

GRAUDATE ADMINISTRATORS' COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, September 9, 2021

8:30am – 10:30am

Via Zoom Meeting ID: <https://odu.zoom.us/j/92937685226?from=addon>

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Bryan Porter, Missy Barber, Genny Conwell, Karen Eck, Dorothy Lackaby, David Cook, Dale Miller, Lamar Reams, Bill Heffelfinger, Paul Currant, Alice Laubach, Debbi Bauman, Humberto Portellez, Lesley Greene, Linda Bol, Wie Yusuf, Rob Bruno, Diane Hernandez, Renee Felts, Marissa Jimenez, Diana Hernandez, Ariana Wright, Kasie Reyes, and Milos Kotinis.

Welcome Remarks

Robert Wojtowicz welcomed attendees.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes for April 8, 2021, and May 13, 2021, were approved.

Announcements

Missy Barber announced that the latest edition of the Graduate Catalog is now online. The PDF is in the process, and everyone will be alerted via email when it is available for purchase.

New Business

- **International Student Update by Kasie Reyes, Visa & Immigration Service Advising.**

Current international student requirements stipulate only one online course (3 credit hours) per semester (fall and spring) is allowed. Effective Spring 2022, this requirement will allow international students to register for more than one. Kasie Reyes also stated that current hybrid courses do not count as online but as in person.

Robert Wojtowicz brought up a case involving a teacher who switched their in-person class to an online platform causing concerns from both students and administration. He cautioned against this kind of change without prior administration feedback.

Kasie Reyes then noted that international students taking classes from overseas must collaborate with the VISA office to be enrolled through ODU Online campus, while the international students that are on location be enrolled through the Norfolk campus.

- **GPD Compliance by Ariana Wright, Interim Assistant VP for Institutional Equity & Diversity.**

To be compliant with Department of Justice regulations, a GPD semester training invitation has been emailed to all ODU academic departments. All new GPDs must register and access the training by the October 1 deadline. Ariana Wright noted that if a GPD received the email but has already taken the training, they do not need to take it again. The training modules now include a new PPT presentation. There is also an optional module covering ODU policies regarding ADA and Section 504 that are not part of the training but are recommended.

Robert Wojtowicz asked for the Graduate School and the Dean's Office to be notified of any new information.

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- **Tutoring Opportunities – Marissa Jimenez, Director of Academic Resources & Coordinator of Operation and Diana Hernandez, Assistant Director of Academic Resources**

The new [Tutor Matching Service \(TMS\)](#) was announced. ODU is partnering with TMS to serve as an additional resource for ODU students to obtain tutoring and/or earn extra income by becoming one. This new program will centralize tutoring and mentoring resources and feature all ODU tutors at the top of the search in the TMS marketplace. ODU students, staff or faculty interested in becoming an official tutor must register and undergo an online training course offered through the Academic Resource Center. Once in the program, they can create their own schedules and pay scale in the platform. They will also be able to obtain “badges” that describe their area of expertise or experience: High GPA, CRLA Certified, Graduate Student. Pros of getting involved in this program is extra income but also improving pedagogical skills. They are actively recruiting students for the program now and will soon begin their campaign aimed at faculty. They are currently offering tutoring on a course-by-course basis and that their current tutors cannot support 300-400 level courses.

Dale Miller asked for clarity regarding the tutoring job's classification as off-campus employment. Marissa Jimenez said it is considered off-campus and stated they will create a system to track the participation of actively employed graduate assistants and their hours.

Milos Kotinis asked if becoming a paid tutor is available for international students and if so, how does it affect their visa status. Marissa Jimenez said she would be following up on that question with the VISA office.

Robert Wojtowicz brought up a point that was not on the agenda regarding enrollment numbers. Jane Danè, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, said the numbers are positive. Headcount overall has improved since 2020 and the few areas where it has dropped has been by half a percentage point.

Robert Wojtowicz then asked Bill Heffelfinger to talk about the trends that help enrollment. Bill Heffelfinger highlighted a few points that attract students:

- Flexible programs
- Flexible modality
- Location
- Student/faculty interaction despite hybrid platforms
- Speedy application/acceptance process
- Urged programs to consider eliminating the GRE as an admission requirement

Robert Wojtowicz brought up the acknowledgment of certificate seeking students at commencement. And the open discussion that followed came to the conclusions that it should be considered. Renee Felts of the School of Continuing Education said that these students do want to be recognized and they created a ceremony with Fleet Force that has met and satisfied the students completing their certificate programs. She suggested perhaps creating a smaller ceremony for 2-3 certificate programs. And of promoting the certificate program as great complement for those seeking their master's degree and gave the example of students taking the Leadership certificate while in the Homeland Security program. Certificate programs are not eligible for financial aid. How do we make them eligible for aid and could they be placed

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inside master's programs? Federal Department of Education only funds approved certificate programs. Motivate ODU to petition the DoE to approve certain certificates making them eligible for financial aid and consequently, attracting more students to take them.

