

## **Minutes**

### **Commission on Graduate Studies & Policies**

**October 18, 2006**

**3:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown**

Present: Dr. Scott Case, Dr. Karen DePauw, Dr. François Elvinger, Professor Bill Galloway, Dr. Tim Mack, Dr. Kumar Mallikarjunan, Ms. Gail McMillan, Dr. Suzanne Murrmann, Dr. Carolyn Rude, Mr. Brian Whitaker

Conference call: Dr. Rosary Lalick

Absent with Notification: Ms. Linsey Barker, Dr. Ron Daniel, Ms. Pat Donovan, Professor Bill Galloway, Dr. Eileen Hitchingham, Mr. Greg Lemmond, Ms. Penny McCallum, Ms. Margaret Merrill, Ms. Maryann Norman, Dr. Tom Ollendick, Dr. Gerhardt Schurig, Dr. Audrey Zink-Sharp

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

Invited Guests: Dr. Brian Mihalik, Mr. Marvin Foushee, Ms. Jacqueline Nottingham, Ms. Jory Ruscio

**Approval of the agenda:** Approved.

**Approval of minutes from October 4, 2006:** Approved.

## **Committee Reports**

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC): The minutes from September 28<sup>th</sup> were approved. The committee approved three degrees with minor revisions (1) Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering Education, (2) Master of Arts in Foreign Languages, Cultures, and Literatures and (3) Simultaneous Master of Public and International Affairs and Master of Urban and Regional Planning.

Graduate Student Appeals: No report.

Graduate Student Relations: No report.

Degree Requirement Standards Criteria and Academic Policy (DRSCAP): Dr. Tim Mack reported that the committee currently was discussing (1) proposed rewording of the application admission statement and (2) admission categories and graduate student classifications.

## **Other Reports**

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA): Ms. Jory Ruscio reported that there has been no official business since their last meeting. GSA would like to address discrepancies in assistantship amounts between student teachers and student graders [GTAs]. Dr. DePauw suggested that the commission might consider developing guidelines for departments to use within their units.

Graduate Honor System (GHS): Mr. Brian Whitaker reported that the GHS had one case from last semester, and one reported case this semester. Mr. Whitaker reported that the case from last semester is dealing with a possible GHS violation occurring in another country, which could present new and (or) different logistical as well as philosophical and cultural considerations. Dr. DePauw encouraged the commission to discuss these issues as they occur.

University Library Committee (ULC): The minutes from September 28<sup>th</sup> were approved.

University Council: No report.

**Old Business:**

The commission voted to approve the request for the reduction in course hour requirements from 27 graded credit hours to 20 graded credit hours for Ph.D. students in the Department of Plant Pathology and Weed Science [18 hours of regular courses and two 1 credit seminars]

The commission discussed the role of research in graduate education, as well as thesis and non-thesis options. Dr. DePauw emphasized that Virginia Tech should have (1) professional degrees, (2) non-thesis options, (3) and research options.

Mr. Marvin Foushee said it is possible to include the thesis title on the transcript. [Dissertation titles are already printed on the transcript.] He said it was also possible to indicate a “non-thesis” option on the transcript. Dr. Carolyn Rude illustrated the ambiguity that could occur. The non-thesis option in English requires a major independent project. Sometimes these projects are substantial enough to be submitted for publication. Dr. DePauw suggested that a topic for discussion at the retreat could be, “What is the role of research in Graduate Education?”

**New Business:**

First Reading, Ph.D. in Engineering Education: Commission members expressed some concern about resources, and the role GCC and the commission have in evaluating new degree resources. Dr. DePauw will investigate and clarify the role of the committee and commission. Dr. DePauw noted that should this proposal be approved, the Graduate School would conduct the program review. Following discussion, the commission agreed to invite Dr. Hayden Griffin to the November 1<sup>st</sup> commission meeting to address concerns of the commission.

Avian influenza preparedness and continuity of business: Dr. Elvinger reported that Drs. David Ford and Kurt Krause are co-chairing an avian influenza task force. They are looking at the impact an outbreak would have on the university community. Dr. Elvinger suggested that the commission consider how operations would need to be adapted for any major infectious disease outbreak.

Dr. Mihalik asked the commission members to distribute the Graduate Curriculum Committee minutes to department personnel. GCC minutes are [currently] posted on the [Graduate School website](http://www.grads.vt.edu/graduate_school/gcc/minutes/index.html). [http://www.grads.vt.edu/graduate\_school/gcc/minutes/index.html]

**Announcements:** None

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 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*