

MINUTES

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

October 19, 2016

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate School Conference Room

Present: Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Dr. Sally Paulson (Chair), Dr. Rajesh Bagchi (for Dr. Linda Wallace), Dr. Sudip Bhattacharjee, Dr. Nancy Bodenhorn, Dr. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Charlene Eska, Dr. William Huckle, Mr. Timothy Kinoshita, Ms. Erin Lavender-Stott, Mr. Brett Netto, Dr. Annie Pearce, Ms. Tara Reel, Ms. Kim Robbins, Ms. Libbie Sonnier-Netto, Dr. Robert Sumichrast, Dr. Zhiwu Xie, and Dr. Ying Zhou.

Absent with Notification: Dr. Lujean Baab, Dr. Rachel Holloway (ex officio), Ms. Hannah Parks, and Dr. Scott Salom.

Absent without Notification: Ms. Chelsea Corkins, Dr. Peizhen Lu, and Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio).

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Janice Austin and Dr. Muhammed Hajj.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Paulson at 3:30 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as modified, with new business being conducted following the approval of the minutes.

Approval of the Minutes from October 5, 2016

The minutes were approved as presented.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee

The committee has reviewed several proposals. The minutes were accepted by the Commission.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee

There was no report.

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

Dr. Huckle provided the following report to the Commission:

DRSCAP held its first meeting of the semester on Monday, Oct 10, 2016, to review our known list of tasks for the year and to begin planning how best to address them. Rosemary Blieszner had assembled for our consideration a list of items from Dean DePauw's 9/7/16 memo to CGS&P. Briefly, these include:

- Clarifying the policy on repeating courses — Is the cutoff ‘C’ or ‘C-’ for requirement of Grad School approval of repeating a course on the Plan of Study?
- Ensuring adequacy of oral English language proficiency for international students serving as TAs — issues related to tracking and funding of students who participate in offerings through the Language and Cultural Institute (SPEAK test, ENGL 0014)
- Policy concerning closely related persons serving on grad student advisory committees – Resolution 2014-15K addressing this last year was withdrawn 3/4/15 pending further consideration
- Confirm process for approval and expectations for service on graduate advisory committees
- Process for graduate student review of advisors
- Consideration of a Graduate School requirement for diversity training, similar to the training in research ethics and scholarly integrity implemented 3 years ago

Owing to the short lead time ahead of our first meeting, two members could not attend; consequently, we agreed to resume discussion of priorities and approach at the next meeting (10/24/16) when more of the group could participate.

Constituency Updates

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Netto reported that Ms. Corkins met with the NOVA students and the Roanoke Graduate Student Association to identify their needs. The President and Vice President of the NOVA campus student organization will visit on Nov. 12th. The travel fund program is open for fall semester and will close Saturday. The research fund will open Sunday and will close on October 29th.

Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Ms. Lavender-Stott reported it has been a quiet year. She is actively visiting departments and discussing prevention. Dr. DePauw announced a hearing may occur in the future with a student potentially falsifying data in a dissertation.

University Library Committee

There was no report.

Faculty Senate

Dr. Eska reported the Faculty Senate has waived its review of the resolution presented.

Student Government Association (SGA)

Ms. Robbins reported there is no new business.

University Council and Commission Updates

Dr. Paulson attended the University Council meeting this past Monday. We had two resolutions presented for second readings. Both resolutions were passed. The renaming of a department was also passed following the second reading.

There were no other commission updates.

Graduate School Update

Dr. DePauw reported Ann McNabb is serving as an interim ombudsperson. Dr. DePauw asked if others are interested in the partnership with Shandong University. She will invite Rolf Mueller to CGS&P for a future meeting to discuss VT opportunities with Shandong. She does not yet have an update on health insurance. She is in conversation with graduate program directors about how graduate education will be represented in PIBB, the new budget model. Weighted student credit hours and research are both areas of interest in how the new model evolves. Additional topics from the graduate program directors meeting have been identified for future consideration. Dr. DePauw invited everyone to the graduate student social mixer at the University Club at 5:00 p.m. today.

Old Business

The second reading of the Resolution for the Establishment of a School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech was prefaced with a discussion about the resolution. Following the discussion, the resolution passed with one opposed. Dr. Paulson will share the discussion with the College regarding a concern for efficiency of structure, how three departments will function within the new school, and how student recruitment and growth will occur.

New Business

Dr. Pratt-Clarke provided a summary of the InclusiveVT Strategic Plan Summary. She spent her first 90 days on campus meeting staff and students, asking the questions what is best of VT and what could VT do better? Her sense of community, friendships, and relationships was observed across the board. Relationships that explore across difference is a recurring theme in all of her conversations. Typical of the academy is that people find their safe space. Dr. Pratt-Clarke has also reviewed 20 years of diversity reports. She reviewed for the Commission the definition, goals, and objectives of InclusiveVT. Current activity is investigating how to influence the Pathways curriculum with diversity education and consideration of how diversity is identified as a destination area. Diversity.edu is intended to give students a fundamental understanding of diversity. Implementation was partnered with Student Affairs. At the graduate level, very few graduate program directors participated, however, the intent was for departments to have conversations with graduate students after completion of Diversity.edu. A new initiative, VT Unfinished, is about having those conversations that haven't happened. The BOV will consider endorsing Diversity.edu, Title IX, and alcohol modular training at a future meeting.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Marilynn R. King
on behalf of Karen P. DePauw, Ph.D.
Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education