

**Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)**  
**Minutes for Thursday, April 25, 2013**  
**Koch Hall Board Room**  
**9:00 am to 10:30 am**

Attending: Brenda Neumon Lewis, Chair, Missy Barber, Richardean Benjamin, David Selover, Osman Akan, Lynn Ridinger, Joanne Scheibman, Chris Osgood, Isao Ishibashi, Bill Heffelfinger, Ali Ardalán, Sharon Judge

Guest Speaker: Jeanie Kline

**Approval of March 28, 2013 Minutes**

- Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Announcements/Updates**

- Graduate Research Achievement Day - Dr. Lewis reported that Graduate Research Achievement Day was a very successful event. There was very good participation and the oral sessions went well. She thanked Joanne Scheibman, Chris Osgood, and Ali Ardalán for serving as facilitators for the oral presentation sessions. Dr. Lewis also said that the students were excited to talk about their research, not only to faculty, but other students as well. Students were able to network with each other. To recognize the students who participated in Graduate Research Achievement Day, the President is providing a reception/luncheon on May 7.
- National Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week - The reception provided by the Graduate Student Organization went well. The ODU GSO's recognition event was mentioned in the National Graduate and Professional Student Organization's newsletter.
- Graduate Student Organization - Elections for the 2013-2014 year were held and there is a new slate of officers. Dr. Lewis will be meeting with both the outgoing and incoming officers during the transition.
- Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Awards - The committee chose Max Siangchokyo as the OGTA - Classroom and Rachael Callan as the OGTA - Laboratory. They will both be acknowledged at the Faculty Awards dinner in May. Dr. Lewis also reminded everyone that Rick McKenzie was selected as the winner of the University's Doctoral Mentoring Award and he will also be acknowledged at the dinner as well.
- PFF Faculty Coordinator Position - Wie Yusuf from the College of Business and Public Administration has been chosen as the new PFF Faculty Coordinator.
- Enrollment Requirement for Master's Students - Dr. Lewis advised Council that the proposal for the enrollment requirement for Master's students has been approved by Faculty Senate. She has requested official notification. GAC needs to discuss procedures to make sure that it is administered equitably among the six colleges.
- International Teaching Instructor Proposal - Dr. Lewis advised that the request for the international teaching instructor did go forward through the budget process, but she does not have any information regarding the outcome.
- Health Insurance Proposal - Dr. Lewis advised Council that Provost Simpson has received a proposal from SEES for health coverage and that is also being considered through the budget process.

- Master's and Doctoral Reception - Alumni Relations is hosting the Master's and Doctoral Reception on May 8 at 5:30 pm in the Baron and Ellin Gordon Art Galleries. Please encourage faculty and students to attend.

### **Summer School Discussion – Dr. Jeanie Kline**

- Dr. Lewis introduced Dr. Kline to Council. Dr. Kline has been tasked with the responsibility of providing coordination and direction for the summer school program which will hopefully lead to increased enrollment.
- Dr. Kline discussed a proposal for a new summer schedule. Instead of being five sessions, it has been reduced to three. Faculty have been consulted about the changes. Due to the uniqueness of some of the courses in Health Sciences, they will have courses scheduled outside of the three session time frames. The new schedule meets SACS requirements for the minimum number of classes.
- Dr. Ardalan mentioned that students like not having classes scheduled for Fridays. Dr. Kline said there were ways to avoid Friday classes. There is a MW or TR option or faculty can make part of the course an online experience.
- It has been approved to change the scheduling process to put summer and spring scheduling together. This change was recommended because many schools have their schedules out earlier. Students are planning their summer schedule earlier and by having our schedule available earlier, we should be able to attract more students. The next scheduling notification regarding spring will include the summer scheduling as well.
- While there is some concern about faculty availability for summer when scheduling, they will have a lot more lead time to plan.
- Dr. Kline hopes that this change will increase enrollment. It can also help with financial aid.

### **Work hour limitations based on the Affordable Health Care Act**

- We have received some guidance from Human Resources on the Affordable Health Care Act. The key information is in paragraph 4 of the letter. Employees are not to work more than 29 hours per week on average. This mostly applies to adjunct faculty, but it can also apply to graduate assistants since there are requests to add hours beyond the allotted 20 hours.
- It was asked if someone had health insurance coverage elsewhere would there be a possibility of a waiver of the 29 hour rule. Dr. Lewis said no. It is based on their employment at ODU.
- Individuals can be employed at two different institutions. VCCS and ODU are two different entities. Also the Research Foundation and ODU would be considered separate as well. The 29 hour rule is based on the institution, so you cannot have someone working 20 hours in business and 20 hours in engineering.
- Dr. Lewis advised Council that we need to monitor this to ensure that graduate assistants stay within the guidelines.

### **Doctoral Mentoring Award Process**

- Dr. Lewis discussed an issue that we had with the doctoral mentoring award process this year. She requested that when nominations are sent forward for the University's Doctoral Mentoring Award that the colleges specify who the college winner is and who the finalist is for the University's award. It was agreed that the college mentoring award process and the University award process would be kept separate.

### **Continuous Enrollment**

- Dr. Lewis has shared the proposal with Jim Duffy. She hopes to be able to meet with him next week to discuss implications to income. Council should share with GPD's to get feedback. Dr. Lewis said that we will discuss at the next meeting.

### **Additional Topics**

- Maternity Leave for Graduate Assistants – Dr. Lewis said there was an issue with a Graduate Assistant that delivered her baby early, mid-semester. This left the department with classes to cover at the last minute. Funds are usually allocated at the beginning of the semester for the graduate assistants and there is no extra money for unexpected situations. Dr. Lewis would like for Council to review this issue. She said that we may need to look at what other schools are currently doing. She also said that she had previously worked with Renee Dunman on a medical leave policy and that she would check with Dunman to see what information she had. It was suggested that the President's Office have a pool of money for emergency situations. Also, it was suggested that Research Foundation may have a policy too.
- Leave Schedule for Graduate Assistants - Dr. Lewis said that we do not currently have a policy regarding leave for holidays, spring break, or winter break. Some students feel they aren't being treated fairly because departments aren't being consistent.

Dr. Lewis said that it is important to communicate the work schedule to the graduate assistant when they begin employment so they know in advance what the expectations and requirements are. Students need to be advised that different graduate assistants have different responsibilities and thus work different schedules.

Dr. Lewis said that we will revisit the issue in early fall to be sure everyone is functioning similarly.

- The last meeting of the semester will be Thursday, May 9, 2013. We will discuss the continuous enrollment policy.

Meeting adjourned.