Jane Danè – SCHEV needs to see data regarding certificate programs. Pointed out that employees cannot take certificate courses either because their tuition aid doesn't cover them. Robert emphasized that financial incentives in the certificate programs will create more attention and higher enrollment.

- **Forms & Policies – Bryan Porter, Associate Dean, Graduate School**

Edits to the Duties and Responsibilities section regarding “Decisions made by the graduate program director in executing these responsibilities or duties may be *overturned by their department chair or administrative supervisor in exceptional circumstances...*”

Edits to Regular Training section emphasizing that GPDs must attend regular graduate policy and procedure trainings offered by the GS to stay current with university practice, review the Graduate Catalog, and participate in scheduled college-level meetings of directors convened by the dean's office. Robert Wojtowicz suggested documentation tracking the GPDs interactions and Bryan Porter agreed.

Bryan Porter brought up that remuneration will not be up to debate, that will be up to Nina Gonser and Robert Wojtowicz.

David Cook wanted to go back to the verbiage in Duties and Responsibilities and suggested the edit to “by *their chair.*” Everyone agreed and the change was made.

Bryan Porter added if the program's dean or designee is considered to be the adjunct supervisor, the provost or the designee shall adjudicate the matter.

Wie Yusuf asked if the chair overturns everything?

Bryan Porter – Discretion is up to the department chair with GPD objection clause.

Wie Yusuf stated she has reservations for untenured GPDs who may not feel at liberty to appeal the overturning of their decision by the chair and that it tips the balance away from the GPD.

Bryan Porter – The bottom line is that the GPD serves at the pleasure of the chair. And the word “exceptional” was used over the terms “justifiable” and “reasonable” because it avoids capricious tendencies.

Wie Yusuf sees a problem because there are situations that come up regularly where chairs are causing more problems.

Robert Wojtowicz suggested leaving the wordsmithing to Committee C.

Bryan Porter stated that there were many versions but reiterated that in the end the chair can overturn and the GPD can appeal. It all needed to be in black and white.

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Robert Wojtowicz called for motion to be approved. David Cook voted to approve; Dale Miller seconded.

Graduate Credits by Transfer

Move to approve that earned credits in a certificate program can be transferred to ODU towards a degree.

Wie Yusuf says it's a positive move and is consistent with policies of other universities.

Robert Wojtowicz called for motion to be approved. David Cook voted to approve; Wie Yusuf seconded.

Re-Validation of Out-of-Date Graduate Credits

Approval of language changing "academic credit" to "graded coursework" and will exempt thesis/dissertation-based courses.

Robert Wojtowicz noted that courses identified as research, thesis or dissertation do not require re-validation.

Wie Yusuf – if it doesn't need revalidation after 8 years it still counts?

Robert Wojtowicz/Bryan Porter – yes.

Wie Yusuf said credit hours need to be tagged in the system. Missy Barber said that is for Degree Works to monitor and note in the system.

David Shirley asks if this applies to practicum and/or internships.

Robert Wojtowicz suggests students seeking revalidation and admission into a program should be able to submit a report on what they accomplished, the knowledge and experience gained and how it all can be applied today and its relevance to the completion of a degree.

Lamar Reams said they defer to programs who have practicums and internships and agrees with Robert regarding the submission of a report for assessment.

Debbie Bauman says on the clinical side, they don't require revalidation.

Lamar Reams reiterates the assessment prior to submission.

Robert Wojtowicz asked Debbie Bauman how many applicants are beyond 8 years. Debbie Bauman said it's rarely the case and their programs have a 2–3-year limit anyway.

Dale Miller asked for insertion that graded pass/fail do not require revalidation.

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Time Limits

Bryan Porter stated we used to have forms, but they haven't been followed or used. All new students reviving their studies must be approved by the GPD prior to being admitted into the program. He stressed that currently there is no tracking process.

Robert Wojtowicz said to David Shirley – This is the measure of good housekeeping. Is this approval necessary or are we overthinking it?

David Shirley – Generally speaking, there needs to be evidence, a form, a way of tracking. Less is more in the way of paperwork, but it is necessary.

Robert Wojtowicz – This would bring accountability to the student.

Wie Yusuf – Faculty advisor needs to track any lingering students in the programs. Unless teaching faculty is regularly interacting with the GPD.

Robert Wojtowicz called for the motion to be approved. Lesley Greene voted to approve; Wie Yusuf seconded.

Other Topics

Bryan Porter mentioned the Post-Doctorate Appreciation Week, September 20 – 24.

Wie Yusuf announced that Career Pathways is back and to watch for updates.

Bill Heffelfinger urged everyone to attend the Presidential Forum.

Robert Wojtowicz moved to end the meeting. Dale Miller voted to approve; Lamar Reams seconded.