

CGPSP Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2020
3:30 – 5:00 pm

Present: Karen DePauw (ex-officio), Richard Vari, Maruf Hoque, Pengtao Yue, Coy Allen, Montasir Abbas, Anurag Mantha, Robert Sumachrist, Nancy Bodenhorn, Madlyn Frisard, Rachel Holloway (ex officio), Marcia Feuerstein, Barbara Hoopes, Ashley Shew, Cliff Shaffer, Tyler Walters (ex officio), Lujean Baab, Emily Burns, Hypatia Alexandria, Gabriela Carillo

Absent with Notification: Paul Emmons, Awad Abdelhalim, Hannah Parks

Absent without Notification: Nathaniel Porter, Sarah Karpanty, Lesa Hanlin

Visitors and Invited Guests: William Huckle, Kevin Edgar, Janice Austin, Cathy Grimes, April Myers, Monika Gibson

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 3:34. A quorum was verified. The committee agreed, due to virtual meeting limitations, to approve motions by asking for those not in favor instead of those in favor. Motions without significant dissent will be approved.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from September 2 were approved as presented.

New member Richard (Rick) Vari, Senior Dean of Academic Affairs for the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, was introduced.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee – Marcia Feuerstein

Marcia reviewed the committee report posted to the SharePoint by Nicole Akers. Courses approved as is include Advanced Practice-Based Research Methods (CAUS), Behavioral Biology of Domesticated Animals (CALs), Insecticide Toxicology (CALs), and Nutrition for Sport and Exercise (CALs). Courses approved pending revisions include International Agriculture and Diplomacy (CAUS), Applied Behavior Analysis for Animal Behaviorists (CALs), Advanced Orbital Mechanics (COE), Critical Research Design (CLAHS), Science, Technology, and Engineering in Policy Seminar (CLAHS), Management Research Practicum (COS). A new certificate, Disaster Resilience and Risk Management, was also approved starting Spring 2021.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee – Karen DePauw

There are no open appeals at this time.

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

After their first meeting of the year, DRSCAP has identified three priorities for the 2021 Academic Year.

1. They will retire Presidential Policy Memorandum 194: Transfer Credit for Master's Degrees. Maruf Hoque later asked for clarity. This Memorandum will be retired as the policy is now inaccurate, and does not match the existing policy put in place by the Graduate School.
2. DRSCAP will formalize the posthumous degree process, set minimum criteria for approval, and provide options for appeal.
3. DRSCAP will revisit the principles of doctoral residency. This effort is being led by CGPSP member Coy Allen. Karen DePauw later added that further discussion is needed regarding residency types, and the current criteria to earn residency.

Anurag Mantha resigned from DRSCAP due to a conflict of interest. Maruf Hoque will replace him as a student representative. DRSCAP will meet alternate Wednesdays during the same time slot as CGPSP.

Old Business

HDFS MS Program Site Deactivation Notice – Karen DePauw

The ~~HDFS Marriage and Family Therapy Master's program~~ Human Development Master's program - Marriage and Family Therapy focus - will no longer be offered ~~as an on-campus option~~ at the Northern Virginia Center. All students currently enrolled in the program have been informed, and there is a teach-out and clinic wind-down plan in place for these students to continue current courses and complete their degrees. No action is needed from CGPSP, but the matter was brought to the commission for awareness.

After a question from Montasir Abbas, Dean DePauw clarified that while the university is generally expanding the Northern Virginia Center, this program is being moved as a result of site-alignment reviews, funding changes, and fewer faculty appointments. The program itself will be retained, but in Blacksburg.

Mental Health for Graduate Students Task Force Report – Karen DePauw

The Task Force Report, gathered last spring, has been shared internally. A copy is available for review in the SharePoint; please do not distribute yet. Dean DePauw would like to make the report public only after action items have been reviewed and can also be released.

Dean DePauw outlined the main groups she would like to share the report with, including the University Mental Health Group, CGPSP, students in Blacksburg, NVC, and Roanoke, and Graduate Program Directors. Members also identified the Faculty Senate, CUSP, Student Affairs, and Active Minds (suggested by Ashley Shew; we are not sure if this group is limited to undergraduate students).

From the report's 20-40 recommendations which include University-level actions, Dean DePauw identified 5 recommendations that the Graduate School can reasonably address over the next year. Many are already in-progress.

1. Develop workshops for GRAs, similar to the existing GTA workshop,
2. Review and revise policies, particularly in regard to credit hours, schedules, leave of absence, and communication of expectations. Any policy changes would be brought to CGPSP/DRSCAP.
3. Review the graduate school website and the catalog for consistency and clear, working links between the two. There are currently some inconsistencies.

4. Embed resources into colleges and campuses. There is already an embedded counselor in the GLC and several colleges (COE, PCOB, VMCVM, and VTCSM). There are plans in place for counselor hiring in NVC.
5. Initiate an awareness campaign and training for both students and faculty.

During discussion, Dean DePauw clarified that ideally there will not be new sub-committees to manage these actions, nor will there be a new task force to implement changes. The recommendations outlined are either already underway or can be folded into the continued work of administration and departments. Dean DePauw encouraged members to continue to review the report, and please give feedback on priorities and implementation.

