

Graduate Administrators' Council Meeting
Thursday, November 3, 2016
Koch Hall Board Room

Members in attendance: Robert Wojtowicz, Chair, Shirshak Dhali, Wie Yusuf, Wayne Hynes, Bill Heffelfinger, Kiran Karande, Michael Moore, Ravi Mukkamala, Isao Ishibashi, Bryan Porter, Steve Myran, Gail Dickinson. Kevin DePew, Corey van Vlymen, Holly Gaff, Jane Dane, and Missy Barber

Guest Attendees: Kelsey Kirland

Managing Certificate Programs

- How do we manage our students in certificate programs, especially those that are degree-seeking. We don't often know they have completed a certificate until they are done.
- There are two types of certificate seekers, non-degree certificate seekers and those students who get a certificate along the way.
- About a year and a half ago, codes were created for all certificate programs so that students could be admitted to them. The process would be to admit the student as non-degree and then contact the GPD of the certificate program to confirm admission.
- We need to figure out how we want to admit certificate students.
- Is there a point or a way to give a benchmark of completion? With Retain, we can reach out to students and let them know. (Michael Moore & Matt Newton)
- The best way is to have the certificate noted on the learner's record.
- What is the admit process for certificate seekers? Verification of bachelor's degree only.
- Departments want certificates to be counted like degrees, not by college, but by department. However, we can't have it like the degree-seeking process in Leo Online.
- Could a degree-seeking student have a secondary curriculum of non-degree seeking? Can they be in two separate catalogs? There is concern about no financial aid for certificates, so easier to claim the certificate after the fact.
- Certificate seekers are building in numbers every year.
- Take away from discussion – We are already coding non-degree students and informing GPDs. We may implement messaging system to inform students who have completed some requirements toward a certificate. Certificates are good marketing tools. We can use the secondary curriculum option for degree-seeking students.
- GPDs should make the Registrar's Office aware of students in certificate programs.
- We are working on the certificate landing page on the website.
- We are working on establishing a certificate in conservation leadership that is not housed in any program or department. Administrative oversight could be provided by the Graduate School, but we can't manage programs, so the College of Continuing Education and Professional Development should manage the program. Kelsey Kirland is currently working with the College of Continuing Education and Professional Development to build a process.

Approval of Minutes from Thursday, October 20, 2016

- Minutes were approved as submitted with one change noted.

Announcements and Updates

- Graduate Administrators Workshop - The Graduate Administrators' Workshop has been rescheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2016 from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm in the Hampton/Newport News Rooms in Webb Center. Lunch will be provided.

- Advanced Degree Luncheon – The Advanced Degree Luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2016 at 11:30 am in the Hampton/Newport News Rooms in Webb Center.
- Advanced Degree Graduation Ceremony – There may be a separate graduation ceremony for graduate students in the spring semester.
- Commonwealth Graduate Education Day – The Graduate School will be attending the VCGS Commonwealth Graduate Education Day on Friday, November 4, 2016 at William & Mary.
- Graduate & Professional Development Fair – Scheduled for November 9 and November 17. There has been a good response so far.
- International Student Readiness – Brown Bag Series Event scheduled for November 10, 2016 from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm in the President's Dining Room in Webb Center.
- Speak Test and Retest – Upcoming Dates – Speak Test will be held on Friday, November 11, 2016 and the retest will be held on Friday, December 2, 2016.
- Upcoming CourseLeaf Training for Catalog – December 5, 2016, BAL 1013C, 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm.

Strategic Planning Committee Update

- Dr. Yusuf shared that the committee wanted to be sure to have an inclusive process and the first way of doing that would be to have a web survey and she asked for Council to review the document. The survey specifically targets broad feedback for the SWOT analysis.
- Council's feedback included shortening the survey and to have less qualitative data, i.e., use check boxes for responses (aided responses). It was also suggested to weigh how much resources can be put into data analysis. Quantitative data is better for summarizing information.
- Dr. Yusuf asked for any other comments to be sent to her by November 10, 2016.
- Survey to go to all faculty and administrators. The release date has not been set yet, but it is planned to be distributed in the fall semester.

Forms & Policies Subcommittee

- The final version of the faculty certification policy will be presented to the newly constructed Dean's Council.

Graduate Assistantship Subcommittee

- The subcommittee has been tasked with reviewing the entire assistantship process from top to bottom. Dr. Porter has prioritized what should come first and the biggest priority are the offer letters.
- Dr. Porter advised that he will have tentative documents to share at the next GAC meeting.
- For the international piece, departments should be urged to have a Plan B if they intend to recruit international students as GTAs and the students cannot be placed in the classroom right away.

Multi-Literacy Center

- Dr. Wojtowicz advised Council that he met with Beth Vincelette to get an update on the Writing Center and the challenges they have with graduate students. International students need a lot of help with thesis and dissertation preparation, so the Writing Center is stretched to its limit.
- There has previously been a proposal to mentor international students. Physics hired Kathy Moulton to tutor students individually this semester.
- Dr. Vincelette mentioned partnering with the ELC to have a situation where students can get both. It would make it a much more robust operation. We need to be able to support an increase in graduate students.
- It was pointed out that domestic students can have the same issues, so maybe we should consider an idea that would be for all students.

- Part of the problem is that the Writing Center is confined to the English department's budget. How can we bridge student success? Does it make sense for the Writing Center to be housed within the English department? Yes, because of the skills needed. Since they service the University, shouldn't they be University funded?
- Broader issue – How the Writing Center interacts with other Student Success programs, meaning there are organizational issues as well, not just funding.
- As an institution, we need to expand service that is more robust.
- Challenges – