

## **MINUTES**

### **Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies**

**February 17, 2016**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Graduate School Conference Room**

**Present:** Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Dr. Saul Halfon, Dr. Lujean Baab, Mr. Anthony Carno, Mr. Nathan Carter, Mr. Matt Chan, Ms. Kira Dietz, Dr. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Joseph Eska (substitute for Charlene Eska), Dr. Rachel Holloway, Dr. William Huckle, Dr. James Jones, Dr. Sally Paulson, Ms. Tara Reel, Dr. Hans Robinson, Dr. Scott Salom, Mr. Mohammed Seyam, Ms. Maria Stack, and Ms. Sally Wieringa.

**Absent with Notification:** Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dr. Gary Seidel, and Dr. Christopher Zobel.

**Absent without Notification:** Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio).

**Visitors and Invited Guests:** Ms. Janice Austin.

### **Call to Order**

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

### **Approval of the Agenda**

The Commission approved the agenda as presented.

### **Approval of the Minutes from February 3, 2016**

The minutes were approved as amended.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Graduate Curriculum Committee**

The minutes of February 11, 2016 were presented and accepted. Dr. Paulson reported many proposals are in process.

#### **Graduate Student Appeals Committee**

Dr. Jones reported there are no cases.

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

Dr. Edgar reported the members are looking at the advantages and disadvantages of plagiarism software. The committee members have discussed spouses serving on graduate committees and find this to be too general a formulation of the issue and the committee is instead discussing how conflicts of interest might require consideration. The committee is also discussing how conflicts of interest may require consideration through the representation of committee members. Further guidance will be offered for the future. Rosemary is investigating the summer status issue and further discussion will be held.

## **Constituencies Updates**

### Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Chan reported a second general meeting will be held next week and the two factor authentication will be discussed. The VP for Inclusion and Diversity, Dr. Pratt-Clarke, will also speak next week. Mr. Carno reported 160 abstracts are being reviewed for the symposium. Faculty judges are needed for the symposium. There is still no confirmation for the speaker. Additional calls for judges will be made.

### Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Mr. Carter reported there are no case updates. There is consideration for a minor revision to the constitution for a one credit course as recommended by Jennifer Henderson. A few more options for training and learning opportunities are being considered. A change in the title for chief justice will also be considered.

### University Library Committee

Ms. Dietz reported no report.

### Faculty Senate

Dr. Salom reported the Faculty Senate met last night. Dr. Finney presented a proposal for naming new instructors at the university. Dr. DePauw noted this is a category that is beyond instructor; the category of collegiate faculty is to recognize teaching faculty. There will be scholarship requirements and a primary focus on teaching. It most likely will focus on PhD hires focused on teaching.

Ken Eriksson gave a presentation on various models to consider for an Ombuds Office that would include an Ombudsperson for the faculty. This would remove the Committee on Reconciliation. An Ombuds Office would provide an opportunity to have confidential issues resolved.

A letter was prepared by Dr. Robinson regarding the implementation of the Pathways Resolution. The letter is asking what resources will be available to make the plan successful.

### Student Government Association

Mr. Amos was absent and submitted a report to Ms. King prior to the meeting. He reported:

- For the constituency update for the SGA, we have met twice, although we failed to make quorum at yesterday's meeting, resulting in no new business being taken up. A new SGA Chief Justice has been selected and will be confirmed at next week's meeting.
- Commission Update for the Energy & Sustainability Commission: The Green RFP subcommittee met on Friday, February 12th, to review the 18 Category 1 proposals. The subcommittee ranked the 18 proposals and sent them forward to the entire E&S Commission to review and vote. This will take place at the next E&S meeting on Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **University Council and Commission Updates**

Dr. Halfon reported the University Council meeting on Monday was cancelled since there was no business.

The Commission of Research established a task force previously regarding faculty workload and what is needed for greater faculty effectiveness. Dr. DePauw will share a copy of the report for discussion at the next meeting. She noted there are references to graduate research assistants. Dr. DePauw is reaching out to Dr. Mayer and offering help with this discussion.

### **Graduate School Update**

Dr. DePauw reported the Graduate Program Directors Workshop is next Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 11:30 am. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, there is a graduate student and mentor event that is jointly sponsored by the Graduate School and the University Club. This is an effort of the University Club to be more active with the University. The Commission members are welcome to attend. Graduate Education Week is March 21-25, 2016. The graduate student appreciation luncheon will be held on Monday, March 21<sup>st</sup>. The full agenda of events will be distributed soon. Dr. DePauw noted she is working within the university community to clarify the health fees, e.g., the Schiffert fee, and insurance available through the summer terms. The bus, McComas rec sports, and library services are not available. A discussion pursued to identify the barriers as to why students do not have access in the summer. Dr. DePauw noted that services are often defined by enrollment and it would be helpful to connect services to student status rather than summer enrollment. Dr. DePauw reminded everyone that when a department removes a student from an assistantship, the student should have been given feedback about performance, what needs to be changed, and a timeline for improving performance prior to the termination of the assistantship. A conversation about assistantship termination will be discussed at the Program Directors' Meeting. Documentation needs to support the termination and this is especially significant should the case move to an appeal status. Dr. DePauw noted that this is standard HR practice.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

Student Perception of Teaching (SPOT), formerly SPOI, the online teaching evaluation process ranges from 18-85% response rate and the rate of participation dropped when the process went online. The lab GTA's do not have access unless the instructor of record provides information to the GTA. Dr. Culver is working toward a more holistic evaluation that will separate course material and delivery. Inconsistency and lack of transparency are evident in the process. Mr. Carter asked if mandatory participation should be considered, with grades being withheld for lack of response. The timing of the request to participate also needs consideration. Dr. Holloway noted the importance of focusing on learning outcomes. Mid-term evaluation can be more meaningful if the student experiences change as a result of feedback. The current technology is not effective. New platforms are being considered. A separate assessment is needed for the GTA's. Another question is whether there needs to be a different evaluation for graduate courses vs. undergraduate courses. Dr. Eska commented that multiple requests to students for survey completion can cause a problem since students can confuse the course identified for evaluation. Evaluation could occur across the entire semester, rather than at the end of the semester. Dr. Culver will be invited to a future CGS&P meeting to further explore this topic.

DRSCAP is considering the need for plagiarism software. Dr. Halfon noted it is unlikely that a recommendation will be forthcoming from CGS&P. Dr. Blieszner did a survey of the graduate directors that was then forwarded to associate deans and others. A mixed response has been noted in response to the survey and the need for plagiarism software. Plagiarism software is expensive and the university would need to consider making a significant investment. Sponsorship and ownership would also need to be negotiated. Software could support undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty. Use of the

software can improve the learning curve for the student. Both the undergraduate and graduate student honor systems would need to consider management of offenses. This is the beginning of a conversation to consider the need for this software.

**Announcements**

Dr. Huckle asked a question about IGEP as it relates to the destination areas and the survey. Dr. DePauw noted that up to five faculty members will be recommended from the colleges to represent the destination areas at the workshops and likely IGEP faculty will be represented.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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