New Business

Posthumous Degree Request – Department of Mathematics – Karen DePauw

As it stands, the process for approving and awarding posthumous degrees exists, but it requires Dean DePauw to judge based on the information she is given before presenting it to the committee. As previously discussed, this process needs a formalized policy.

The student for this case completed and passed his pre-lim in 2019, which included three chapters of his dissertation, before he passed away in July 2020. While the final document and oral exam were not completed, the student has the full support of the department and his committee. In previous cases, the main (unofficial) criteria was the completion of the pre-lim and significant progress towards completion, which this student has demonstrated.

The committee unanimously approved the posthumous degree, to be awarded in December 2020. The family will be notified and invited to Spring Commencement.

Graduate Honor System Constitution Revisions – Anurag Mantha

A committee was convened this summer to consider amendments, including 2019-20A, which allows for the revocation of a degree as a penalty option. This amendment went before governance and the Board of Visitors, and was approved, but will go again as part of with Article 12 which provides an expanded process for former student cases and the evidence-gathering process for faculty and students. Article 12 helps to replace Article 11 Section 16, which was removed for improvements.

The commission waived the first reading of these amendments, and approved as presented.

Graduate School Update – Karen DePauw

- Commencement for Fall 2020 will be virtual, with a similar model to Spring commencement. There will be two separate ceremonies for Undergraduate and Graduate students. With the increased volume of graduates wishing to walk in Spring commencement, we may consider reserving the stadium.
- Fall 2020 Commencement will also include awards for distinguished graduate alumni. Submission deadline is October 16, 2020. For more information on nomination requirements and to submit a nomination, visit: <https://graduateschool.vt.edu/about/awards/alumni.html>.
- The HBCU and MSI (Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions) Research Summit has been announced for October 29 and 30! Details and event flyers are available here: https://graduateschool.vt.edu/about/diversity/hbcu_research_summit.html. Faculty sessions on the event structure, types of participation, and registration mechanisms are

available on September 22, 25 and 29. Links for these sessions are available on the latest Graduate School Bulletin:

<https://webapps.graduateschool.vt.edu/monthlymemo/2020/09/16/september-16-2020/#more-754>

- As mentioned in the GCC report, there is a new certificate approved in Disaster Resilience and Management (DRM)

Constituency Updates

Graduate Student Assembly – Maruf Hoque

No updates to report at this time; Maruf will report back once initiatives are launched.

Graduate Student Honor System – Anurag Mantha

There are currently two open Honor System cases.

University Library Committee – no representative present

Faculty Senate – Montasir Abbas

Discussion at the last meeting centered largely on faculty concerns related to Covid-19 adaptations. President Sands will be present at their next meeting on September 18 to address concerns.

Student Government Association – no representative selected

Board of Visitors – no representative present

University Council and Commission Updates

University Council – Madlyn Frisard

UC will meet Monday. ~~Internal planning Commission Chairs meeting is s-will take place the~~ Thursday, September 17 ~~before~~.

Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs – no representative selected

Commission on Student Affairs – Maruf Hoque

No updates to report

Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies – Rachel Holloway

CUSP has had one meeting to date. They are planning to develop an Academic Relief policy, begin offering re-enrollment and Leave of Absence options, and continue policy clean-up as needed.

Announcements and Discussion

No announcements for this week. Discussion centered around Virginia Tech's response to Covid-19 and the current barometer on the possibility of pivoting to all-virtual. Dean DePauw clarified that the pivot plans were developed as a SCHEV requirement, and consider the number of isolation spaces, hospitalizations, positive tests, and the availability of testing. Virginia Tech currently has 700 beds available for isolation and quarantine. It was also clarified that the additional isolation and quarantine beds were not a response to growing numbers, but to the need for separate isolation and quarantine

spaces. It was emphasized that they are continuing to monitor all metrics closely, and are comfortable with Virginia Tech's current plans given the current data.

Hypatia Alexandria mentioned measures that other successful institutions are taking, including waste water testing. Rachel Holloway confirmed that we have also begun waste water testing, have multiple means of personal testing, and are actively pursuing the possibility of pool testing (allowing for 5-6 samples to be tested at once) and swab testing.

Hypatia also raised concerns for free testing availability for Northern Virginia students. Marcia Feuerstein noted that students who are residents of the Gallery were given at-home swab tests to mail in as a requirement before setting up their studio space.

Ashley Shew added that while staff cases are reported as low, our numbers are only based on those able to test at Schiffert. Montgomery County numbers may be a better indicator for non-student cases (assuming that you subtract student cases from the total). She also highlighted student experiences, which show that those not hospitalized are not necessarily asymptomatic, and some are unable to participate in virtual classes. Continued conversation will be needed to adapt our frameworks for long-term effects on student health.

Maruf Hoque highlighted the efforts of a VT alum, who has developed a tool to compare university responses to Covid-19. With roughly 50 universities compared, Virginia Tech's response is rated fairly well.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Kehr

On behalf of Karen P. DePauw, Ph.D.

Vice President and Dean of Graduate Studies