

Graduate Administrators' Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, October 16, 2014
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 am to 10:30 am

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Chair, Andres Sousa-Poza, David Earnest, Bill Heffelfinger, Bryan Porter, Tim Grothaus, Mary Swartz, Bonnie Van Lunen, Gail Dickinson, Richardean Benjamin, Ravi Mukkamala, David Selover, Missy Barber, Raleta Summers

Guests: Lynn Waltz and Renee Olander

Approval of October 16, 2014 Minutes

- The minutes were approved as presented.

Graduate Enrollment at the Peninsula Center – Lynn Waltz and Renee Olander

- Ms. Waltz began the discussion by stating that they would like to have a more robust graduate presence at the Peninsula Center. Ms. Waltz said that Newport News is the 5th most populous city and they have several large employers. She is working directly with the large employers to customize programs. She reminded Council that the Peninsula Higher Education Center was originally started for graduate outreach. She shared some statistics relating to employment growth and projections and said that given the numbers, there is a market on the peninsula for graduate programs. Also, she stated that approximately 10% of ODU's students have addresses with zip codes on the peninsula.
- Dr. Wojtowicz asked about which schools have a physical, bricks and mortar, graduate presence on the peninsula. Ms. Waltz said William & Mary, Christopher Newport, and Hampton University. Also Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, George Washington, St. Leo, VCU, and for profit schools like Strayer and ECPI all have satellites there.
- Waltz also said that Newport News Shipyard would like ODU to teach in their facilities on site.
- Dr. Wojtowicz talked about the typical student. They are working professionals seeking either Master's or Doctoral degrees, or possibly both. So the student base would be teachers, shipyard engineers, potential MBA students, military, NASA, and Jefferson Labs.
- Ms. Olander asked how they can help graduate programs. Can they display materials to promote programs? Also for the longer term, how can they help to recruit students from the large businesses around the Peninsula Higher Education Center? She said that she would like to get a gauge of who wants to build a constituency and where the interest is to do that.
- It was suggested that discussions be held with each college directly to discuss how the Peninsula Center could be of assistance.
- Dr. Earnest asked if there was any interest shown for Humanities or any classic liberal arts. Waltz replied that there is a position that is on campus at Thomas Nelson that grew out of the Arts & Letters IDS-MSEd program. She also said there is a definite need for English classes at the undergraduate level.
- There was some discussion about who pays for the students from the larger employers. Waltz reported that Newport News Shipyard pays 100% of students' tuition. For teachers

in the school system, they pay between 25% and 100%. Other employers are willing to pay part of the expense.

Announcements

- Dr. Wojtowicz mentioned the upcoming Graduate Administration Workshop on Friday, October 31, 2014 in the Alumni Center, the CourseLeaf deadlines, the CSGS Master's Thesis Award Call for Nominations Deadline, and the Advanced Degree Luncheon scheduled for Wednesday, December 10, 2014. Dr. Wojtowicz said that student volunteers were still needed to present at the luncheon. Dr. Benjamin and Dr. Dickinson said they would identify a student to participate.
- Dr. Wojtowicz brought up an issue from the last Graduate Administrators' Council meeting regarding the Change of Status form. He said that we need a formal dismissal policy for students that are making insufficient progress or the failing of a comprehensive exam, etc. Guidelines need to be set in a way that is fair and firm.
- Dr. Wojtowicz reminded Council that master's students need to be registered for master's level research courses. Some master's students are registering for doctoral level research credit and that is not appropriate. Dr. Mukkamala asked why the Registrar's Office allowed master's students to register. Mary Swartz responded by saying that the department would need to notify the Registrar's Office to put a registration block in Banner to prevent registration. Dr. Sousa-Poza said that his department's 699/899 courses are not rolling every semester like they used to. Mary Swartz will check with Scheduling on the issue.

Graduate Enrollments

- Bill Heffelfinger advised Council that the spreadsheets for projected graduate enrollments for spring, summer, and fall 2015 will be sent out in the next couple of days. The spreadsheets will include the past five terms. Concentrations that run as separate programs are broken out, otherwise they are listed together. Also included with the spreadsheet is a narrative document that needs to be completed. For programs that are willing to grow, the narrative data can be helpful.

