

## **Minutes**

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

**April 20, 2005**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**206 Sandy Hall**

Present: Mr. Chris Bassler, Dr. Scott Case, Dr. Kevin Davy, Dr. Klaus Elgert, Professor Bill Galloway, Ms. Lauren Good, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Mr. Greg Lemmond, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Sue Murrmann, Dr. Tom Ollendick, Dr. Don Orth, Dr. Carolyn Rude, Ms. Chris Thomas

Absent with Notification: Dr. Roger Avery, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Dr. Rakesh Kapania, Dr. John Moore, Dr. Jerry Niles, Ms. Yvette Quintela, Dr. Susan Short, Mr. Terrell Strayhorn, Ms. Angie Webb

Invited Guests: Ms. Nancy Feuerbach, Mr. Marvin Foushee, Dr. F. M. Anne McNabb, Dr. Tarun Sen, Dr. Sherri Turner

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from April 6, 2005: Approved.

### **Committee Reports**

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from April 14 and April 19 were approved.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): Dr. Scott Case thanked the committee for their efforts during the academic year. Dr. Case distributed a working draft for a graduate faculty policy. He asked that CGS&P members distribute the draft document to their constituents and solicit feedback to bring back to the commission in the fall. The document will be distributed to the commission electronically. Ms. Lauren Good will suggest wording to be incorporated into the draft to address undergraduate students' concerns that there will be sufficient numbers of qualified faculty to teach undergraduate courses.

### **Other Reports**

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): No report

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): Dr. Hitchingham reported that the resolution which addressed changing the reporting structure and membership of the University Library Committee was successfully reviewed by the Commission on Research, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies, the University Library Board, and the University Council. The library committee has also made a recommendation that the library maintain the existing policy which dictates the borrowing period, but added that exceptions could be made for individuals who needed a more flexible borrowing timeframe.

Dr. Tarun Sen, MIT India: Dr. Tarun Sen, at the invitation of the commission, reported on the status of the MIT program. Following his presentation to the commission in fall 2004, approvals were received from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Virginia Tech's Institute for Distance & Distributed Learning (IDDL) had just completed a

SACS approval for the MIT online program so they were able to assist with the preparation of documents. By late July / early August the program was ready to be launched. The partner institution in Bombay then began marketing the program. In order to maximize the results of the marketing effort, the program was officially launched in October of 2004. Approximately 80 – 100 preliminary applications were submitted. These applications were screened, and a selection of applicants then applied to the Graduate School. Thirty two students were accepted to the program; thirty are currently enrolled.

Dr. Sen visited the facility in January 2005 to teach a course. The students had a good background; approximately ninety percent were engineering students so were technically skilled. Current students will be asked to strengthen communication / presentation skills. Dr. Sen also summarized the course offerings. Six Virginia Tech faculty have visited the facility to teach the courses. Each course is divided into three phases: (1) Pre-contact phase (prep work before VT faculty arrive), (2) One-on-one class time, and (3) Post-contact phase (projects, exams, assignments).

Program strengths include the collaborative experience with another institution; the Virginia Tech faculty have unanimously described the experience as positive. The students, as well, have found the experience to be rewarding. A significant number of students reported that they had applied to the program because of the reputation of the S P Jain Institute, and so the strength of the partner institution has also contributed to the program's success. Dr. Sen noted that the student's didn't automatically identify themselves as Virginia Tech students. He observed that it would take some time for them to "see" themselves as belonging to the Virginia Tech campus. Students have been provided with VT i.d.'s.

Dr. Sen reported that course compression was a problem. In the future, courses / faculty will be spaced out rather than send all six faculty within a period of three months. New faculty will not be sent until the current teaching faculty are "caught up". Dr. Sen anticipates that students will be caught up by the end of June [2005]. In the future, courses will be spread more uniformly over a twelve month period.

Dr. Sen also reported that the program will develop a more structured follow-up procedure for the post-contact phase.

More faculty may need to be hired in the future as current faculty are not able to provide the one-on-one interaction that found in the U.S.-based program.

Marketing the program has proven to be a challenge. India is a large country, and getting Virginia Tech's identity / name established will take some time.

Establishing a tuition rate did cause some problems and generated discussion.

Dr. Orth asked Dr. Sen to explain the program's revenue sharing model. Dr. Sen said that this has been a major challenge. The college basically decided that the program was important enough to warrant being launched on an "overload basis"; the program was considered part of Virginia Tech's globalization goals by "internationalizing the curriculum". It also allows faculty to get exposure in the international arena and gives additional publicity to Virginia Tech. Ultimately, the program may even generate revenue for research.

Dr. Sen also stated that another measurement of the program's success will be determined by whether graduates are able to obtain satisfactory employment. S P Jain does have an aggressive placement program. Other options for placement of graduates are currently being investigated.

Mr. Greg Lemmond suggested that Dr. Sen use the Graduate Student Assembly as a program resource, particularly when researching ways to build a Virginia Tech identity within the MIT-India student body.

Dr. Sen encouraged commission members to contact him with questions and hopes the commission will invite him to give future updates on the MIT-India program.

Old Business:

Dr. McNabb thanked the commission, on behalf of Dr. DePauw, for their work on the review process.

Graduate Program Review: Dr. F. M. Anne McNabb and Dr. Sherri Turner

Dr. Anne McNabb discussed four points. (1) Seven year (minimum) review cycle. This cycle is negotiable. (2) Duplication. The dean and the college would meet to develop a plan; this would minimize repetition in review processes. (This would occur in the year prior to the review.) (3) Inside vs. outside reviews. Currently, the draft review document procedure suggests an inside review followed by an outside review. Units already doing outside accreditation reviews would adopt another process to be determined at the beginning of the planning process. (4) The role of the program itself in the process. The first step in the process would be a self-assessment by the program.

Institutional Research has designed reports to assist with review, and will help analyze data.

The review process being developed would be a complement to any review process already in place.

New Business: None.

Announcements: Dr. Elgert thanked the commission and Ms. Feuerbach for their efforts throughout the 2004-2005 academic year. Ms. Feuerbach extended Dr. DePauw's appreciation to the commission. The commission expressed its gratitude to Dr. Klaus Elgert, outgoing chair of the commission, and welcomed the new chair, Dr. Scott Case.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted:*

*Ms. Nancy B. Feuerbach, on behalf of*

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