

MINUTES

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

April 6, 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. Charlene Eska, Dr. William Huckle, Dr. James Jones, Ms. Tara Reel, Ms. Kim Robbins, Dr. Hans Robinson, Dr. Gary Seidel, Mr. Mohammed Seyam, Ms. Maria Stack, Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio), and Dr. Christopher Zobel.

Absent with Notification: Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dr. Rachel Holloway, Dr. Sally Paulson, Dr. Scott Salom, and Ms. Sally Wieringa.

Absent without Notification: None.

Visitors and Invited Guests: Ms. Janice Austin, Dr. Ivica Ico Bukvic, Dr. Scott McCrickard, Ms. Martina Svyantek, Mr. Kyriakos Tsoukalas, and Dr. Lisa McNair.

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 March 16, 2016

The minutes were approved as amended.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee

The minutes of March 24, 2016 were presented and accepted.

Graduate Student Appeals Committee

Time was not available for a report from the committee; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

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

Dr. Zobel reported DRSCAP met with Dean DePauw on the summer status issue and the issue of defining an alternate category of full-time status for students who have completed their preliminary exams. Her office will be working on both of these issues moving forward.

DRSCAP is currently discussing several additional items, including the number of times that one should be able to repeat certain courses or designations, such as SSDE; the possibility of offering joint theses

(more than one individual contributing to a single thesis, with each participant receiving their own degree); and issues associated with cross-listing courses across departments. Additional information is still being gathered in order to make appropriate recommendations.

Constituencies Updates

Faculty Senate

Time was not available for a report from the Faculty Senate; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Chan reported the GSA Constitution will be considered for final approval this Thursday at the Commission on Student Affairs. Thanks to all CGS&P members who have provided feedback.

The GSA will commence with the election of the slate of Executive Board officers for 2016-17 on April 28th. Five positions are available in this election (six if the constitutional amendment is approved); two seats are contested. The remaining positions each have one graduate student running.

President Sands and Provost Rikakis are still committed to attending the final GSA General Assembly meeting on April 28th. Among other things, we hope to hear how the Destination Areas would interface with graduate education and students.

Last but not least, the GSA is happy to announce that the Board of Visitors have selected Tara Reel, current GSA Vice President, as the 2016-17 graduate student representative to the Board.

Mr. Carno reported that the 32nd Annual Research Symposium & Exposition was held on March 23rd. Over 150 graduate students presented in a variety of formats, with over 50 faculty and staff members helping to judge the participants. Dr. Amy Pruden offered remarks on the importance of interdisciplinary scholarship prior to our keynote speaker, Mr. Abhi Nemani. Dean Karen DePauw also offered remarks on the importance of the Research Symposium & Expo after the keynote speaker. The GSA wishes to thank Dr. Pruden, Dean DePauw, and the faculty and staff judges for their time and efforts.

The spring Graduate Research Development Program (GRDP) application process was open from March 21st to April 1st. Awards will be announced in the beginning of May.

The spring Travel Fund Program (TFP) application process was open from March 14th to April 3rd. Awards will be announced in 5 – 7 weeks.

The Spring Beer and Wine Social will be held this Friday, April 8th, from 5 – 9 pm at the University Club. This event provides graduate students with the opportunity to interact with other students and faculty in an informal environment. The cost is \$10 for drinks and food (\$5 for food only).

Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Time was not available for a report from the GHS; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

Student Government Association

Time was not available for a report from the SGA; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

University Library Committee

Time was not available for a report from the committee; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

University Council and Commission Updates

Time was not available for a report from the committee; a report will be heard at the next meeting.

