

**Minutes  
Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies  
November 7, 2007  
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm  
Graduate School, GLC, Conference Room**

Present: Ms. Linsey Barker, Dr. Jim Collier, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. Joe Eska, Dr. François Elvinger, Mr. Thomas Gorman, Mr. John Kane, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Gail McMillan, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Patrick Miller, Dr. Suzanne Murrmann, Dr. Glenda Scales, Dr. Cliff Shaffer, Ms. Chris Thomas

Absent with Notification: Dr. Paul Deck, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Gerhardt Schurig

Absent without Notification: Ms. Laura Hendrick for Mr. James Freeman, Ms. Margo Eggeling, Ms. Evelyn Richardson

Conference call in: Dr. Rosary Lalik

Visitors and Invited Guests: Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Ennis McCrery, Mr. Joe McFadden, Dr. Brian Mihalik, Ms. Jacqueline Nottingham

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

**Approval of the agenda:** Approved.

**Approval of minutes from October 17, 2007:** The minutes were approved.

**Committee Reports**

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from the meeting held on October 25, 2007 were approved. Following discussion, it was recommended that graduate deans [via e-mail] will be included in the 15 day course review process. Also, an in-service training could be of use to key personnel involved in the 15 day review process. More discussion will take place at a later date.

Graduate Student Appeals: The committee is asking for documentation in a current appeal.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP):

Dr. Joe Eska presented some generic models for assessing learning objectives which would satisfy a SACS review. The objectives and measures could be circulated to departments who may or may not choose to use them. Following discussion, the commission decided to solicit comments from Ray Van Dyke, Director, Academic Assessment, as well as continue to review the format and clarify the language.

**Other Reports**

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Mr. Joe McFadden, president of the Graduate Student Assembly and chair of the Commission on Student Affairs, reported on key accomplishments of the GSA. Some steps have been implemented to enhance communication, including (1) a new webmaster has updated the GSA website, (2) a “facebook group” has been created in order to reach more students, and (3) the GSA is asking students who serve on committees or commissions to give brief reports to post on the GSA website.

This year, the GSA is trying to establish a better connection with graduate students in the National Capital Region. Students from Northern Virginia are attending GSA meetings via videoconference. The website and Blackboard are being utilized, as well. GSA is working with the SGA expanding VT-Engage to the community of Falls Church. Mr. McFadden visits different departments periodically in order to have one-one conversations with faculty and students.

Mr. McFadden attended the Commission on Student Affairs and brought up: (1) student fees and (2) communication about campus events.

The GSA constitution is undergoing a review, and child care for dependents of graduate students is being studied.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Mr. John Kane sent an e-mail to the college associate deans, and later the graduate program chairs, requesting their assistance in recruiting faculty representatives to serve on GHS panels. The response to this e-mail was good and training sessions are ongoing. Several colleges are still without faculty representation, and Mr. Kane requested that the commission encourage participation in the GHS.

University Library Committee (ULC): No report.

University Council: No report.

Office of the Graduate Student Ombudsperson

Ms. Ennis McCrery, the graduate student ombudsperson, presented an overview of the office she staffs, including the history and function. She represents an impartial and safe [confidential] place to seek information on policies and procedures, as well as provide referrals to students. In her role as ombudsperson, she can effect change by giving feedback to Dr. Karen DePauw.

Dr. DePauw suggested that Ms. Ennis be invited back to a commission meeting at the end of the academic year to give an update on the role and effectiveness of the office of the ombudsperson.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

Dr. DePauw (1) is organizing a faculty meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup> to talk about some items in the monthly memo, as well as some upcoming issues; (2) asked the commission to investigate and discuss the 4000 level courses taught for graduate credit and (3) would like the commission to review and discuss graduate student policies as they relate to the VT student judicial system.

**Announcements:**

Dr. Mallikarjunan announced that the Indian Student Association will be celebrating Diwali on Sunday from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. with catered Indian food.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 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*