

**CGPSP Minutes**  
**September 20, 2023**  
**3:30-5:00 p.m.**  
**Graduate Life Center Room 238/Zoom**

**Present:** Monty Abbas (presiding), Coy Allen, Lisa Becksford, Nancy Bradley, Carolyn Commer, Zai Cook, Jacob Curry, Christina DiMarino, Robert Emmett, Chip Frazier, Charly Hartle, Rachel Holloway, Mary Kasarda, Renee LeClair, Sattar Mansi, Aimée Surprenant, Kwok Tsang, Tyler Walters, Jerald Walz, and Scott Weimer

**Absent with Notice:** Paul Emmons, Mary Kasarda, Rose McGroarty, Tarisa Ross

**Absent:** Joe Eifert, Tom Ewing

**Guests:** Janice Austin, Kevin Edgar, Barbara Hoopes, Bill Huckle, Xiaoyan Ma, Rachel Maizel, Carrie Mayer, April Myers, Emily Tirrell

Monty called the meeting to order at 3:31. A quorum was present.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

Chair Abbas suggested the addition of a new business item: securing an exemption for the 3-person committee for MEng students in nuclear engineering. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda with this addition. The motion carried.

**2. Approval of or Announcement of approval and posting of minutes of September 6, 2023**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 6, 2023 minutes.

**3. New Business**

\*A request was made to waive the requirement for a 3-person committee for MEng students in nuclear engineering to allow for a single person. After discussion, a motion was made and passed.

\*The commission was made aware of the VT Advantage (affordability).

\*A goal of VT is to be a part of the 100 Global Universities. Currently, VT is between 200-300. It was suggested to invite France Bélanger and Sylvester Johnson in to discuss. More information can be found here: <http://udc.vt.edu/spm>.

\*Discussions have started on the campus master plan and space and the impact on student life.

\*Lessons learned in faculty advising: Drs. Edgar and Huckle have a forward-facing presentation that tackles mentoring issues. Engaging faculty regarding surveys, focus groups and time to graduation is part of the advising.

\*Student recruitment and admission for diversity, equity, and inclusion: <http://pullias.usc.edu/GradEd/#projects> was mentioned as an example.

**4. Acceptance and Posting of Committee Reports and/or Minutes**

- **Graduate Student Appeals Committee-** Aimée Surprenant

No current appeals

- **DAP-** Mary Kasarda

Committee member volunteers are still needed. Please email Mary at: [maryk@vt.edu](mailto:maryk@vt.edu)

- **Graduate School Updates-**Aimée Surprenant

\*Discussed refreshing mentoring efforts.

\*Moving forward with VT Advantage (day-long workshop? How do we get there?)

\*Based on the Supreme Court's decision on Affirmative Action regarding race on application, there will be supplementary questions on the application for students to share experiences and successes and how that makes them a strong candidate for a VT program.

\*The dean reported she is continuing to work through student compensation for the minimum requirement for 5% stipend increases.

\*458 or 19.8% received ~5% increase

889 or 38.4% received an increase between 5.1-10%

824 or 35.6% received more than 10% increase in stipend

146 or 6.3% did not get the 5% increase (see attached with a breakdown by program). Of these 90 are in engineering, and there is limited information on why they didn't get the increase.

- **Constituency Updates-**Mony Abbas

- a. Graduate and Professional Student Senate**—Rachel Maizel

- \*Looking into affordable housing

- \*Sending out department climate surveys

- \*Gave a statement of no confidence to the SVCC.

- \*Looking for financial transparency of the past 3 years

- b. Graduate Student Honor System**—Rose McGroarty

- No update

- c. University Library Committee**—Lisa Becksford

- \*Steve Miller will be the chair and a first meeting is scheduled

- d. Faculty Senate**—Carolyn Commer and Jerald Walz

- No update

- e. Undergraduate Student Senate**—N/A

- No update

- f. Board of Visitors**—Emily Tirrell

- No update

- g. AP Faculty Senate**—Rob Emmett

Language revisiting Beyond Boundaries Vision:

[https://virginiatech.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UniversityGovernance/APFS/EZR0DjaKsxVCh-mdDpKqYWMBtAgza0WKH7et\\_nRfvc31ng?e=Xd8klk](https://virginiatech.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/UniversityGovernance/APFS/EZR0DjaKsxVCh-mdDpKqYWMBtAgza0WKH7et_nRfvc31ng?e=Xd8klk)

- **University Council and Commission Updates**—Monty Abbas

**a. University Council** –Monty Abbas

The meeting was about updates/plans for commissions.

**b. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies**—Rachel Holloway

They will focus on policies that are creating barriers for progress on degrees. No relevance for graduate students at the moment.

**5. Adjournment**- Monty Abbas

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:16.