

MINUTES

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

March 2, 2016

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate School Conference Room

Present: Dr. Saul Halfon, Dr. Lujean Baab, Mr. Matt Chan, Ms. Kira Dietz, Dr. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Joseph Eska (on behalf of Dr. Charlene Eska), Dr. William Huckle, Dr. James Jones, Dr. Mary Ann Lewis (on behalf of Dr. Rachel Holloway), Dr. Sally Paulson, Ms. Tara Reel, Ms. Kim Robbins, Dr. Hans Robinson, Mr. Richard Rodrigues (on behalf of Mr. Mohammed Seyam), Dr. Scott Salom, Dr. Gary Seidel, Ms. Maria Stack, Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio), and Dr. Christopher Zobel.

Absent with Notification: Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Mr. Nathan Carter, Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dr. Charlene Eska, Dr. Rachel Holloway, Mr. Mohammed Seyam, and Ms. Sally Wieringa.

Absent without Notification: None.

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Janice Austin and Dr. Muhammed Hajj.

Call to Order

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

Approval of the Agenda

The Commission approved the agenda as presented. Later in the meeting, the members learned the new degree under new business would not be presented today.

Approval of the Minutes from February 17, 2016

The minutes were approved as amended.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee

The minutes of February 25, 2016 were presented and accepted. There may be additional new proposals to be reviewed in the future.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee

Dr. Jones reported there are no new cases.

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

Dr. Zobel reported Maria Stack has gathered information on students' rights and responsibilities for committee formation. The Graduate School website will be updated with this information. The University is meeting with turnitin.com regarding use of plagiarism software next week. The committee is collecting information on what university services are cut off in the summer. Dr. Walters provided updated information regarding library services for graduate students. Dr. Walters noted that when the student is

not registered for any hours in the fall, the student would not receive summer services. If the PID and password becomes inactive, library materials would not be accessible. Additional services will be reviewed in considering summer services for graduate students.

Constituencies Updates

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Chan reported registration for the two factor authorization drop dead deadline is July 4th. IT staff met with the GSA to provide training and respond to questions and concerns. The GSA will provide a document to CGS&P for review of the amendments to the constitution. Dr. Menah Pratt-Clarke will attend the next GSA meeting. Dr. Sands and Dr. Rikakis will attend the last meeting of the year. Mr. Chan will be stepping down at the end of this year. Mr. Carno announced there are 190 presentations with 70 presenters for the research symposium. The Travel Fund Program will open March 14th. The Graduate Research Development Program will open March 21st. Students are encouraged to apply. The keynote speaker for the research symposium is Abhi Nemani. The symposium will be 9-4 pm on March 23rd. Additional volunteers for judges would be appreciated.

Graduate Honor System (GHS)

No report.

University Library Committee

Ms. Dietz reported on the University Library Committee letter from 2014. There was support for the memo but no further actions were taken at that time. Dr. Walters is willing to provide additional leadership and would provide additional presentations to other groups. Dr. Robinson suggested the Commission formulate a charge to be presented to the Library Committee and will prepare this for the next CGS&P meeting. Dr. Halfon noted the importance of identifying new library resources necessary to support new degree programs. The new School of Neuroscience is identifying many journals that are needed and funding was not identified at the time the School was approved.

The question of grad student access during the summer comes up every few years in CGS&P. Ms. Dietz shared that Mr. Tomlin has confirmed that as long as graduate students have pre-registered for classes in the Fall by the end of the spring semester, they should maintain borrowing privileges and access to library resources without interruption. Mr. Tomlin also contacted the Graduate School about summer credit, and while each department does have a research and dissertation course number, registering for it in the summer is optional. Graduate students don't need it to keep their status as actively enrolled between the end of Spring and the beginning of Fall semesters.

Faculty Senate

Dr. Robinson reported that Dr. Menah Pratt-Clarke gave a presentation of her first month's impressions at the last Faculty Senate meeting. A student with an Appalachian background reported on her survey results about the experience of students with an Appalachian background. Students are experiencing biases because of their language usage from professors. Dr. Pratt-Clarke will discuss Appalachian microaggressions in her upcoming workshop. Dr. Robinson also reported that a survey has been done by the Faculty Senate regarding the attitudes and impressions of the institutes on campus. The good news is the institutes provide funding to support faculty research. He also noted that top-down management of the institutes and competition with faculty outside of the institutes are of concern.

Student Government Association

Ms. Robbins introduced herself as the new representative.

Ms. King presented Mr. Amos SGA report to the members. The SGA voted on legislation to provide funding for the Big Event and Relay for Life. SGA is considering legislation to support the April 16th community lunch and relay with funding for food.

SGA is also discussing proposing legislation to oppose the decision to eliminate the Prices Fork Rd. - Webb St. crosswalk. The crosswalk is being planned to be removed by the Town of Blacksburg due to safety concerns for pedestrians and also due to traffic congestion. The traffic congestion also has led to the Blacksburg Transit buses not maintaining their schedules. Opponents of this decision believe that removal of the crosswalk will lead to more jaywalking and further increase safety hazards for the pedestrians. The body is relatively split on the issue, and this may not proceed forward.

Dr. Halfon further described the location and concerns of the crosswalk in question.

University Council and Commission Updates

Dr. Halfon reported University Council had not met since the last CGS&P meeting.

Dr. Robinson reported that CUSP is going to limit signing up for the same course to three times. Dr. Hajj reported that a course cannot be repeated if the student has a grade of C or higher at the graduate level. If a student has two F's in a graduate course, the course cannot be repeated a third time.

Ms. King provided Mr. Amos' report on the Commission on Energy and Sustainability (E&S). E & S has voted on the Green RFP proposals and passed those onto the Budget Office. The results of the 2015-2016 Green RFP Program will be announced later in the year, likely April.

Based on the results of the Sustainability Survey, the E&S Committee is holding focus group sessions to get further feedback from the community. These will be among the last times that interested parties will have to voice their concerns before the committee moves forward to take action in April.

- o March 1: 12-1PM, Library Multipurpose Room, Alternative Transportation
- o March 2: 12-1PM, Library Multipurpose Room, Waste/Recycling
- o March 15: 12-1PM, Squires 232, Water Conservation/Management
- o March 16: 12-1PM, Squires 232, Energy Reduction/Renewables
- o March 17: 12-1PM, Squires 232, Communication and Education

Graduate School Update

Dr. Hajj had no updates.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Announcements

Dr. Halfon announced that Dr. Culver will attend the next meeting regarding SPOT. A representative will be invited from the Language Culture Institute and possibly someone from the Writing Center to follow-up on a previous conversation about international student training, language, and resources.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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