

## **MINUTES**

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

**December 2, 2015**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Graduate School Conference Room**

**Present:** Dr. Saul Halfon, Mr. Melvin Amos, Mr. Matt Chan, Ms. Chelsea Corkins, Ms. Kira Dietz, Dr. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Charlene Eska, Dr. William Huckle, Dr. James Jones, Dr. Sally Paulson, Dr. Hans Robinson, Dr. Gary Seidel, Mr. Mohammed Seyam, Ms. Maria Stack, Ms. Sally Wieringa, and Dr. Christopher Zobel.

**Absent with Notification:** Mr. Nathan Carter, Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Dr. Rachel Holloway, Dr. Scott Salom, and Ms. Dawn Stoneking.

**Absent without Notification:** Ms. Tara Reel, and Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio).

**Visitors and Invited Guests:** Ms. Janice Austin, Dr. Muhammed Hajj and Erin Lavender-Stott.

### **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.

### **Approval of the Minutes from November 18, 2015**

The minutes were approved as amended.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Graduate Curriculum Committee**

The committee did not meet. An electronic approval of the next meeting's minutes will be requested by email following the next meeting to facilitate actions before the next CGS&P meeting.

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

Dr. Halfon reported an appeal currently in progress should be completed soon.

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

Dr. Zobel reported that the discussion continues regarding the inclusion of the name of the degree on the diploma. A discussion has been held with the Dean regarding the MIT program and a follow-up meeting will be held with the Registrar. The meeting with Brennan Shepherd has been delayed regarding summer.

## **Constituencies' Updates**

### Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Chan reported that the GSA is also discussing concerns of the degree name being listed on the diploma. The membership also noted support for a sustainability plan being incorporated into the transportation plan. Ms. Corkins reported that abstracts will be accepted until January 1<sup>st</sup> for the Research Symposium on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Chan announced that Dr. Sands will attend the next GSA meeting for 30 minutes. Mr. Seyam reported on the success of the luncheon with Dr. Sands today. Dr. Seidel noted that students may be willing to pay an additional charge to have the degree name on the diploma. It was noted that there are administrative concerns in providing the support necessary to deliver the degree name. Also, there is some recognition of SCHEV degree titles versus the Virginia Tech commonly used degree titles not consistently matching. Dr. Halfon recommended a small group may need to gather data and look at how diplomas are used to further understand why the degree name is needed.

### Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Ms. Lavender-Stott reported the semester has been quiet and training has continued with the Vet-Med School.

### University Library Committee

Ms. Dietz reported the fourth floor renovations have been complete.

### Faculty Senate

Dr. Robinson reported the Provost and the President attended yesterday's meeting to discuss Beyond Boundaries. Faculty are engaged in the discussions regarding the destination areas. There is a need to raise funds and increase the endowment to offset the loss of state support as tuition continues to increase. The Virginia Tech applicant pool is unbalanced; half of the undergraduate pool wants to major in engineering. A broader balance is needed in our yield and we need to improve curriculum design and provide an opportunity for students to have a technology component in their programs of study. Dr. Rikakis noted this is to be a dynamic process and discussed the ten destination areas. An incubator will be offered next summer to explore and potentially expand the destination areas.

### SGA

Mr. Amos reported that representatives have discussed recreational sports and other concerns regarding the cost of participation and use of War Memorial gym. Also, surveys are being conducted and additional reports will be given in January.

## **University Council and Commission Updates**

Dr. Halfon reported there has been no University Council meeting since the last CGS&P meeting.

Mr. Amos reported that the Committee on Energy and Sustainability met. The Committee is forming a working group and have distributed surveys to determine what people identify with sustainability. An engagement working group has been formed and a survey will be collected on concerns about sustainability. Focus groups will be held in the spring to set priorities.

Mr. Amos reported that the five-year energy plan for the University has received \$2.56 M to implement various programs in support of Phase I of the energy action plan. Phase I is expected to be completed by Summer, 2016.

### **Graduate School Update**

Dr. Hajj noted there is no new information to report.

### **Old Business**

There is no old business.

### **New Business**

There is no new business.

### **Announcements**

Dr Halfon discussed a policy memorandum from 2003 that stated departments are required to file a procedures/handbook report with the Graduate School each year. Dr. Eska questioned if the document is different from the catalog. A follow-up question will be asked of the Dean regarding this policy.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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