

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

February 1, 2006

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Room 206, Sandy Hall

Present: Mr. Chris Bassler, Dr. Scott Case, Dr. Kevin Davy, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Ms. Nicole James, Mr. Osama Marsouk, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Dr. Brian Mihalik, Dr. Sue Murrmann, Dr. Don Orth, Dr. Carolyn Rude, Dr. Susan Short

Absent with Notification: Dr. Ron Daniel, Ms. Pat Donovan, Mr. Greg Lemmond, Dr. Gail McMillan, Dr. Jerry Niles, Dr. Tom Ollendick, Ms. Angie Webb, Mr. Brian Whitaker

Absent without Notification: Mr. Sumeet Bagai, Professor Bill Galloway, Dr. John Moore,
Conference call in: Dr. Barbara Allen

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

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from January 18, 2006: Approved.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): No report

AP faculty / staff admissions: No report. Next meeting will be February 16th.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): Dr. Carolyn Rude reported on the proposed policy changes regarding revalidation of courses including a statement of problems with the current policy, and a recommendation to the commission, as follows:

Statement of problems with the current policy

1. Currently, courses older than 5 years (Master's degree) or 7 years (Doctorate) when a Plan of Study is filed must be revalidated. A student's advisor and committee must determine, by oral or written examination or other means, that the student's knowledge as represented by these courses is current. The revalidation process is continuous as plans are modified, time passes, and older courses drop out of the 5-year or 7-year window. Some courses are being revalidated as late as the time of the dissertation defense, when the process is redundant and serves no meaningful purpose.
2. The statement about revalidation of courses appears in a section of the graduate catalog called "Time Limits". The information is not really about time limits for completing degrees but rather about prior coursework and its appropriateness for a current program.
3. Part-time students, such as distance students completing one course at a time while they work, are particularly disadvantaged by "expiration dates" for courses. Many of these

students are using their knowledge in their work and thereby maintaining currency of their knowledge.

4. While all students who are continuously enrolled have incentives to continue using and developing knowledge, students who take extended leaves may be distracted from their academic work.

Recommendation

DRSCAP recommends:

1. Requiring one-time revalidation, even when courses come to exceed the 5-year limit, if the student is continuously enrolled.

If a student takes a leave of absence for more than one year and must apply for readmission, courses must be revalidated even if they were revalidated at the time of first admission.

2. Adding a section about courses older than 5 years to the catalog section on Plan of Study. The section would appear between the section “Plan of Study Changes” and “Supporting Courses.”

3. Deleting the section entitled “Time Limits.”

The commission voted to accept DRSCAP’S recommendations.

University Council: No report.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Mr. Chris Bassler reported that last week the GSA endorsed the idea of a “green fee” but specifics are still being developed.

Dr. DePauw suggested to the GSA that they consider bringing issues [such as fee concerns] to the commission for discussion.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Mr. Brian Whitaker circulated the following report (via e-mail):

Three cases from Fall 2005 are:

Three are currently under investigation. No reported cases for spring 2006 at this point. The GHS needs more faculty and graduate student panelists. The time commitment is minimal in that you need to only attend one 1-hour training session and volunteer to sit on panels/boards when you don’t have a scheduling conflict. Most all correspondence is done via email. The training will take place in the Graduate Life Center (Donaldson Brown) on Wednesday, February 8th: Room D: 5:30 – 6:30 PM, and Thursday, February 9th: Room C: 5:00 – 6:00 PM. Please let fellow colleagues know and support the system.

University Library Committee (ULC): Dr. Hitchingham briefly reviewed the proposal [letter] drafted by Douglass Berry which addresses the insufficient support of University Libraries compared to other institutions.

Dr. Scott Case will forward the letter to Ms. Feuerbach who will forward it to commission members.

Old Business: None

New Business: None.

Announcements: None

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:12 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