

Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)
Koch Hall Administration Building Board Room
October 2, 2008
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Attending: Philip Langlais, chair, Brenda Neumon Lewis, Mike Overstreet, Ali Ardalán, Brenda Stevenson-Marshall, Isao Ishibashi, George Maihafer, Mona Danner, Osman Akan, Joyce Neff, Sharon Judge, Yin Xu

Guests: Dr. Jeffrey Richards, Dr. Karen Medina

Approval of September 18, 2008 Minutes

Minutes were accepted with one modification.

Modification:

In the section “SEM Graduate Committee”- Dr. Mona Danner requested that the wording be changed to deans “*are hesitant*” to shrink their programs and that the faculty are overwhelmed because of so much growth.

Announcements

Dr. Langlais had no announcements.

Update of Survey on “Administration of Graduate Programs”

Dr. Jeffrey Richards, former GAC member, reported the results of the survey to the Council. The report identified the duties of the Graduate Program Directors (GPD’s) and their concerns. The survey found that among their major concerns is university support, particularly in admissions. Several specific problems were cited, in Graduate Admissions, an under staffed office, not posting information in a timely manner and information being lost.

Dr. Richards stated that the relationship between the Office of Graduate Studies and GPD’s should be more concrete and suggested a guide be constructed. Dr. Langlais suggested a core set of GPD responsibilities be developed. Dr. Richards agreed, stating that there are not many differences between what is already in the handbook and the survey results. Dr. Richards offered to add the job description of a GPD to the report with core responsibilities as an addendum. Dr. Richards agreed to return to the next GAC meeting to continue discussing the survey.

Discussion of Admission Decisions, iBT/Speak Test

Dr. Karen Medina reported that the Test on Spoken English (TSE) is no longer being used. She also reported that ODU’s current cut score on the iBT is 26 and that some universities are currently raising their standard and increasing their cut score to 28. Dr. Medina addressed concerns about cultural differences between international teaching assistants (TA’s) and domestic students in such areas as classroom protocol, teacher/student comprehension in class and decoding comments on papers. Dr. Medina reported that many schools offer classes to train international teaching assistants. Council agreed that more training for ODU’s international TA’s is needed. Drs. Osman Akan, Ali Ardalán and Mike Overstreet volunteered to work with Dr.

Medina in a subcommittee to brainstorm new training methods for international TA's and to make recommendations on standards for iBT and TOEFL.

Prioritization of Policies/Issues and Subcommittee Assignments Proposed for 2008-09

Dr. Langlais asked the Council if there were any new issues to add to the list of assignments for 2008-09. Dr. Osman Akan proposed adding issues with FICA to the list stating that seven percent of his students' pay was being deducted for FICA. Dr. Akan will do further research on FICA issues and bring his findings to the next meeting. Dr. Langlais recommended establishing three subcommittees to address three key graduate topics. Dr. Langlais went over the issues related to the three subcommittees.

a. University Thesis/Dissertation

Dr. Langlais reported that there are four major aspects that need to be addressed with the current guide: 1) improving the guide, 2) format: electronic or hard copy, 3) oversight and approval and 4) college specific issues. Dr. Mike Overstreet stated that representation from each college is needed for the new guide. A subcommittee was formed to review and revise the University Thesis/Dissertation guide consisting of Drs. Mona Danner, Sharon Judge, Mike Overstreet and Robert Wojtowicz.

b. GTA Institute (Criteria for Evaluation of Oral Presentation and Recommendations for Continued Training)

Council agreed that the GTA subcommittee and the international TA subcommittee will work as one subcommittee.

c. Interface of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in Policy Decisions Related to Academic Dishonesty, Administrative Withdrawal

Dr. Langlais reported that Mike Dubose from Judicial Affairs will come to an upcoming GAC meeting to discuss policies and procedures followed by Student Affairs in cases of academic dishonesty.

Additional Items

Council had no additional items to discuss.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.