

Graduate Administrators' Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, April 23, 2015
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 am to 10:30 am

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Chair, Richardean Benjamin, David Selover, Bryan Porter, David Earnest, Kevin DePew, Bill Heffelfinger, Ali Ardalan, Gail Dickinson, Tim Grothaus, Shirshak Dhali, Ravi Mukkamala, Brian Payne, and Missy Barber

Guest Speaker: Corey van Vlymen

Approval of Minutes for Thursday, April 9, 2015

- Minutes approved as submitted.

Announcements

- Graduate Research Achievement Day
 - Oral Presentations
 - Students are the best marketers of their research. They should be encouraged to invite people to attend.
 - The opportunity to present is more valuable to the student than a poster presentation.
 - It is important to find a way to incorporate students that are distance learners.
 - Dr. Wojtowicz thanked those who volunteered to be facilitators.
 - Poster Presentations
 - The cost of printing a poster should not be a barrier to a student's decision to participate. Dr. Wojtowicz is going to see if we can get a line item in Academic Affairs to be used to assist students with the expense of poster printing.
- Orientation for New GPDs – Thursday, May 14, 2015 in the President's Dining Room in Webb Center. Dr. Wojtowicz advised Council that there is going to be an orientation and luncheon for new or transitioning GPDs. The training will be approximately 2 hours in the morning. All GPDs and Associate Deans will be invited to attend the luncheon.
- Advanced Degree Luncheon – Wednesday, May 6, 2015 in the Hampton/Newport News Room in Webb Center. Dr. Wojtowicz asked Council to make sure to share the invitation to the event with faculty who teach or advise graduate students that may not be GPDs.
- Meredith and Alumni Scholarships – Dr. Wojtowicz shared the details of both awards with Council. He said they were both significant awards for graduate students. He asked for volunteers to serve on the review committee. Dr. Dickinson and Dr. Van Lunen agreed to serve. There was a recommendation to change the submission process this year so that each college would submit one nominee for the Meredith Scholarship and two nominees for the Alumni Scholarship, rather than submitting all nominations to Graduate Studies. Council agreed to this change. This means the associate deans will pre-determine the nominees for their respective colleges. Dr. Ardalan asked for an extension to the May 6 deadline as his committee is not meeting until May 8. Dr. Wojtowicz agreed to the extension.

Graduate Assistantships vs. Adjunct Faculty – Corey van Vlymen

- Mr. van Vlymen raised the issue of colleges hiring students as adjunct faculty during the summer. He asked that colleges not continue the practice because it causes several issues.
 - There are issues with SACS, as the requirements for graduate assistants to teach are lower than the standards for adjuncts.
 - There are issues for international students and their VISA status. Those students are not legally allowed to work as adjunct faculty.
 - Switching students from GA to Adjunct status causes delays in their assistantship payments

Mr. van Vlymen recommends that if there is a situation with a student who needs funding but assistantship funds are not available, that the associate dean contact Jim Duffy to see if there are any funds that may be converted rather than converting the student.

Minimum Stipend Levels

- Dr. Wojtowicz suggested clarification of catalog language regarding assistantship funding. He would like it to be clearer that the minimum stipend is \$3200 per semester. Dr. Wojtowicz will check the federal guidelines as well. There was discussion about “partial” assistantships within the colleges. Verification of the federal guidelines should help clarify what can be done.

Normal Courseload and Graduate Assistantship Policy

- This policy was rejected by Faculty Senate. There are concerns with some of the language regarding part-time and quarter-time status in the Normal Courseload Policy. The Graduate Assistantship policy is complicated, but it is what the University Auditor recommends. Dr. Wojtowicz advised that the Faculty Senate is an advisory committee and asked that Council’s advice on whether or not we should proceed with the policy. After discussion, it was decided that Robert would talk with Dr. de Silva and Dr. Champagne and report back to Council.
- It was also pointed out that if the policy was revised, the EPAF process would need to be updated as well.

Exploratory Committee

- Dr. Payne updated Council on the outcome of the Graduate College Exploratory Committee. A draft summary report has been done that includes a history of enrollment at ODU and quality of graduate faculty because of growth in programs, and the CGS committee’s report suggesting that a change was needed. The summary report also talks about infrastructure and the reason a graduate school is needed. In addition, there is a mission statement and a suggestion for a mantra, “Making Graduate Education Count.” Three different structures are provided in the report, the current structure, a proposed basic structure (meets the basic needs now), and an expanded (best case scenario). The report also includes a timeline for moving forward and implementation. The final report will be submitted to the Provost and presented at the President’s mid-summer retreat. The timeline includes Faculty Forums in September 2015, updates/changes to formal proposal in October 2015, in November 2015, the proposal will be submitted to the Provost’s Council and Faculty Senate, then to the Board of Visitors in December 2015.

If all goes well, then the proposal will go to SCHEV in January and the change will be effective in March 2016.

- Dr. Grothaus suggested another mantra, “Promoting Excellence in Graduate Education.” Council liked the suggestion, citing that it seems less political.

Graduate Enrollment Task Force

- The Task Force has been talking with the GPDs of the ten programs with the most growth and the ten programs with the least growth. There was a common theme amongst those contacted about their programs. They appreciated being asked. There are opportunities that we need to take advantage of. Standalone programs struggle more. Our University culture suggests that good undergraduates need to go elsewhere. We need to make sure the undergraduates are aware of what ODU has to offer.
- Dr. Wojtowicz points out that there can be splits within departments and that lack of cooperation can cause difficulty. There is a divide between professional and research programs that can cause difficulty as well. The committee is getting a better picture of opportunities and limits.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations Subcommittee

- Reminder – Meeting with Marlene Coles on Friday, April 24, 2015.

Graduate Registration

- Graduate registration is down. Make sure to encourage students to register as soon as possible.