

**Minutes
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies
February 6, 2008
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Graduate School, GLC, Conference Room**

Present: Ms. Linsey Barker, Dr. Paul Deck, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Dr. Joe Eska, Mr. Thomas Gorman, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Mr. John Kane, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Gail McMillan, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Patrick Miller, Dr. Glenda Scales, Dr. Cliff Shaffer, Ms. Chris Thomas

Absent with Notification: Dr. Jim Collier, Dr. Ron Daniel, Mr. James Freeman, Dr. Suzanne Murrmann, Dr. Gerhardt Schurig

Absent without Notification: Ms. Margo Eggeling, Ms. Evelyn Richardson

Conference call: Dr. Glenda Scales

Videoconference: Dr. Rosary Lalik,

Visitors and Invited Guests: Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Ennis McCrery

Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from January 16, 2008: Approved.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from January 22, 2008 were approved. Dr. Shaffer reported that the committee was finalizing a new guide for course approval.

Graduate Student Appeals: The committee has completed an appeal and submitted a report to Dr. DePauw.

Graduate Student Relations: The committee is closer to making recommendations for (1) aligning the graduate and undergraduate judicial timelines; and (2) graduate honor system training for graduate students from diverse cultures. A survey may be developed which would assist in identifying students who need the training. The committee will invite a teaching faculty member to serve as an advisor on this committee.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP):

The committee hopes to have a report by the next meeting [02.20.08] which will clarify the 4000 level program language. The committee will also review the language of the admissions categories.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Ms. Linsey Barker reported on the January 31st meeting during which GSA held the first reading of the amended constitution and (2) defined approved the “purpose” of the Karen P. DePauw Graduate Fund. Ms. Barker announced that elections for new board members will

be held at the next meeting. Dr. DePauw complimented the GSA representatives on the growth in numbers of participating members

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): Dr. Hitchingham reviewed the ULC minutes from November 15, 2007 which focused on the “April 16th Prevail Archive” project led by Ms. Gail McMillan.

The mold problem reported early in the fall has been resolved. Ultimately the library will need a new HVAC system.

University Council: The University Council met for the first time on February 4th. Dr. Kumar Mallikarjuna highlighted some reports given by commission chairs at the meeting. Among the resolutions presented were: (1) *University Closure for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*, and (2) *Resolution for Appointment of the New Executive Director of University Planning, Design, and Construction as a Member of the University Building Committee*. Bs/ms

There may be a future resolution allowing graduate students to pay their fees across the semester without penalty.

Old Business:

Summer Session Enrollment:

Dr. Karen DePauw reviewed the issues related to Summer Session Enrollment:

Our continuous enrollment policy for graduate students is not implemented during the summer. This policy was developed because it would allow graduate students to be employed (wage) during the summer without the enrollment requirement. Graduate students employed in the summer are subject to the same withholding taxes as a regular university employee. In addition, students employed during the summer and continuing their research with a faculty member are not “counted” as enrolled. One possible solution might be to implement a special summer enrollment category for graduate students who are on GAs, GTAs, GRAs. It was noted that Virginia Tech’s sister institutions in have a requirement of enrollment when a student is on assistantship; students are not allowed to transition to wage employee status in the summer, and they have no special fee.

Another drawback for VT graduate students who are wage employees (or are considered “summer status”) is the denial of access to university health services. Students are also removed from the “people finder” VT database. Ms. Barker asked if this year-round enrollment would allow students to take their preliminary examinations, and noted that this would be an added benefit. Dr. DePauw said that would need to be part of the discussion. She emphasized that this is only a discussion item at this point.

New Business: None

Announcements:

Ms. Barker announced that the GSA is now accepting applications for the GSA Research Symposium, the Travel Fund Program, and the Research & Development Program [<http://www.gsa.uusa.vt.edu>].

The Graduate School Distinguished Lecturer, Dr. Mary Catherine Bateson, will speak at 4:00 p.m. on February 26, Graduate Life Center. Her lecture is entitled, “Building Community, Composing a Life”. The lecture will be video-broadcast to the National Capital Region.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 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