

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

CGPSP Minutes

September 7, 2022

3:30-5:00 p.m.

Present: Monty Abbas, Coy Allen, Kayla Alward, Lisa Becksford, Nancy Bradley, Christina DiMarino, Joseph Eifert, Robert Emmett, Tom Ewing, Chip Frazier, Donna Sedgwick, Rachel Holloway, Mary Kasarda, Eric Kaufman, Sattar Mansi, Hannah Parks, Rebecca Pauly, Aimée Surprenant, Noor Tasnim, Alina Valop, Tyler Walters, Scott Weimer, Pengtao Yue

Absent with notification: Anna Buhle

Visitors and invited guests: Janice Austin, Kevin Edgar, Monika Gibson, Cathy Grimes, Bill Huckle, Carrie Mayer, Lauren Surface

Establishment of Quorum–

A quorum was verified and the meeting was called to order at 3:32 by Monty Abbas.

Adoption of the Agenda–

Agenda was moved, seconded, and therefore adopted.

Approval of the Minutes–

Minutes from the previous meeting were moved, seconded, and therefore adopted.

Chair report updates–

Monty shared a general setup for how business will be conducted in this commission using three main ideas: operational, responsive, proactive. His document can be found in the Sharepoint drive.

Committee Reports–

Graduate Curriculum Committee-Coy Allen

The first meeting will be September 8th. There are 10 items on the agenda.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee-Aimée Surprenant

There were 2 graduate student grade appeals over the summer. Committee was formed made up of CGPSP members and appropriate department members. One appeal was heard and it was denied by the committee. Processes and procedures were followed. The dean would like to talk more about some of the nuances and some language that may need changing.

DRSCAP-Mary Kasarda

Nothing to report

Old Business

A. Modification to the Co-Op for Graduate Students–Monika Gibson

Some considerations were proposed last year. More work has been done and documents are in Sharepoint. The Graduate School would like to propose CGPSP change current co-op definitions from it needing to be full-time to semester long to allow different versions because there are opportunities graduate students are missing out on and they would like to pursue different versions of co-op. Another reason is co-op is defined as a one-credit course. There is little reason why a credit is getting granted because the work is not supervised by VT and there isn't a product at the end that is evaluated or monitored by faculty. There is no justifiable work created by the student. Tracking would still be preferred and a zero-credit co-op enrollment would allow tracking. CGPSP is being asked to create a resolution to allow these changes to happen.

Dean Surprenant would like to refer this matter to DRSCAP for their attention. There were no objections.

New Business

A. Ratification of the election of the GHS chair

Moved, seconded, and approved the ratification of the new GHS chair, Rose McGroarty. New chair is not present because of a new baby. Kayla Alward will work with her on the transition.

B. Discussion of changes to the Shared Governance structure

Dean Surprenant shared the new resolution flowchart and the governance structure. The new structure means there are 2 commissions relating to graduate student issues. One reports to Faculty/Senate and the other reports to GPSS. The charges are overlapping and commissions need to make sure efforts are not being duplicated.

A member asked who is the primary audience for the resolution flowchart. It was generated by the governance group with the understanding that there will be some re-design along the way. The intended audience is the administrators for the commissions.

Dean Surprenant gave a quick update on the Task Force for Student Compensation. It has been meeting over the summer and making progress. A series of recommendations to the provost will be made by the December deadline.

A member asked to table conversations regarding compensation until we hear back from the task force in December. Chair approves unless the committee asks CGPSP for input.

C. Phasing out of the GCC (what to replace it with?)

A member explained that the work of the GCC is routine and it prevents overlap and courses getting into the realm of those that are not graduate courses. The overall effect of that has been to raise the bar of graduate learning objectives. The Registrar's office should take care of the routine actions. Another member explained the other items in transition, one of which is the adoption of Courseleaf as a management tool of the graduate catalog and courses and the course development program. Once a course enters the internal governance process the formal way, there is a way of looking for overlap. It is not reasonable to ask the Registrar to judge whether or not the learning objectives for a course are graduate level.

Another member asked about a document that would replace GCC. Not sure about the availability of this document. Monty will reach out and get more information. Much of the GCC is being taken to the college level. This is being done in undergraduate courses. A lot of work GCC does is confirming what is coming out of the colleges.

A member asked if there is an action item for the GCC? Monty answered that it is to get information and bring it back to CGPSP.

Graduate School Updates

A. Status Report on Graduate Education at VT–Aimée Surprenant

Dean shared her letter on Sharepoint with detailed information on Graduate School updates. Some highlights:

*There are over 7, 000 graduate students enrolled this year from all over the world doing a variety of research. This commission ensures all students are being served.

*The Graduate School fulfilled inclusion/diversity requirements.

*Mental health and wellness is a prominent topic and concern. There is a new telehealth opportunity for students.

*The Graduate School continues to implement the recommendations of the Graduate Education task force.

*The Graduate School will increase the focus on mentoring and mentoring faculty, graduate students, and their understanding of taking control of their mentoring.

*The Graduate School will take a close look at interdisciplinary programs and how to support those better. There was a previous conversation on holistic admission and standardized scores that will be revisited later.

*The dean encourages the commission to think about GTAs and those who are Instructors of Record. There are not many policies/procedures for recommendations to support students regarding training.

*The dean would like advice on multi-authored publications in dissertations and theses in order to be more clear on how the Graduate School can adjudicate questions that come up.

Constituency Updates—Montasir Abbas

A. Graduate and Professional Student Senate—Ben Beiter

No updates (Noor spoke on behalf of GPSS)

B. Graduate Student Honor System—Kayla Alward

Shared number of cases, types, outcomes, and dismissed versus responsible. The information can be found on Sharepoint.

C. University Library Committee—Lisa Becksford

No updates

D. Faculty Senate—Donna Sedgwick and Eric Kaufman

No updates

E. Undergraduate Student Senate—vacant

F. Board of Visitors—Anna Buhle

No updates

University Council and Commission Updates—Montasir Abbas

A. University Council—Montasir Abbas

No updates

B. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs—Robert Emmett

No updates

C. Commission on Student Affairs

No updates

D. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies—Rachel Holloway

No updates

Announcements—Montasir Abbas

A. Next CGPSP meeting will be September 21, 2022

B. Other announcements:

The October 5th meeting falls on Yom Kippur as noted by the dean. It will be decided next meeting whether the commission will meet or cancel.

A member suggested putting in the minutes a huge congratulations to Rose on the birth of her new baby!

Adjournment–Montasir Abbas

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33.