It was mentioned that the market is much more flexible than ODU. Some consideration may be given to having two entry points in the fall and spring semesters. The University's goal is to grow 1% every year. The goal was met this year with undergraduate students. Dr. Wojtowicz said that as we look on the horizon, the landscape is changing. The idea of building programs as we have in the past should be abandoned. Multiple entry points make sense rather than students having to wait a calendar year to enroll because they missed the deadline.

Dr. Wojtowicz said that the exercise last year did not provide the necessary data that was needed. He said that the narrative portion should be used to draw out what the issues are, i.e., space or lack of faculty. Also talk about available resources to attract applicants to have a larger graduate pool. There is a centralized application database that can be accessed for a cost, however, it is a way to help programs grow. Conversations should happen at the Graduate Program Director, Associate Dean, and Dean level. Requests for

funding should include a plan to enlarge the program along with data to support the request. By doing this, the request will be more effective.

Dr. Dickinson said there should be a way to speed up the process. Bill Heffelfinger said they now will accept unofficial transcripts with the student's admission application. This makes it much easier for the student to apply. Dr. Dickinson asked if they had top quality applicants could the decision to admit them be made more quickly. Heffelfinger advised that if you have unofficial transcripts, the graduate program director can admit the student immediately, as long as everything else is in order.

Heffelfinger also said that program numbers by concentration are available in Insight. He will be talking about that at the Graduate Administration Workshop.

Dr. Wojtowicz advised that there was no penalty for not meeting projections, but it would be important to follow-up to see what can be done. Heffelfinger also said that the projections are to help the graduate program directors. Admissions can help them to make it happen.

Dr. Mukkamala suggested that Bill Heffelfinger and Dr. Wojtowicz meet with each college and explain the process and answer questions.

Dr. Sousa-Poza said that we still need to figure out how to market our programs. There are a number of lost opportunities because of our inflexibility. We need to understand how to serve the population.

Dr. Benjamin suggested identifying a program that would be willing to have a more diverse point of entry and admissions process. Dr. Benjamin also said that they have a single spring admission point, but she would be willing to volunteer. Dr. Dickinson also said that she could find a program in the College of Education. Mary Swartz suggested half semester classes to increase the flexibility of programs.

Creation of Subcommittees

- Dr. Wojtowicz asked for volunteers for three subcommittees, Policies and Forms, Program Reviews, and Electronic Theses and Dissertations. The committees are as follows:
 - Policies and Forms
 - Andres Sousa-Poza
 - Mary Swartz
 - Ali Ardalan
 - Program Reviews
 - Bonnie Van Lunen
 - Tim Grothaus
 - David Earnest
 - Electronic Theses and Dissertations
 - Mary Swartz
 - Bryan Porter
 - Richardean Benjamin

Graduate Administration Workshop – Panel Participants

- Dr. Wojtowicz asked for volunteers to participate in a discussion panel at the upcoming Graduate Administration Workshop. Bryan Payne, David Selover, and Bonnie Van Lunen all agreed to participate.

Catalog Issues – Identifying a Program’s Core Courses

- Dr. Wojtowicz has met with Gail Dickinson and David Earnest to discuss their respective colleges and programs to ensure that the degree programs are in compliance with the percentage of core courses, 50% for master’s and 25% for PhD. He plans to meet with all of the associate deans.

Advancement to Candidacy – Policy Revision

- After a short discussion, it was decided to let the subcommittee work on the revision and present a recommendation to Council.

Further discussion regarding core courses

- Council asked if there were students admitted directly into a PhD program, can the master’s and PhD curriculum be shared? Feedback was given that core courses for master’s programs meet the 50% percentage, however, the PhD programs do not. If you look at the two programs together, then there is alignment.

Follow-up on 699/899 course scheduling.

- Mary Swartz reported 830 of 868 of the 699/899 courses roll from one semester to the next.