minutes from February 1, 2012:** Approved.

**Committee Reports**

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from January 26<sup>th</sup> and February 9<sup>th</sup> were approved.

Graduate Student Appeals: An appeals meeting has been scheduled. Dr. DePauw is waiting for materials from the appellant.

Graduate Student Relations (GSR): No report.

Degree Requirements, Standards, Criteria, and Academic Progress (DRSCAP): The committee is reviewing the approval process used in the development of online courses as well as how classroom classes are transitioned to online classes. The committee will also try to determine if SCHEV data is in current in their recording of both online and in-classroom classes. Lujean Baab, Assistant Director, Design, Development and Support with the Institute for Distance and Distributed Learning, met with the committee. The committee learned:

- There is no difference in developing online vs. in-classroom courses. The governance process is the same.
- There is no formal process for deciding an in-classroom course will be taught online
- IDDL will work with faculty in transitioning in-classroom to online

The committee did not feel that there appeared to be much difference in how an online course's quality was assessed. Dr. Halsey quoted from the Distance Learning policy, "The faculty, through their respective departments and colleges, assume responsibility for and exercise oversight of distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction." IDDL does is not a quality control agent for online instruction. Classes that are less than 50% online are considered "web-enhanced" classes and are in a separate category. IDDL doesn't have a way of tracking classes that are not taught 100% online at this point. Online courses follow the same course evaluation process that in-classroom classes use.

Dr. DePauw asked how online courses attached to master's degrees were approved. Dr. Halsey said programs are approved through governance; how they are taught is not part of an identifier in the approval process. Dr.

DePauw noted that a completely online doctoral program would present multiple problems. She would like the commission to review the process. Dr. DePauw asked the DRSCAP committee to make recommendations for a process, and consider the following questions:

- Who determines the integrity of the degree when it's online, the students or the faculty?
- When does a set of courses become a degree?
- Is there a mechanism for notifying the Graduate School of online degrees?

Graduate Student Assembly Report (GSA): No report.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Ms. Shugart-Schmidt reported that there is a case for spring semester, and one case is carried over from semester. The focus group on sanctions and penalties is scheduled to have a second meeting. GHS currently has a position advertised for an Education / Outreach Coordinator.

University Library Committee (ULC): No report.

University Council: No report.

Graduate School:

Dr. DePauw shared the results of the IGEP. We have four new awards, and seven of eight colleges were represented:

- Computational Tissue Engineering
- Regenerative Medicine
- Remote Sensing
- Translational Obesity

Funding for IGEP proposals will be on the next commission meeting agenda.

Dr. DePauw asked commission members to think about the possibility of a fall semester 2013 graduate experience to be held in CESA.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Announcements:**

Ms. Michelle McLeese took twelve graduate students to Richmond for Hokie Day and they spoke with the Secretary of Education.

Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> there are two events presented by The Department of Forest Resources & Environmental Conservation.

- A Work-Life Balance Panel. One of the panelists is Laura Furgione, Deputy Director, National Weather Service. Other panelists are Dr. Jennifer Hodgson, Dr. Lynn Resler, and Dr. Valerie Trouet.
- The keynote address will be given by Laura Furgione.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

*Respectfully submitted:*

Ms. Nancy Feuerbach, on behalf of

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