

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

November 6, 2013

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate School Conference Room

Present: Ms. Shaimaa Abdallah, Mr. Matt Banfield, Mr. Jordon Booker, Dr. Cyril Clark, Ms. Kara Dietz, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. Joe Eifert, Ms. Samantha Erwin, Dr. Saul Halfon, Mr. Mordecai Harvey for Mr. Greg Purdy, Dr. James Jones, Dr. Mayuresh Patil, Dr. Hans Robinson, Dr. Gary Seidel, Dr. Elankumaran Subbiah, Dr. Christopher Zobel

Absent with Notification: Ms. Beth Alley, Dr. Chad Bolding, Ms. Nancy Dudek, Dr. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Bernice Hausman, Dr. Rachel Holloway

Absent without Notification: Dr. Alireza Haghighat, Dr. Tyler Walters

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Janice Austin, Dr. Janet Rankin, Ms. Vanessa Ruccolo, Mr. Ryan Rideau

Dr. Joe Eifert, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of the minutes from October 16, 2013: Approved with minor changes.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC)

Dr. Elankumaran Subbiah reviewed the meeting minutes from October 24, 2013. The minutes were accepted for filing.

Graduate Student Appeals

The committee finished reviewing two out of three appeals and has made its recommendations to Dr. DePauw. They anticipate finishing the last review in the near future. Dr. DePauw will review general trends in academic appeals at a future meeting.

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

Dr. Hans Robinson reported that the committee is making progress on its review of the cooperative education program fee charge. The committee is finalizing a resolution for the commission's review recommending a change to the fee structure. The committee is also working on the continuous enrollment policy.

Constituencies Updates

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Ms. Shaimaa Abdallah reported GSA upcoming events and announcements.

- The "Little Hokies Donate and Swap 2013" is November 13.
- The GSA will receive applications for the Graduate Research Development Program from November 15 – November 22nd. Questions may be sent to gsa@vt.edu. Students are awarded up to \$500 for master's students and up to \$700 for doctoral students.
- The very popular GSA travel fund receives about 200 applications. It awards up to \$500.

Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Mr. Jordon Booker reported:

- Two cases have been resolved.
- An additional case should be resolved by the end of November.
- Two new cases are expected this fall.
- There might be one more training in the fall.

University Library Committee

- Ms. Dietz announced the hiring of a new graphic coordinator and visual literacy instructor.
- The (first floor) multipurpose room will be finished in December.

University Council and Commission Updates

University Council

Dr. Eifert reported that the resolution for a B.S. in nano science, spring 2015, will be on the agenda for the second time at the next meeting.

Commissions: Commission on Outreach and International Affairs, October 17, 2013.

Dr. Subbiah reviewed their recent meeting activities including

- A resolution was presented at the October 7 University Council meeting from the Commission on Faculty Affairs to approve “The Faculty of Health Sciences”.
- The Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies presented a resolution for a first reading on the degree name change from *Forestry and Wildlife* to *Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation* in the College of Natural Resources and Environment.
- Virginia Cooperative Extension Report: There is a new effort initiated-District Program Leadership Team-where new agents will work with mentors in developing educational programs.
- UCIA: Education Abroad Fair took place on the Drillfield with 5,000-6,000 attendees.
- UCIA is working on their three alumni awards.
- The Deans Forum on Global Engagement is March 25 – 27. The request for proposals has gone out.

Graduate School Updates: Dr. Karen DePauw

- The TBMH external review team had a successful visit and their report is being revised and sent to SCHEV today. SHEV is expected to give their final approval at their January meeting. Virginia Tech has opened admissions to the program.
- Don't know the timing yet for the M.A. and Ph.D. in Higher Education. The M.A. will probably be approved sooner; the Ph.D. must have an external review.
- STL has built a new admissions application; it is live. Those on the receiving end will notice no difference. There is an annual cost savings.
- G.M. Southwest update: They used to be our students' healthcare provider. About three years ago some fraudulent activity was uncovered. The CEO resigned and has pled guilty. Most of the insurance underwriters have settled. We have recovered some of the funds, but about \$700,000 is owed to students for the portion they paid. University Legal Counsel is trying to track down the students who were affected. Dr. DePauw will find out if grants who funded part of the health benefits will be reimbursed.
- A student set up a “crowd fund” website which came to the attention of the Office of Research. Maybe DRSCAP can study this at some point. As long as students do not use university resources they can do this as a private citizen. The University of Virginia has a website they've set up for their students who wish to pursue crowd funding. The Virginia Tech Foundation was approached about being involved, accepting donation. They opted out. Kay Heidbreder will give us her legal opinion. Dr. DePauw will keep the commission informed. For now, the commission felt it was too early to be involved in the narrative.

- Accelerated undergraduate / graduate option: Currently this option is only open to Virginia Tech undergraduates. We're going to open this option up to non-Virginia Tech undergraduates. These students will spend their senior year at Virginia Tech. This program is intended for departments that want to have a partnership with another institution in order to recruit outstanding students.

Old Business: None

New Business: BSE Ph.D. Degree Requirements Revision, reducing credit hours from 48 to 36: The minimum for the Graduate School is 27 graded course hours. The commission reviewed the revision and supported the change.

Dr. Jones asked if there was a way to make the ESS process less cumbersome for external committee members. Ms. Austin is aware of some of the problems and is working on processes which would streamline some steps.

Announcements: None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Ms. Nancy Feuerbach, on behalf of

Dr. Karen P. DePauw, Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education