Graduate School Update

Dr. DePauw reported that the Master and Doctor of Education in Counselor Education Programs are ending in Falls Church. The Master of Public and International Affairs Program in Blacksburg is ending. The programs have not been terminated in other locations. Dr. DePauw also shared the proposal she has shared with the Provost regarding summer status. This is being taken forward to the Budget Office. Two options are being considered: 1) students having access to all services when enrolled in the prior term and following term; and, 2) graduate students on assistantship would need to register for one credit (paid by the PI) and be on assistantship in the summer (not wage). The second option does not address access to services for those students not on assistantship. A candidate status allowing fulltime enrollment, registering for three credits, would be established for graduate students working on research with no more than twelve hours remaining. This would benefit international students.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

A business process question was asked regarding the distribution of the iPhD proposals to the Commission members. In the future, the proposals will be distributed to the Commission members two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Dr. DePauw reminded everyone that the iPhD is a front-loaded degree that requires the candidate to propose a plan of study and a prelim structure prior to admission into the iPhD program. The candidate will be admitted into the iPhD after the Commission approves the proposal.

Dr. Jones commented on the importance of a new body of knowledge being available to the academy as an outcome of the iPhD program. Dr. Zobel noted the iPhD proposal needs to communicate to a general audience as part of the introduction, with jargon more usable in the later development of the proposal. Dr. DePauw encouraged a twenty-page limit to the proposal in the future. Dr. DePauw stated the proposals will be made public on the web.

Dr. Seidel suggested the student should form a committee which represents 2 or more colleges (and therefore departments), with the committee members providing discipline expertise. As such, the student should prepare a mapping of the courses they would have to take if they did the PhD in what would be their home department (e.g. their chair's department), or if they did their PhD in one of their committee member's departments (most relevant or all), and then compare this to what their proposed course would be. This way it is clear that their course work for their proposed PhD would be too divergent from any of the established programs they are drawing from.

Dr. Seidel urged that care be taken in assuring the proposal 1) is using faculty expertise and not trying to create a degree that isn't offered and can't be supported. (He noted it should be more like destination areas

than proposing a new PhD program); and 2) is not representative of an engineering student doing a sociology PhD in engineering. (For example, he asked why a student wouldn't go to Sociology and complete a PhD in engineering as a society/learning environment.) Dr. Seidel urged careful consideration in what can be covered by collaboration (i.e. it's mostly A with a little B) vs. what is interdisciplinary (as in 50/50 A/B). This begs the question as to whether or not an iPhD should inherently be co-advised.

Dr. DePauw will share the process comments with Dr. Pruden for improved communication and coordination with future students.

An iPhD proposal was presented by Martina Svyantek centering on disability and higher education. Dr. Lisa McNair, committee chair, was also present. Ms. Svyantek described her plan of study and expectations for her program. It was noted her courses are not represented across the Colleges, however, the committee membership does represent other Colleges. It was recommended that she develop a hypothesis statement early in the proposal to support her plan. She may need to include classes she has already completed as part of the curriculum. It was also recommended that she reduce jargon in the proposal to support greater readership comprehension. Ms. Svyantek will provide a revision of the proposal for the Commission's consideration.

An iPhD proposal was presented by Kyriakos Tsoukalas centering on human-centered design. Dr. Ivica Ico Bukvic, committee chair, and Dr. Scott McCrickard, co-chair, were also present. Mr. Tsoukalas was advised to reduce jargon in the proposal to reach a larger readership and create greater understanding. Mr. Tsoukalas will provide a revision of the proposal.

The Untaught Course List was approved by the Commission with awareness of some modifications due to administrative needs.

Dr. Huckle presented a question on representation of the student's graduate committee. Specifically, there is a concern that faculty that are not tenure-track should be permitted to serve on committees, including research and clinical faculty and professors of practice. Current policy limits only one-third of the committee not be tenure track. Dr. DePauw noted a designation of graduate faculty would be helpful. A recommendation was made to move this to DRSCAP for further discussion and to discuss this further within the Colleges.

Announcements

The Library is looking for reference desk students and graduate assistants. Applications are due April 15th. Bring Your Kids to School Day is April 15th. Everyone is welcome to participate.

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