

Minutes
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies
January 16, 2002
206 Sandy Hall

Present: Dr. Stephen Boyle, Dr. Greg Brown, Dr. David de Wolf, Dr. Klaus Elgert, Dr. Peter Graham, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Rakesh Kapania, Mr. Jay Khare, Dr. Joseph Merola, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. John Ney, Dr. Joseph Scarpaci, Mr. Jan van Aardt

Absent with Notification: Dr. Ruth Alscher, Dr. Roger Avery, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Kent Murrmann, Ms. Mary Schaeffer, Ms. Tracey Slotta, Ms. Angela Webb

Absent without Notice: Mr. Edward Boone, Ms. Theresa Kanter, Dr. David M. Moore, Ms. Miya Simpson, Mr. Greg Touchton

Conference Call In: Ms. Patti Foutz

Invited Guests: Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Nancy Feuerbach, Dr. Elaine Scott

Dr. Stephen Boyle, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Announcements: Dr. Boyle reported that at a meeting of commission chairs President Steger and Provost McNamee indicated that there is strong support at the legislative level for higher education. Deans of the various colleges will be asked to develop ways to meet budget cuts, rather than respond to mandates handed down from the state. Dr. Boyle strongly encouraged members of the commission to forward specific cost-cutting ideas to Provost McNamee.

Dr. Boyle reminded the commission that there was a need to revisit the charges to the commission and investigate more efficient way of carrying out the charges. Other commissions are investigating ways to streamline the meeting process.

Dr. Merola noted that the phrase used by the governor in his address , "Preschool through graduate school" indicates that the governor views graduate education as an important component of education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. At the same time, Dr. Merola noted that the governor indicated he would increase the level of cuts beyond the funding cuts of the previous administration. Dr. Merola said that the provost would be sharing a plan with the deans in the following week.

Approval of the agenda: The agenda was approved.

Approval of minutes from December 5, 2001: The minutes were approved.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee: Mr. Marvin Foushee presented the report from the December 13 GCC meeting. He reported that seven course items were considered, and that the majority of these courses were undergraduate courses being considered for graduate credit. Three were approved as submitted. Four were approved with minor corrections. The report was approved by the commission.

Graduate Student Appeals (GSR): There were no active appeals reported.

Graduate Student Relations: Mr. Jay Khare reported that there was no pending business as the committee has not met since last semester.

DRSCAP: Dr. Klaus Elgert reported that the committee was in the process of soliciting information about certification and graduate school evaluation policy from Virginia Tech colleges and soliciting information externally from the top thirty institutions. Dr. Elgert is cataloging the responses as they are returned to him.

Dr. Elgert also reported that the committee members felt that the decision process in the awarding of posthumous degrees should be left to the discretion of the dean of the graduate school with input from the graduate committee and the department head/chair. This could be done on a case-by-case basis since there were so few cases per year. Should the dean require the commission's input, he could present the case to those members as well. The report of the DRSCAP committee was approved.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Mr. van Aardt said there had not been a meeting since the last meeting of the commission, so he had no formal report to present. He said, however, that two issues had been brought to his attention since the last GSA meeting: (1) graduate student health insurance and (2) a graduate student survey covering a broad range of items including computer resources and health insurance. The survey will probably be distributed within the next month, and Mr. van Aardt will report on the results. Dr. Merola noted that, at this time, students with graduate assistantships are not considered state employees. Therefore, students are not eligible for consideration under the same health insurance policy umbrella as are state employees. Negotiations for health insurance coverage for undergraduate and graduate students are handled through the Office of Risk Management. Dr. Merola stated he would keep graduate students informed as to how to give their input to that office.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Mr. Jay Khare reported that there are five current cases. One of the investigators has been called to active duty and is stationed in Washington, D.C. This investigator will give a series of talks at the Northern Virginia Center. Dr. Merola recommended that the GHS develop a presentation which could be incorporated into the graduate student seminars and video recorded so that the presentation would be available on the web via streaming video. There would be a possibility that the attendance of a seminar or the viewing of this video could be made a check-off requirement for all students.

University Library Committee: Dr. Eileen Hitchingham reported that the committee met during exam week. The committee had asked about the reporting structure of the university library committee. Dr. Hitchingham explained that the committee reported to CGS&P, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, as well as the Commission on Research in that this commission is interested in library resources. Dr. Hitchingham also presented to the library committee a reprise of a presentation that she was asked to do for the University Budget and Planning Committee which explained where the library stood when compared to the top thirty institutions. Dr. Hitchingham reported that the library's operating budget has remained the same since 1995-1996.

Biomedical Engineering & Sciences Proposal: Dr. Elaine Scott gave a brief overview of her presentation to the commission at the meeting on December 5, 2001. Following the overview, Dr. Scott invited questions and discussion. Questions concerning the structure, logistics and resources were answered. Dr. Scott noted that distance learning would be incorporated into the teaching structure of the program. It is anticipated that there will be some travel between Wake Forrest and Virginia Tech for faculty and students participating in the joint degree program. Dr. Hitchingham discussed licensing issues that could occur. This issue was addressed at a prior meeting between Virginia Tech and Wake Forrest library faculty. Dr. Scott asked that faculty send curriculum requests directly to her. The motion to approve the

establishment of the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest University School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences was passed.

New Business:

Resource Allocation: Dr. de Wolf requested that the issue of resource allocation be tabled in order to integrate the new budget information into the existing language of his recommendation.

Graduate Student Parking: Tabled until February 6 meeting.

Old Business: Dr. Merola reported that the search committee for the dean of the graduate school had been narrowed to eight candidates in December. Each candidate participated in a half-hour video taping with predetermined questions. The committee is meeting to review the videos and information packets on each of the candidates. Finalists will be invited to the campus for interviews.

Dr. Boyle asked for ideas on how the commission could function more efficiently. The commission decided to circulate the committee reports electronically. Unless there was an objection or question raised by a commission member, the report would be considered accepted by the commission. Dr. Merola encouraged the commission to use the meeting time for substantive discussions that would lead to a better graduate program. Dr. Boyle emphasized that the charges of the commission needed to be revisited. It was decided to send electronically all reports to Ms. Feuerbach prior to the next meeting. Ms. Feuerbach will distribute the reports to the commission prior to the scheduled meeting. In addition, the next meeting will begin at 4:00 PM rather than 3:30 PM.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Joseph S. Merola, Acting Dean of the Graduate School