

MINUTES

Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies

October 20, 2021, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

238 GLC and Zoom

Present: Montasir Abbas, Coy Allen, Kayla Alward, Nancy Bodenhorn, Amanda Covey, Christina DiMarino, Joe Eifert, Marcia Feuerstein, Barbara Hoopes, Maruf Hoque, Jack Leff, Kaitlyn Malewicz, Hannah Parks, Roan Parrish, Nathaniel Porter, Cliff Shaffer, Aimée Surprenant (ex officio), Hannah Jane Upson, Alina Valop, Scott Weimer, Pengtao Yue.

Absent with notification: Rachel Holloway (ex officio), Chip Frazier, Robert Sumichrast.

Absent without notification: Eleni Laskaridou, Ashley Shew, Richard Vari, Tyler Walters (ex officio), Jordan Wescott.

Visitors and invited guests: Janice Austin, Kevin Edgar, Paul Emmons, Monika Gibson, Bill Huckle, Kevin Kish, April Myers.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Feuerstein at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was verified.

Approval of the Agenda

Dean Surprenant moved that we remove GPSS Resolution 2021-22I for consideration as it does not relate to the CGPS&P charge. The motion was seconded, seven members opposed, and the motion carried. The agenda was approved as amended.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of October 6, 2021 were approved electronically.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee

Dr. Allen reported GCC approved eleven proposals and two certificates at the previous meeting.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee

Dean Surprenant reported no appeals are pending.

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

Dr. Hoopes reported DRSCAP is working on a resolution for the posthumous degree policy. DRSCAP is also reviewing services for graduate students with disabilities as well as how doctoral student milestones may cause barriers for these students. DRSCAP continues to review English proficiency requirements and assessments of proficiency.

Old Business

Dr. Edgar shared an update on the Graduate Education Task Force recommendations.

GPSS Resolution 2021-22A *Resolution to Establish a University Policy Governing Task Forces and Working Groups* was sent to the Senates for comment.

GPSS Resolution 2021-22B *Resolution to Make 12-month Graduate Contracts the Default Contract* was sent to the Senates for comment.

GPSS Resolution 2021-22E *Resolution to Change Constitution to Move Transition of Power to Spring* was sent to the Senates for comment.

New Business

Mr. Leff presented GPSS Resolution 2021-22H: *Resolution to Clarify and Expand Parental Leave Policies, Childcare Services, and Family Insurance Plans* for first reading.

Graduate School Updates

Dean Surprenant shared that she has been meeting with many groups and listening to concerns; primary concerns relate to stipends, cost of housing, and mentoring. Diversity Scholar applications are due by December 11th, please encourage students to apply. The Global Perspectives Program will resume in person in May 2022 with fifteen students participating. The Communicating Science course currently has six sections and an additional online section will be offered in the upcoming spring term. About 65% of Inclusion and Diversity plans have been received, submission deadline is in November; full implementation is in spring 2022. Work-life grants continue to be a great program and Dean Surprenant is working with Advancement about possible donor support to expand the program. Little Hokie Hangout is back to full capacity and the annual report will be available soon. Dean Surprenant is working with Bryan Hanson, Graduate School Ombudsperson, to expand the Disrupting Academic Bullying initiative. Graduate student enrollment has slightly increased over last year; Dean Surprenant will be meeting with individual units to determine capacity for increasing numbers and identifying barriers to enrollment goals. In-person commencement activities are being planned for fall in Blacksburg and the Greater Washington DC Metro area. Dean Surprenant met with department heads in the College of Science and they are working on a template letter of understanding between advisors and students.

Constituency Updates

Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Mr. Leff reported that GPSS has approved fifteen resolutions thus far with three more for consideration at the next meeting. Mr. Leff shared a growing concern that due to the resolutions that GPSS has been considering, GPSS members have been the target of several harassment campaigns.

Graduate Honor System

Ms. Alward reported one current active case.

University Library Committee

No report.

Faculty Senate

Dr. Abbas shared the Faculty Senate is considering the curricular review process and are active in the sponsored programs faculty working group.

Undergraduate Student Senate

Ms. Upson reported that elections are coming up soon.

Board of Visitors Representative

No report.

University Council and Commission Updates

University Council

Dr. Feuerstein reported that the most recent University Council meeting was cancelled.

Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs

Ms. Covey reported that CAPFA had first reading on seven resolutions for A/P Faculty representation on various university committees.

Commission on Student Affairs

No report.

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

No report.

Announcements

Dean Surprenant noted the Office of Strategic Affairs has a survey open and encourages members to provide feedback.

Dr. Feuerstein reminded voting members that they have a responsibility to take back to the constituent group they represent any items of business, including resolutions, for discussion. After discussion with their constituent group, representatives should provide feedback to the commission such as any questions, concerns, etc. Members are reminded that they are not to vote how they personally feel about a resolution because they are a representative of their constituent group and should be voting on behalf of that group.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

Janice E. Austin
On behalf of Aimée Surprenant, Ph.D.
Dean for Graduate Education