

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

Meeting Minutes – January 15th, 2025

Zoom

Present: Renee LeClair, Lisa Becksford, Stephen Biscotte, Nancy Bradley, Zai Cook, Carolyn Commer, Nathan Lau, Sattar Mansi, Veronica van Montfrans, Kiera Schneiderman, Aimée Surprenant, Jerald Walz

Absent with Notice: Leslie LaConte, Jacque Pelzer, Kwok Tsang

Absent: Aaron Bond, Brian Bush, Kirk Cameron, Paul Emmons, Rose McGroarty, Kaustuv Ray, Kaylee South, Tyler Walters

Guests: Janice Austin, Kevin Edgar, Barbara Hoopes, William Huckle, April Myers, Lori Rose, Lauren Surface

Renee called the meeting to order at 3:33pm. A quorum was met.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was approved and adopted.

2. Approval of or announcement of approval of minutes from December 4th, 2024

Minutes were approved.

3. New Business

- CGPSA 2024-25A: Resolution to Expand CGPSA Membership to Graduate Students from Extended Campuses.
- The Constructive Dialogue Institute is presenting CGPS&P members with the opportunity to participate in asynchronous Perspectives modules on guided discussions/constructive dialogue. They have proposed a schedule:
 - o Date TBD – Suggested deadline to register for Perspectives course
 - o Date TBD – Modules open (you will receive an invitation to create an account via email)
 - o Date TBD – Pework: Complete modules 1-2
 - o Date TBD (CGPSP meeting) - Discussion session (modules 1-2)

4. Committee Reports

• Graduate Student Appeals - Aimée Surprenant

- When students fall below a 3.0 average they are put on probation for one semester and are required to submit a plan to get above the 3.0 threshold. If they do not meet that and are

below 3.0 for a second semester they can be dismissed from their program, or their program can request that we give them more time to get their GPA up.

- In one appeal of dismissal recently, a student fell below a 3.0, but there was a grade change after the probation. The Graduate School is not automatically told about grade changes, so the student was placed on a second semester of probation and therefore dismissed, even though it was technically one semester of probation. Dean Surprenant approved the appeal of dismissal.

- **DAP (Degree and Academic Progress) - Jerald Walz**

- The committee was asked to review several policies and come back with recommendations:
 - DAP was requested to review the current policy on Accelerated Undergraduate/Graduate Degree programs (<https://catalog.vt.edu/graduate/graduate-policies/#admissiontext>) for clarity and consistency, **the committee recommends** that the final bullet point: “Courses must not be taken pass-fail if a graded option is available” be struck out and removed from the policy.
 - DAP was tasked with considering whether our required credential qualification for VT graduate admission can be modified to include students who have earned a master's degree from, for example, a European institution without having been awarded a bachelor's degree along the way. **The committee recommends** the following language be added to the current policy: “For applicants whose initial post-secondary degree is an integrated master's degree or higher (i.e., no baccalaureate degree was awarded), the earned graduate degree is sufficient to satisfy the graduate admission contingency if earned from an institution of higher education accredited by a recognized U.S. institutional accrediting agency or an international equivalent, as verified from official transcripts.”
 - DAP was tasked with considering whether our policy on Retaking Graduate Courses on the Plan of Study should be revised. **The committee recommends** that the current VT Graduate Catalogue section on retaking graduate courses on Plan of Study be revised as follows: “Courses may not be repeated if a P grade is earned; or ~~without permission of the Graduate School~~ if a grade of C- or better is earned **and the student GPA is 3.0 or better.**”
- All three recommendations were moved by the commission and were carried.

- **NTCO Master's Committee – Barbara Hoopes**

- The committee has developed a proposed change to the Plan of Study submission requirements that balances policy and practicality for these programs and strives to meet several objectives. First, the proposed policy provides some much-needed flexibility to NTCO programs, since all programs do not operate in a similar fashion; second, the change seeks to give students assurance and guidance surrounding their degree “contract” with the university; and third, the policy change seeks to ease the end-of-semester processing crunch of the Graduate Admissions and Academic Progress (GAAP) team.

- Committee members have taken this suggestion back to their programs and departments for consideration, and all responses have been positive so far. The next step is to present the proposed change to the Graduate Program Directors meeting on February 12 to gather feedback from a wider audience, after which they will bring the proposed policy change to CGPS&P for consideration and approval.
 - The previously approved policy change regarding ESS scheduling by programs on behalf of NTCO students is still awaiting development resources in order to move forward. In addition, the outcome of recent discussions regarding the tracking of multiple degrees and certificates is awaiting the Banner transition to cloud for final implementation.
 - This committee will be coordinating with the DAP committee and Enrollment Management's Professional Graduate Program (PGP) group to explore any other issues that may benefit from being examined through a policy and procedure lens. With no urgent issues at the moment, the committee is dropping back to a monthly meeting cadence.
- **Graduate School Updates - Aimée Surprenant**
 - The Graduate School is hosting multiple orientations this week: international student orientation, orientation for online students, all graduate student orientation in the GLC, and an orientation in the new Innovation Campus building in Alexandria on Saturday.
 - Dean Surprenant is a member of the Academic Resource Alignment Committee (ARAC), a committee charged by the Provost to look at all academic programs and determine whether resources are being used appropriately and wisely. The committee has been focusing on undergraduate programs and Dean Surprenant wants to help the committee understand what metrics will be useful for evaluating resource alignment at the graduate level.
 - The Graduate School is in admissions season. There are 1,000 more applicants today than this time last year. The majority of those are PhD applications, while master's applications are steady from last year. A great deal of those are international students, which gives a cause for concern pending a new administration that has signaled they will be more restrictive on immigration issues. The Graduate School is advising programs on admission strategies and issues that these students may face in arriving to the United States.

Constituency Updates

- a. Graduate and Professional Student Senate – Kaustuv Ray
None to report.
- b. Graduate Honors System – Rose McGroarty
None to report.
- c. University Libraries – Lisa Becksford
None to report.

d. Faculty Senate – Carolyn Commer

None to report.

e. Undergraduate Student Senate – Kiera Schneiderman

- The USS is going to Richmond next week to speak with legislators.

f. Board of Visitors

None to report.

g. AP Faculty Senate

None to report.

h. Staff Senate – Zai Cook

None to report.

University Council and Commission Updates

a. University Council -

None to report.

b. Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies (CUSP) - Stephen Biscotte for Rachel Holloway

- CUSP finished the semester by tackling the semesters defining majors, minors, certificates and the rules of how these can overlap.

- Rachel Holloway has formally announced her retirement from Virginia Tech, which will happen after this Spring.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:19pm.