

**Graduate Administrators' Council (GAC)**  
**Minutes for Thursday, October 8, 2015**  
**Koch Hall Board Room**  
**9:00 am to 10:30 am**

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**Attendees:**

Robert Wojtowicz, Chair

Missy Barber  
Richardean Benjamin  
Jane Dane  
Kevin DePew  
Shirshak Dhali  
Gail Dickinson  
David Earnest

Bill Heffelfinger  
Kiran Karande  
*Katrina Miller-Stevens*  
Ravi Mukkamala  
Steve Myran  
Chris Osgood  
*Brian Payne*

*Humberto Portellez*  
Bryan Porter  
*Andres Sousa-Poza*  
Mary Swartz  
*Bonnie Van Lunen*  
Eric White

*Members highlighted in italics were not present at the meeting.*

**Guest Presenters:**

Kristyn Danson & Ashley Sawyer, Office of Alumni Relations

**Advanced Degree Luncheon – K. Danson & A. Sawyer**

- Dr. Wojtowicz introduced Kristyn Danson and Ashley Sawyer from the Office of Alumni Relations. They work with the Office of Graduate Studies to coordinate the Advanced Degree Luncheon. The Advanced Degree Luncheon is for graduating graduate students and faculty. He met with them recently to discuss the upcoming luncheon scheduled for December. In addition to marketing and attendance, establishing a tradition like the senior toast, improving the agenda, and identifying speakers was also discussed.
- While attendance at the event has increased over the past year or so, Ms. Danson asked Council for their suggestions to help increase attendance and improve the event.
- Dr. DePew suggested to make the event more inclusive for distance students and allow for live participation.
- Council members agreed to help promote the event through college and/or departmental meetings. Ms. Danson offered to attend the meetings and answer questions about the event.
- Dr. Wojtowicz asked Council to start the process of identifying possible students that would be good speakers for the December event.

**Approval of Minutes for Thursday, September 24, 2015**

- Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Announcements**

- CourseLeaf Training – CIM Training for CourseLeaf continues. For more information, check the Academic Affairs calendar online.
- Graduate Student Organization – The GSO is now considered a defunct organization with the SGA. The Office of Graduate Studies is conducting an interest meeting on October 22, 2015 in the Potomac/York Room in Webb. The purpose of the meeting will

be to determine interest in restarting the group, discuss possible ways to reinvent the organization and make it meaningful to graduate students. Participation in this organization would be good for any graduate student in any program. It was mentioned that the SGA is primarily an undergraduate focused organization. It was suggested to consider distance students and ways they might be able to be involved as well.

- Linked Programs Meeting – The Office of Graduate Studies is hosting a Linked Programs meeting for undergraduate students on Thursday, October 29, 2015 in 1002 Constant Hall. All Graduate Program Directors are encouraged to attend. Dr. Wojtowicz and Missy will be meeting with Michael Moore, Mary Swartz, and Bill Heffelfinger to discuss how to identify students in linked programs. There is no way to track or monitor students in linked programs now until they are admitted into a graduate program. Identifying students as linked students helps the student to feel more involved and like their pursuit of the master's degree is more official. Last year, we had about 150 students at the meeting. Dr. Wojtowicz suggested this would be a good mechanism to reach out to our best undergraduate students. As a result of last year's positive response, Mathematics & Statistics and the MPA program have established linked programs.
- VCGS – Candidates have been identified to attend the Graduate Forum at VCU on October 30, 2015.
- Banner Carrier Update - The banner carriers for the December Commencement exercises have been identified and University Events has been advised.
- Graduate Administrators' Workshop – TODAY, Thursday, October 8, 2015, 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm in the Hampton/Newport News Room in Webb Center. Lunch will be provided.

### **Graduate School Update**

- Supporting documents to be provided to faculty senate include the Executive Summary, enrollment data, and the consultants' recommendations.
- The preparation of a formal proposal is in process and is scheduled to be submitted to the Provost and to the Faculty Senate in November.

### **Graduate Enrollment Task Force Report**

- Dr. Wojtowicz shared the Graduate Enrollment Task Force Report. He advised that Missy would send it electronically to the Council. He also said that we are waiting for the report from Ruffalo Noel Levitz. The Task Force Report concludes the Task Force should continue in some form. Also, the Provost is seriously looking at possibly closing some graduate program. If there is a program in your area that is weak in numbers, if you want to save it, a plan of action needs to be done to try to turn it around.
- Jane Dane advised that a contract has been approved that will allow the University to work with outside agents to recruit students. Steve Risch is the coordinator of the program.

### **Graduate Assistantship Subcommittee**

- Dr. Porter and Dr. Wojtowicz provided an update on the progress of the subcommittee. The subcommittee met and identified a number of issues to be addressed to include:
  - Length of Service, i.e., when does the semester start and end.
  - Work schedule
  - Establishment of Consistent Workload

- Evaluation
- Hiring Contract

### **Forms & Policies Subcommittee**

- Additional Degrees Policy – The revised policy was submitted for Council’s review and approval. Council approved the policy with changes noted.
- Graduate Numbering Policy – There was a brief discussion regarding seminar courses and course titles and 700/800 level courses needing different requirements since the 800 level course was a higher level. Council approved the policy as submitted.
- The Separation/Continuance policy was discussed but was sent back to the subcommittee.

### **Suggested Strategies to Assist Military Personnel with Degree Completion**

- Waive the restriction on transfer credits.
- Pursue articulation agreements with schools with a lot of military personnel, i.e., SDU, Alaska, Coast Guard War Colleges, and other schools online.
- The military point person for undergraduate students in Admissions is Angela Little. Bill Heffelfinger is the representative at the graduate level. Kris West is the representative in the Registrar’s Office. However, there is no centralized office on campus.
- The University has a Military Connections Center that does a lot of legwork for students.
- Certain programs are more conducive for reciprocal or articulation agreements and greater flexibility with transferring credits.
- Having more flexible programs creates a new market for students. PhD students would benefit tremendously.
- Where would this fit in the hierarchy of the Graduate School concept?