

Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, September 12, 2013
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 am to 10:30 am

Attending: Brenda Neumon Lewis, Chair, Missy Barber, Brian Payne, Robert Wojtowicz, Shirshak Dhali, Isao Ishibashi, Kevin DePew, Bill Heffelfinger, Lynn Ridinger, Gail Dickinson, Craig Bayse, Richardean Benjamin, Ravi Mukkamala, Ali Ardalan, Carolyn Rutledge

Welcome and Introductions

- Dr. Lewis welcomed the 2013 - 2014 Council members to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves to the group.
- Dr. Lewis indicated that the Council includes all associate deans that work with graduate programs, a representative graduate program director from each college, Bill Heffelfinger, Director of Graduate Admissions, Mary Swartz, University Registrar, and Brian Payne, Vice Provost for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs.

Approval of May 9, 2013 Minutes

- Minutes were approved as submitted.

Announcements/Updates

- Continuance Data – Dr. Lewis provided Council with summary information relating to graduate students' academic performance for the 2012 – 2013 academic year. Associate Deans were sent information specific to their respective colleges. Dr. Lewis indicated the summary sho

Dr. Dickinson mentioned the issue of GTA access to Blackboard prior to completion of the GTAI Institute. Dr. Lewis said that it would be a topic of discussion for the planning of the spring GTAI Institute.

- New Graduate Student Orientation – Dr. Lewis said that the evaluations for the New Graduate Student Orientation were good. She did mention that some students said the information was redundant; however, only two speakers were the same for both the GTAI Institute and New Graduate Student Orientation. Also, she pointed out their presentations were different for each event.
- PFF Event on September 20, 2013 from noon to 2:00 pm in the Cape Charles Room in Webb Center – The topic is Classroom Management.
- Graduate Administration Workshop - This event is scheduled for Wednesday, October 16th in the Hampton/Newport News Room in Webb Center. If you have questions or concerns that you would like to see addressed at the workshop, please let Dr. Lewis know. Points of discussion will include changes to policies and current issues relating to graduate students. Dr. Lewis said that she may call on some Council members to participate.
- GSO Mentoring Workshop – October 24, 2013
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- Effective with the 2013 – 2014 catalog, a Master’s student in the final semester of study may register for fewer than 9 credit hours and be considered full-time.
- Dr. Lewis requested that Council let their faculty and GPDs know about the change.
- Dr. Lewis will send Council the new form electronically. It will also be posted on the Graduate Studies website.

Continuous Enrollment Policy

- Dr. Ardalan updated Council on the Continuous Enrollment Policy and the recommendations for change. The current policy states that once a student has advanced to candidacy, he must register for one credit hour in every semester until graduation. There is some concern about students being required to register for summer because some students do not work on their dissertations in the summer and also they may not have access to faculty during that time. GAC formed a subcommittee to review. Dr. Wojtowicz, Dr. Ardalan, Dr. Akan, and Dr. Ishibashi were on the committee.
- Dr. Ardalan said they looked at the pros and cons of student registration. If a student is not using University resources, why are we requiring them to register? It is possible that a student may be using other resources. It is very difficult to follow students at that stage. Jim Duffy was consulted to determine the amount of revenue that could possibly be lost if the registration requirement was changed. He advised that the revenue loss would not be a significant impact to the University. It would also be the faculty members’ responsibility to ensure that the students that needed to register would do so.
- There are other issues that need to be addressed like the definition of candidacy, also students are being charged for the use of University resources, but faculty are not being compensated.
- There are also ethical questions because summer school as a semester does not impact PhD students. If faculty are not on campus guiding students, it seems disingenuous to require that students be registered.
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- There are issues with how to fund the program and also they need to look at the impact of the Affordable Health Care Act.

Full-time Designation for Graduate Assistants – Brian Payne

- There have been some issues with defining “full-time” for graduate assistants. Students funded through ODURF can work 6 hours and be considered full-time, but students on S5 funding are required to take 9 credit hours to be considered full-time.
- One proposal would be to dictate the rules by the activity. GTAs and GAAs would adhere to the current policy of 9 hours. GRAs would only be required to take 6. This would be ok for international students because they can get a waiver.
- Dr. Payne asked for Council to share proposal with the Graduate Program Directors before the next meeting and get their feedback so that it can be discussed further.

Graduate Enrollment – Brian Payne

- Dr. Payne said two tasks have been identified.
 1. Program Review (GAC will be collectively involved in the process.)
 2. Graduate enrollment projections are needed from each department.