

Minutes

Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies

November 1, 2006

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown

Present: Ms. Linsey Barker, Dr. Scott Case, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Professor Bill Galloway, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Dr. Tim Mack, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Gail McMillan, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Ms. Mary Ann Norman, Dr. Tom Ollendick, Dr. Carolyn Rude, Ms. Rebecca Slutzky, Mr. Brian Whitaker, Dr. Audrey Zink-Sharp

Absent with Notification: Mr. Greg Lemmond, Dr. Rosary Lalik, Dr. Suzanne Murrmann, Dr. Gerhardt Schurig

Absent without Notification: Mr. Sherif Agha, Dr. Jim Collier, Dr. Ron Daniel, Ms. Pat Donovan

Invited Guests: Dr. Hayden Griffin, Dr. Sue Magliaro, Dr. Brian Mihalik, Ms. Jory Ruscio

Dr. François Elvinger opened the meeting with the introduction of new members to the commission.

Approval of the agenda: Approved.

Approval of minutes from October 18, 2006: Approved with following corrections (1) Ron Daniel was not present (2) corrected spelling of member name, “Zink-Sharp” (3) title correction of GSA representative, Ms. Mary Ann Norman.

Committee Reports

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from October 12, 2006 were approved.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): Dr. Tim Mack reviewed the proposed re-wording of the application and admissions statement. In particular, the impact of the “Bologna process” on admissions was examined. Also, the committee addressed the admissions standard that focused on (1) a 3.0 grade point average requirement for the last half of undergraduate credit earned or (2) a minimum of 12 graduate credits with a 3.0 grade point average.

Dr. DePauw reviewed the Bologna process. Some systems of education adopted in Europe are based on (1) high school education through age 19, (2) three years undergraduate education, (3) two years of master’s, and (4) two years Ph.D. Students whose education was modeled on the Bologna process would be considered admissible to Virginia Tech.

The commission voted to approve the policy re-wording pending the incorporation of their discussion items.

Dr. Mack reported that DRSCAP was working on residency requirements for doctoral candidates.

Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan introduced the topic of conditional admission status. Departments would determine the “conditions” a student must meet before being considered for regular admissions, e.g., additional coursework. This status differs from provisional status, which gives students with an undergraduate GPA below 3.0 the opportunity to earn a 3.0 GPA or higher in a graduate program. The committee will work on wording for a conditional admission status.

Following discussion, the commission agreed to place the new degree proposal under the S.T.E.M. interdisciplinary “umbrella”.

Changes to the new engineering degree proposal, including how it will fit into the S.T.E.M framework, will be presented at the November 15th meeting.

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Ms. Jory Ruscio reported that the October delegate meeting is scheduled for November 2nd. The health insurance committee met on October 30th. The committee’s health insurance survey has received more than 100 replies, primarily negative. Friday, November 10th, the GSA will host a fall social. Profits from the event will be used to offset medical expenses of a GSA board member. The university community may also make donations online. Some commission members expressed concern that if governance did not approve the STEM umbrella concept, then the Ph.D. proposal could not be approved.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Mr. Brian Whitaker reported there are three cases from the current semester, and one case from the previous semester.

University Library Committee (ULC): Dr. Eileen Hitchingham described efforts underway to deal with the mold situation.

University Council: No report.

Old Business:

Ms. Linsey Barker is continuing her efforts to meet with Ms. Frances Keene, Director of Judicial Affairs.

Dr. Hayden Griffin and Dr. Sue Magliaro reviewed the updated Ph.D. in Engineering Education degree proposal.

Dr. DePauw reviewed an effort underway involving multiple departments - including, engineering, physics, chemistry, biology - referred to as S.T.E.M – Education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education). Both the provost’s office and the Graduate School support the concept of the umbrella degree concept, a one-of-a-kind, truly interdisciplinary graduate program, in the United States. The curriculum would consist of core courses, and then some specialization, or majors. Dr. DePauw asked the commission to consider engineering education as the first of these majors.

New Business:

Dr. Karen DePauw asked the commission if they would be willing to use Blackboard as a tool for posting and reviewing commission documents. Users would be sent an email informing them when documents are posted for review, or commission members could be classified as “instructors” and randomly post and edit items at will. Commission members would then remember to check the CGS&P “course” prior to the meeting. Items for the November 15th meeting will be posted on Blackboard’s “course”, CGS&P.

Discussion on commencement will be postponed until November 15th.

Announcements: None

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