

## **MINUTES**

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

**September 2, 2015**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Graduate School Conference Room**

**Present:** Dr. Karen DePauw (ex officio), Dr. Saul Halfon, Mr. Nathan Carter, Mr. Matt Chan, Ms. Chelsea Corkins, Ms. Kira Dietz, Ms. Kay Dunkley, Dr. Kevin Edgar, Dr. Charlene Eska, Dr. Sally Paulson, Ms. Tara Reel, Dr. Hans Robinson, Dr. Gary Seidel, Mr. Mohammed Seyam, Ms. Maria Stack, Ms. Dawn Stoneking, Dr. Tyler Walters (ex officio), and Dr. Christopher Zobel,

**Absent with Notification:** Dr. James Jones, and Dr. Scott Salom.

**Absent without Notification:** Dr. Cyril Clarke, Dr. Ellen Plummer (ex officio), and Ms. Sally Wieringa,

**Visitors and Invited Guests:** Ms. Venice Adams, Ms. Ayesah Alazmi, Ms. Janice Austin, Dr. Rosemary Blieszner, Ms. Cathy Grimes, Dr. Muhammed Hajj, and Monique McKay.

### **Call to Order**

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

Saul extended a welcome to everyone and invited members and guests to introduce themselves. He stressed the significance of the good work this committee does and we could anticipate a busy agenda for the upcoming year.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

The Commission approved the agenda.

### **Approval of the Minutes from April 15, 2015**

The minutes were approved with corrections.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Graduate Curriculum Committee**

The minutes of August 27, 2015 were presented and accepted.

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

Dr. Seidel reported that the committee reviewed three cases over the summer. All cases were completed prior to the start of the fall semester.

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

DRSCAP did not meet over the summer. Dr. Robinson reviewed the responsibilities of the committee, highlighting proposal review prior to full submission to the Commission. Dr. Zobel has agreed to serve again. Ms. Stoneking also volunteered to serve. Dr. Edgar volunteered to serve. Mr. Chan will serve and

Ms. Stack will be asked to serve. Dr. Robinson will serve as a consultant as needed. The chair is undecided and will be determined at the next meeting.

## **Constituencies Updates**

### Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)

Mr. Chan, President, provided a new GSA guide to familiarize constituents about GSA events and activities. The welcome back barbecue was a success and 920+ students attended. The ice cream social was held last week. Ms. Corkins was congratulated by Mr. Chan with her success in managing these events. The first GSA meeting will be Sept 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Chan encouraged everyone to assist in alerting departments of the availability of GSA staff to meet with students and departmental staff. Mr. Chan will regularly keep the membership updated as events occur.

### Graduate Honor System (GHS)

Mr. Carter, Chair, reported that he has presented to 16 departments regarding the ethics requirement. He is also requesting faculty panelists to assist with the GHS. He will be assisting in the training of facilitators for the new Vet-Med Honor Code and will provide members to assist with the Vet-Med hearings.

### University Library Committee

The University Library Committee has not yet met and meetings will be scheduled soon. The new chair of the committee is Lynn Resler, College of Natural Resources and Environment.

## **University Council and Commission Updates**

The University Council has not yet met; no other Commissions have met.

## **Graduate School Update**

Dr. DePauw advised every one of the letter that is available and summarizes the updates and progress of last year's activities. Dr. DePauw presented her objectives for 2015-2016 for CGS&P. She reminded everyone of the many types of degrees that are offered at VT. The trends have only changed slightly and final data will not be available until census. She highlighted the growing fulltime population in NVR. Dr. Seidel asked if the growth in Northern Virginia Region is primarily in the Pamplin College of Business. Dr. DePauw responded that there is a growth spread among many programs. She noted that graduate degree are not offered in Arlington, with the exception of a few executive part-time programs. She reported on various slices of enrollment data and the variances over the last ten years. Specific data is available in the presentation materials recorded on Scholar. Admissions have fallen behind the growth in graduation rates, consequently, total enrollment has fallen. This appears to be reversing in the projected Fall '15 enrollment data. Dr. Edgar asked if we can evaluate the rigor and quality of the student. Dr. DePauw responded that we are expanding the tracking of students based on future holistic admissions processes. Dr. DePauw will not provide data on average GRE scores. A new data assessment staff member has been hired at the Graduate School; this will enhance our ability to track more data. A question was asked by Dr. Robinson regarding the future growth of enrollment at VT. Dr. DePauw responded that Dr. Rikakis will present his plans for the future at the first Academic Council meeting. The compensation package for health insurance continues to increase to meet the increased cost. Dr. DePauw reminded everyone of the ten-year anniversary of the Graduate Life Center on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Work Life Grant was developed to primarily assist with students needing maternity leave. She anticipates the

program will grow to assist with medical crises. Social media continues to be well-supported. The Graduate School website is under redesign, as well as the e-catalog. Childcare initiatives continue to expand and the current half-time position has been increased to an 80% position. Dr. DePauw reviewed how she envisions CGS&P serving in an advisory capacity for the Graduate School. She also presented a list of potential dialogs with the Commission in the upcoming year. Continuous enrollment active and inactive statuses were reviewed as a result of last year's resolutions.

### **Old Business**

Old business, including topics related to continuous enrollment resolutions and active and inactive status were reviewed.

### **New Business**

New business for consideration included appointing the Appeals Committee members. Dr. Jones, a previous member will be asked to serve as chair. Dr. Eska offered to serve. Commission members will review the committee composition at the next meeting. Ms. Corkins volunteered. Ms. Weiringa will also be invited to serve.

Dr. Robinson announced governance reform is a topic of interest for Faculty Senate this year. A proposal will be coming forward to coordinate actions on all Commission resolutions to keep the Faculty Senate abreast of proposed actions.

Dr. DePauw announced that CGS&P will receive regular InclusiveVT updates and regular updates about the Honors System.

De DePauw is asking the commission to consider how posthumous degrees should be evaluated and awarded. Dr. DePauw is asking the committee to consider parameters to define how this will be evaluated for the future. A discussion should ensue to consider how the student's academic progress would influence consideration of a posthumous degree. Further discussion on this topic will occur at the next Commission meeting.

Dr. Halfon encouraged everyone to bring new agenda items to him as the Commission's work progresses.

### **Announcements**

Mr. Chan announced that the Graduate and Professional School Fair will be held on September 21<sup>st</sup> and encouraged faculty to assist in promoting the fair.

**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