

GRADUATE ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL (GAC)  
Minutes of October 5, 2006  
(Draft)

Attending: Philip Langlais, Chair, Brenda Neumon Lewis, Mike Overstreet, Wayne Hynes, Laurel Garzon, Stacy Plichta, David Branch, John Ritz, Robert Wojtowicz, Elliott Jones, Ali Ardalan, Bruce Rubin, and Osman Akan

1. New members of the Council were introduced.
2. Approval of May 25, 2006 Minutes

Dr. Philip Langlais, Vice Provost, reviewed the May 25, 2006 minutes with the Council. During the discussion of the new deferred enrollment section to the admissions policy and the purging of applications after one year, a concern was raised about the average time it takes from when international applications are completed to when the students actually show up. Due to visa hold-ups some international students cannot actually come to campus for 1 to 2 years. Dr. Langlais said that he would ask Steve Risch about this issue or even have him come to a Council meeting to discuss this issue. It was then moved and voted by the Council that the May 25, 2006 minutes be approved as submitted.

3. Announcements:

- A. Graduate Administrative Workshop (Oct. 6, 2006)

Dr. Langlais reminded the Council that the Graduate Administrative Workshop would be held on Friday, Oct. 6, 2006, in the River Rooms in Webb Center and that the main topic would be the new policies that went into effect this Fall semester. He said that it would be good if the new GPDs could attend. New and updated manuals will be given out at the workshop.

It was suggested by Dr. Ardalan that the manual be put up on the Office of Graduate Studies Web Site. Dr. Langlais said he would look into getting that done.

- B. New Graduate Catalog

Dr. Brenda Neumon Lewis informed the Council that the new University Graduate Catalogs have come in and will be mailed out to the University community. She said that the Catalog will ultimately be put on the Web and eventually on CDs to be mailed out. Dr. Lewis indicated that the new Catalog is comprehensive and user friendly. The University's specific information is listed first and after each college section its own courses offered are listed.

A question was raised about what catalog do new students come under. She said

that Fall 2006 students will come under the new catalog and other students will use the catalog that they came under prior to this fall.

C. NRC-Assessment of Research Doctoral Programs

Dr. Lewis, the Institutional Coordinator for this project, told the Council that the NRC is conducting an "Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs." This study will assess the quality and characteristics of more than 200 research-doctorate programs in the U.S. The goal is to help universities improve the quality of research doctoral programs through benchmarking and to provide students with accessible information on these programs nationwide. It will also rank ODU with other universities. Dr. Lewis said that the programs that will be assessed would be the doctoral programs in sciences, engineering, arts and letters and one out of health sciences. There will be information sessions for those people involved in the project on October 18 and 19. She said that as soon as she has more information available she will share it with everyone.

Dr. Langlais told the Council that the Deans have been briefed on this project. Marty Sharpe will be working with Brenda Lewis on this project. He said that they are trying to stay ahead of the curve on obtaining information.

D. Graduate Open House

There will be a graduate open house on October 17 in the Ted Constant Center. Dr. Langlais encouraged all GPDs to participate.

4. Accomplishments AY2005-06 and 2006-07

Dr. Langlais told the Council that the GAC worked very hard last academic year and reviewed numerous policies, some of which are in the new University Graduate Catalog, or in the Faculty Senate for approval. He said that there is still a lot of work to be done this year.

5. Action Items:

A. Establish regular meeting dates and times

It was agreed by the Council that meetings will be every other Thursday, from 8:45 A.M. to 10:45 A.M. Dr. Langlais said that he would get the schedule for the Fall semester put onto the Web Site.

B. Formation of Task Forces to review and submit recommendations to GAC

Vice Provost Langlais discussed several action items that the Council needed to address during the 2006-07 academic year. They are:

- i. Description of common and core vs discipline specific graduate program administration functions, reports, and accountability: role of GPD and other administrative personnel (handout from Faculty Handbook-duties of GPD)
- ii. A set of common metrics that assess capacity, productivity and performance of graduate programs - to be collected each semester, stored in BANNER and accessible to appropriate faculty and administrators (required for SACS accreditation, NRC study, Professional Accreditations, CGS annual reports, Peterson's Guide, etc.)
- iii. A policy and set of procedures for annual internal review and periodic external review of graduate programs. (Handout - Departmental Self Study Guide from OGS and CGS Manual "Assessment and Review of Graduate Program")
- iv. University Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations - policy and procedures for enforcement of format standards and detection of plagiarism
- v. Guidelines on Assistantship assignments and grievances (Senate Issue Number 2006/7-2 Protection of Graduate Teaching Assistants): written contract of duties, expected average hours worked, supervision and documentation of performance and hours worked (?), and a grievance policy to protect students from improper work assignments and excessive hours. (Handout - Senate Issue Assignment 2007/7-2)

Dr. Langlais told the Council that the first three items were discussed at the Provost's retreat. Regarding Item i, he said that questions for the task force to ask are what are the core responsibilities to administering graduate programs and who is responsible. This is an issue of faculty workload and administrative staff needed. Regarding Item ii he said that we needed to determine what metrics are needed and who is responsible for providing this information. Gathering this information will help determine inequities among the duties currently assigned to individual GPDs. For Item iii a set of policies and procedures for internal and external review of graduate programs needs to be created.

The question was raised regarding potential conflicts or duplication in the reporting requirements for SCHEV and the CGS. The Council agreed that the task force should have some guidance to which Dr. Langlais recommended that Marty Sharpe or Dave Hager be contacted and asked to help research this issue.

Item (iv) would require a review of the format for the theses and dissertation guide. Marc Scerbo's students reviewed the Guide as a class project and sent Dr. Langlais a report. He said that he would share this report with the task force reviewing the guide. The issue of plagiarism was brought up about who was checking for this and if in the near future there could be an electronic submission of the theses/dissertations so that plagiarism could be

checked electronically.

Item (v) regarding protecting students in assistantship positions was a Senate item. As it stands there are no grievance policies or procedures in place for graduate assistants.

The Council decided to form task forces for the first three items. They all agreed that some of the information reported could be used parallel to each other and that communication between the task forces be communicated to each other.

Task Forces were formed for Items (i), (ii), and (v).

(i) Bruce Rubin, Stacey Plichta, Elliott Jones , and Osman Akan

(ii) Dave Branch, Laurel Garzon, Mike Overstreet, and Cheryl Baker

(v) Robert Wojtowicz, Wayne Hynes, Ali Ardalán, and Sach Albin

The remaining items iii and iv will be addressed later in the year along with other issues such as the review of the content of the GTAI-Institute and graduate forms.

Dr. Langlais informed the Council that John Young is currently doing research on the formation of a graduate student organization and the allocation of student organization funds to graduate students. He is also trying to find out what the interest is like for a graduate student organization. Vice Provost Langlais said that he would pass this information on to the Council when it is available.

6. Additional Items

Future Presentations: Graduate Degree Audit (Mary Swartz and Chris Davis)

7. Adjournment at 10:45 A.M.