

Minutes
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies
March 20, 2002
206 Sandy Hall

Present: Ms. Kim Aylward, Dr. Stephen Boyle, Dr. David de Wolf, Dr. Klaus Elgert, Dr. Peter Graham, Rakesh Kapania, Mr. Jay Khare, Dr. Joseph Merola, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. John Ney, Ms. Miya Simpson, Tracey Slotta

Absent with Notification: Dr. Ruth Alscher, Mr. Edward Boone, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Ms. Theresa Kanter, Dr. Kent Murrmann, Dr. Joseph Scarpaci, Ms. Mary Schaeffer, Mr. Jan van Aardt, Ms. Angela Webb

Absent without Notice: Dr. Greg Brown, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. David M. Moore

Conference Call In: Ms. Patti Foutz

Invited Guests: Dr. Roger Avery, Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Nancy Feuerbach

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

Announcements: Dr. Joseph Merola reminded the commission that April 1st through 5th was Graduate Student Appreciation Week. The annual GSA Research Symposium is on April 2nd, and Harriet Fulbright of the Fulbright Foundation will be a featured speaker that evening. Selected graduate students will be recognized that week with various awards.

Dr. Merola said that in addition to budget concerns there is also discussion about reorganization. He encouraged the commission to attend one of the Provost's Town Meetings and give the Provost feedback. At the recent Board of Visitors meeting, the board indicated they were pleased that Virginia Tech was taking this opportunity to look at restructuring the university.

Dr. Boyle said that Dr. McNamee, Provost, was attending the CGS&P meeting scheduled for April 17th.

Approval of the agenda: Dr. David de Wolf questioned the order of the agenda. He will investigate the parliamentary procedure and report back to the commission.

Approval of minutes from February 20, 2002: Approved.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee: reported electronically prior to meeting.

Graduate Student Appeals: no report.

Graduate Student Relations: no report.

DRSCAP: Dr. Elgert is still accumulating data on internal and external review for the DRSCAP committee.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): submitted electronically.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): submitted electronically, Mr. Jay Khare reviewed the activities and the handout "Graduate Honor System for the Past Two Years." In particular, Mr. Khare noted that there were few cases involving online/electronic violations. Mr. Khare stated that online offenses seemed to occur more frequently at the undergraduate level. Some discussion ensued comparing the University of Virginia's honor code system with Virginia Tech's system. Mr. Khare suggested that Virginia Tech's system may allow more opportunities for remediation, as well as encourage the reporting of violations. Dr. Merola commended the investigators who serve the Virginia Tech honor system for the superb work they do in deliberating the issues involved in each case. Mr. Khare reminded the commission that an investigator who has been called to active military duty, and is stationed near the Northern Virginia Center (NVC), has agreed to present a number of talks to educate NVC students.

University Library Committee: no report

Old Business: none

New Business: The commission discussed the posthumous awarding of a Doctor of Education, Leadership and Policy Studies degree to Ms. Gaye Charlene Chappell, per the request of M. David Alexander, Department Chair. Dr. Merola reiterated that he would like input from the commission on a case-by-case basis, as had been previously decided. Dr. Rakesh Kapania suggested that the commission obtain input from the student committee members to assist in the evaluation of each case. Dr. Merola stated he will confirm with the committee that they are in agreement in the awarding of this degree. Dr. Ney stated that, in this instance, he was comfortable with Dr. Merola's course of action. The commission voted to seek committee input and approval for future requests.

Dr. Rakesh Kapania asked, on behalf of Dr. Martha McCaughey, about the status of the Women's Studies Graduate Certificate proposal. Dr. Merola stated he has had discussions with Dr. McCaughey, and he noted that this inquiry ties into the issues being currently investigated by DRSCAP. Dr. Merola will clarify (with Dr. McCaughey) that this certificate has been approved by the curriculum committee in the College of Arts and Sciences. Until this is ascertained, its presentation to the commission is premature.

Dr. Kapania asked if the university was considering a graduate student housing option. Dr. Merola stated that a survey was conducted last year. So far, the numbers of students required to justify married student housing was quite small. Complete results of the survey may be available by the end of the semester. Short-term housing for (primarily) international students, while they look for permanent housing, does seem to be a more immediate need. When the new alumni center is created, the Donaldson Brown Center may be an option for short-term housing for students and visiting scholars.

Ms. Margaret Merrill asked if the issue of health care was still on the table. Dr. Merola assured her it was an ongoing discussion. Next year the contract with the health insurance company is up for renewal. A group, including graduate students, will be put together by Mr. Fred Weaver, Director of Risk Management, to assist in the evaluation of the proposals and the selection of a carrier. The GSA is conducting an open forum on graduate student health insurance issues next week.

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

Respectfully submitted:

Joseph S. Merola, Acting Dean of the Graduate School