

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

April 16, 2003

3:30 — 4:30 PM

206 Sandy Hall

Present: Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. David de Wolf, Dr. Klaus Elgert, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Rakesh Kapania, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. John Ney, Ms. Miya Simpson, Dr. Brenda Winkel

Absent with Notification: Dr. Roger Avery, Dr. Stephen Boyle, Dr. Ruth Grene, Mr. Murali Krishnan Gunasekaran, Ms. Megan Madden, Dr. Kent Murrmann, Dr. Mehdi Setareh, Ms. Mary Schaeffer

Absent without Notice: Mr. Nick Amico, Mr. Brian Johnson, Dr. David Moore, Mr. Anthony Scardina

Invited Guests: Ms. Nancy Feuerbach, Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Angela Webb

Conference Call In: Ms. Laura Fornash

Dr. Rakesh Kapania called the meeting to order.

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from April 2, 2003: Approved with two amendments; on page three, under Announcements change (1) Familiarize students the application to Familiarize students with the graduate application and (2) Commission members to encourage to Commission members encourage

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee: Mr. Marvin Foushee reviewed the revised minutes from February 27 and the minutes from April 10. The commission voted to approve the minutes.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: Ms. Margaret Merrill reported that she would be working with Ms. Laura Fornash and Ms. Mary Shaeffer to prepare a draft document, which would consolidate the information, found to-date on graduate student right and responsibilities. This document will be submitted for review to the subcommittee graduate student members. A revised document will be prepared which incorporates the revisions and edits of the graduate students.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): No report.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): No report.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee: Dr. Eileen Hitchingham reported that the Library Committee had not met. She reported that the next item on the agenda would be a discussion of the potential for the library instruction for students.

Dr. Nancy H. Seamans, Director of Instruction and Outreach, University Libraries

Dr. Seamans discussed incorporating library instruction into the graduate student experience, and asked the commission to consider a number of questions, including:

- who owns this problem?
- what are the necessary skills for graduate students?
- should a library course be required, or integrated into existing courses?
- are graduate student skills similar to senior undergraduate level skills?

Dr. Seamans described the library's experience with first year students and the process for determining the foundation skills—a process that included input from faculty. The library recognizes that the process for graduate students must be different; each college has its own librarian and its own unique needs. A draft has been prepared which lists graduate level skills.

Dr. Seamans asked the commission to consider the goal of giving graduate students the opportunity to acquire information skills—a broader goal than just acquiring library skills. She suggested that the commission organize a working group that could work with the library and interested members of the university community to address graduate student instruction. This group could then develop a recommendation to be presented to University Council.

Dr. Seamans described some instruction models that have been suggested and/or used. Dr. Kapania supported the idea of a pre-test, which could identify students with deficient skill sets. Dr. Winkel encouraged a discipline specific workshop tailored to graduate students and offered early in their career. Dr. Hitchingham asked the commission to consider making library instruction a part of a course requirement. Dr. Ney commented that the topic of library instruction fits perfectly into student orientation. Ms. Merrill noted that many graduate students still needed more of a one-on-one approach. Ms. Fornash stated that library instruction was a huge issue for extended campuses. Dr. Seamans replied that University Libraries does try to send staff to extended campuses when there is a request.

The commission asked Ms. Merrill to identify people who might be interested, beginning fall 2003, in serving on a committee to study this issue. It was suggested that members of the Commission on Research and the Library Committee be asked to serve on the committee. Dr. Kapania thanked Dr. Seamans for her presentation to the commission.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

- Dr. DePauw presented a petition from Dr. J. M. Tanko, Chair of the Graduate Education Committee, Chemistry Department. The Chemistry Department petitioned CGS&P for permission to reduce the minimum required graded course credits for the Ph.D. in chemistry at Virginia Tech to 12 hours. Assuming the request is approved, the department would like to make it retroactive for students who are currently enrolled in the program. Dr. Elgert stated it was DRSCAP's intent to give departments this kind of flexibility. The commission voted to approve the petition from the Chemistry Department.

Dr. DePauw asked DRSCAP to revisit the residency requirements and course credits issue in the fall.
- Dr. DePauw asked the commission to review the revised Graduate Assistantship Agreement. Personnel Services and the university legal counsel have reviewed the agreement. The commission voted to approve the revised agreement.

- Dr. DePauw notified the commission that the Race & Policy Institute would like to propose a Graduate Certificate program. The certificate proposal will need to go through the approval process.

Announcements:

Dr. Rakesh Kapania announced that the Faculty Senate was drafting a proposal dealing with employee privacy and the use of computers. Dr. Kapania distributed a draft of the proposal and asked for comments. The proposal has been reviewed by university legal council as well as by Dr. Robert O'Neil, a constitutional attorney.

There is an additional CGS&P meeting scheduled for May 7, 3:30 — 4:30 PM.

Dr. DePauw announced that the first Graduate Alumni Achievement Award will be presented at the commencement ceremony to Dr. Robert Richardson. Dr. Richardson is a Nobel Prize recipient and earned a masters degree in Physics at Virginia Tech. Dr. Debra Stewart, president of the Council of Graduate Schools, will be the commencement speaker. Dr. DePauw stated she would like to see more faculty, administrators, associate deans, department heads, etc. come to Graduate Commencement.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Ms. Nancy B. Feuerbach, on behalf of

Dr. Karen P. DePauw, Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Dean of the Graduate School