

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

November 15, 2006

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown

Present: Dr. Scott Case, Dr. Ron Daniel, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Professor Bill Galloway, Dr. Tim Mack, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Gail McMillan, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Carolyn Rude, Ms. Rebecca Slutzky, Ms. Chris Thomas, Mr. Brian Whitaker

Absent with Notification: Ms. Linsey Barker, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Mr. Greg Lemmond, Dr. Suzanne Murrmann, Dr. Tom Ollendick, Ms. Mary Ann Norman, Dr. Gerhardt Schurig, Dr. Audrey Zink-Sharp

Absent without Notification: Mr. Sherif Agha, Dr. Jim Collier

Conference call: Dr. Rosary Lalik

Invited Guests: Ms. Ennis McCrery, Ms. Jacqueline L. Nottingham

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from November 1, 2006: Approved.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from October 26th were approved. Professor Galloway gave a brief overview of the joint program with Georgetown University as well as the committee's actions from the November 9th meeting.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): Dr. Tim Mack presented three items for consideration by the commission.

(1) Applications and Admissions Statement (final draft). The commission reviewed the edited statement prepared by the DRSCAP committee, in particular, the incorporation of the Bologna process and the potential effect this could have on other admissions decisions for non-Bologna universities. The commission voted to approve the revised statement as follows:

Applications and all related materials for admission should reach the Graduate School Office at least eight weeks before the beginning of the semester in which enrollment is requested.

Consideration for admission to the Graduate School is contingent upon receipt of:

- 1) An official academic transcript showing courses taken and degree(s) earned.*
- 2) Evidence of a Bachelor's degree from a four year or equivalent (e.g., see Bologna Process) accredited college or university.*
- 3) Documentation of at least a 3.0 Grade Point Average (on a 4.0 scale) for the last half of the credits earned for the undergraduate degree; or, the completion of 12 graduate course credits with at least a 3.0 Grade Point Average.*

For financial assistance information, visit www.finaid.vt.edu. Applications for admission should be made online at <http://grads.vt.edu/>.

2. Residency Requirements for a Ph.D. (second draft). Following discussion, the commission decided to table the issue until they had more time to review the recommended revisions. Dr. Karen DePauw will research how this issue may be related to SACS accreditation. Dr. DePauw requested that deletions / edits from the first draft be included for the next discussion.

3. Admission Categories and Graduate Student Classification. Dr. Mack requested that this item be tabled until an upcoming meeting to give the committee more time to review the issue.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA):

Ms. Ennis McCrery reported the following:

The GSA forwarded a recommendation to the Commission on Student Affairs to allow for full funding of student legal services.

The GSA received \$6900 from the budget board to help fund the “Galileo Players”.

The GSA held a successful social which raised several hundred dollars for medical expenses for an injured graduate student.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): No report.

University Library Committee (ULC): The minutes from October 12th were approved.

University Council: Dr. Elvinger reported on Monday’s University Council meeting. Two resolutions were presented for a first reading by the Commission on Faculty Affairs: (1) Resolution on Valid Issues for Faculty Grievances and (2) Resolution for Composition of Committees for Promotion and Tenure Evaluation. The Faculty Senate requested additional time to review the resolutions; the senate will discuss these resolutions at their upcoming meeting.

Old Business:

Graduate Commencement:

Dr. DePauw announced that the graduate speaker for December’s commencement is Ben Davenport the former rector of the Board of Visitors. The speaker for May commencement is Dr. Alberto Mustani, rector of Monterey Tech in Mexico. The original music composed for spring commencement is finished, and will be showcased at the ceremony. A slide show featuring graduate students and activities will be shown simultaneously. Northern Virginia’s commencement in May will follow the same format, but with a slide show unique to their location.

Dr. DePauw described commencement procedures, in particular, the system in place for distributing diplomas. Currently, no diplomas are distributed at the fall ceremony. All students who attend commencement do receive a diploma cover as a gift from the Alumni Association and the Graduate School. At the May commencement, doctoral students who complete all requirements receive their diplomas onstage with an individualized letter from the dean. Master’s students who “clear” receive their diplomas at the Graduate Life Center following the ceremony. Students who have not completed all requirements may still participate in commencement and receive a diploma cover. Once these students complete all requirements, their diploma is mailed to them. Graduate School personnel create a festive atmosphere for eligible master’s students who wish to pick up their diplomas at the GLC. If master’s students did receive their diplomas

onstage, it would limit participation in the ceremony to those students who had met all requirements.

Commission members reported that they had not received negative feedback, and did not anticipate any future repercussions from the existing procedure. Dr. DePauw noted that the procedures for diploma distribution are described in communication with students prior to graduation. Dr. Lalik reported that students in Northern Virginia invested importance in the actual ceremony, i.e., the walk across the stage, with accompanying handshakes by members of the stage party. Following discussion, the commission endorsed the current practice.

Ph.D. in Engineering Education

The commission reviewed the proposed program, *Doctor of Philosophy in STEM Education: Engineering Education*. The version under review addressed budget concerns raised by commission members at the November 1st meeting, and incorporated the new degree proposal into the STEM framework. The proposal is not limited to K-12 educators. It is intended to train “educators for educators”, i.e., training engineering educators to train other faculty members to be educators.

Some commission members expressed concern that the Engineering Education degree proposal process might be hindered by attaching the proposal to the still evolving “STEM umbrella” concept. Following discussion, the commission voted to approve the (1) Ph.D. in Engineering Education and (2) the STEM umbrella concept, with the understanding that should the STEM concept meet resistance, the degree program could proceed through governance as an entity separate from the STEM umbrella. Commission members also asked Dr. Karen DePauw to allow the commission members the opportunity to read and review the finished STEM proposal that she and the provost are preparing for presentation to the University Council.

New Business:

Master of Arts in Foreign Language, Culture, and Literature, first reading: Dr. Elvinger will forward questions and concerns raised by the commission to the authors of the degree proposal. Dr. Elvinger will invite the proposal author(s) to the December 6th meeting to address issues needing clarification. Dr. Galloway noted that this is the first graduate degree in foreign languages. He assured the commission that the degree had undergone a rigorous review by the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

Announcements: Dr. Elvinger will not be at the December 6th meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 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