

Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, September 27, 2012
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 am to 10:30 am

Attending: Brenda Neumon Lewis, Chair, Missy Barber, Chris Osgood, Robert Wojtowicz, Richardean Benjamin, Sharon Judge, Joanne Scheibman, Carolyn Rutledge, Lynn Ridinger, Isao Ishibashi, Osman Akan, Mary Swartz, David Selover

Approval of September 13, 2012 Minutes

- Minutes were approved as submitted.

Announcements/Updates

- Graduate Student Health Insurance Update - Dr. Lewis advised Council that a random sample survey had been sent out to students approximately two weeks ago. The data collected from the survey is imperative for the University to be able to work with vendors. The committee has also met with Dr. Simpson and Dr. Neufeldt. All of the data should be gathered by mid-semester and the plan is to have bids by the end of the spring term.

Dr. Lewis also reported that UVA, Virginia Tech, and VCU all have health insurance contracts with wording that may allow for the possibility of “piggy-backing” on their policies. The committee is considering that as an option as well.

- Courseleaf Training was held on Thursday, September 20 and Friday, September 21. Dr. Lewis thanked Council for their support in promoting the training and their participation. She said that the training was well attended and comments were positive.
- Graduate Administration Workshop - Dr. Lewis announced this year’s Graduate Administration Workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 1:30 pm in Webb Center in the Chesapeake/Portsmouth rooms. Please encourage your GPDs and program support staff to attend.
- CV Writing Workshop – Dr. Lewis advised Council that the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) has been working and planning diligently to have the CV Writing Workshop. It will be held on Friday, October 19. Flyers were provided to members. Council requested that the flyer be sent electronically to them so they could distribute to their staff members.
- SCHEV Training – Dr. Lewis informed Council that Dr. Monica Osei from SCHEV is planning a statewide training for proposal development that is going to be held at Old Dominion University. The dates of the training are Thursday, November 8 and Friday, November 9, 2012. To date, there are approximately 35 participants. Since ODU is hosting the training, Dr. Lewis said that we can add a few more participants. If you are interested in attending, please email Dr. Lewis and let her know as soon as possible. Attendance may be beneficial, especially if you have a proposal in progress.
- OGS Graduate Assistant – Iva Stoyneva – Dr. Lewis introduced the Office of Graduate Studies’ new Graduate Assistant, Iva Stoyneva. Ms. Stoyneva advised Council that she is currently working on the newsletter and another small project with the GSO’s Facebook page. She would like to post on the GSO’s Facebook site when students publish or have a special event that should be publicized. Council advised Ms. Stoyneva that Institutional Research may be able to help with providing her with the names of students that have been published. It was recommended that she contact Corey Van Vlymen for assistance.

Graduate Student Organization Leadership

- Dr. Lewis introduced Danielle Forest and Jana Eggleston, the President and Vice President of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO). This summer, they developed a Graduate Student Living Guide. The guide is a nice compilation of information for students that are new to the area or that live close by the campus. It is available online on the Graduate Student Organization's website. The easiest way to find the site is to go to the Office of Graduate Studies' site and click on the link. Dr. Lewis encouraged Council members to make students aware of the guide.
- Ms. Forest stated that the GSO currently has 62 members. The primary goal of the organization is professional development, but it does have a social component as well. Most recently, as previously mentioned, they have planned the CV Writing Workshop. This workshop is a free event open to all graduate students.
- Ms. Eggleston discussed the group's possible upcoming events. She mentioned a Grad School Panel event for undergraduate students considering graduate school in January. Also, the GSO may have an alumni networking event.
- The GSO is becoming a member of the National Association for Graduate and Professional Students. Members of the GSO will automatically become members of this national association and will have the option for health insurance at a rate of approximately \$1600 per year.
- Ms. Eggleston also reported that the GSO became involved with helping to resolve the parking issues that RA/TA's are having on campus. RA/TA's are having issues with finding parking during the varied hours they are required to be on campus. Their analysis of parking usage in the parking garage on the corner of Elkhorn and 43rd Street revealed that the parking lot was 70% under-utilized. Parking Services has helped to resolve the issue by changing some meter parking to commuter parking. Departments can also help RA/TA's by writing a letter to Parking Services specifically requesting that the student get a faculty/staff parking pass.
- The GSO is also advocating for graduate students to receive additional Student Travel Awards. Currently, students can only receive up to \$500 one time per degree. Because participation in conferences is very important at the graduate level, the GSO has asked that the policy be revised to include up to two times per degree.
- Also, GSO would like to be the governing body for all graduate student organizations. There are distinct standards for getting budget from the SGA. The activity types are currently geared more toward undergraduate students. If the GSO was the governing body, standards could be geared more toward graduate students.

Follow-up to recommended changes for Doctoral Mentoring Award – Dr. Ali Ardalan

- Since Dr. Ardalan was not available to be at the meeting, Dr. Lewis tabled the discussion until the next council meeting.

Follow-up discussion to ABT Policy Recommendation – Isao Ishibashi

- Dr. Ishibashi advised Council that response to the ABT policy recommendation was positive and supportive.
- Mary Swartz informed Council that the Registrar's Office would need verification of the students that were to be ABT (full-time for one semester), as departments currently do with students that are ABD.
- Council decided that the next step would be to invite Jim Duffy to the next Council meeting

- Dr. Osgood suggested that we invite someone like Debra May from Financial Aid to a GAC meeting. The purpose of the visit would be to talk about the processes and financial aid restrictions.

Discussion of Status of International English Instructor – Chris Osgood

- This discussion is a follow-up to a discussion held in May regarding the possibility of establishing a University level position that would perform duties and responsibilities in support of international graduate students with their language and writing skills and to help prepare them for the Graduate Teaching Assistants Institute. The College of Sciences currently has a position, occupied by Kathy Moulton that provides assistance to international students. However, there is nothing available campus-wide to specifically provide training or writing assistance for international students. It was mentioned that even the Writing Center just assists with content, not grammar and punctuation, which is what many international students need.
- Council decided to pursue putting together a proposal. A committee was formed to put together the framework for the proposal. Chris Osgood agreed to be the committee chair. Other members include Joanne Scheibman and David Selover. It was agreed that Kathy Moulton could be used as a consultant to the committee because of her experience and knowledge in this area.
- Dr. Lewis asked the committee to put together some ideas in the next few weeks regarding the proposal. A couple of discussion points will be how to fund the position and in what unit the position should be located.

Screening of Graduate Applications for Travel Assistance

- Dr. Wojtowicz mentioned to Council that as he is reviewing the applications for travel assistance, he is noticing that some of the conferences may not be a legitimate academic gatherings. He recommended that there be some kind of educational process conducted by the GPD's so that students can be more informed when reviewing the conference information. Students should be able to identify whether or not an event is sponsored by a professional society and whether the conference helps to develop their intellectual capital.

Career Management Center – Dr. Wojtowicz

- There is a graduate and professional fair at Webb Center tomorrow. Dr. Wojtowicz was trying to get more information about it from the Career Management Center (CMC). The event is designed for undergraduate students to advertise various programs both inside and outside of Old Dominion University. He suggested that there needs to be better communication between the CMC and graduate programs. Dr. Lewis suggested we invite Tom Wunderlich from CMC to discuss this issue.

There were no additional topics for discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.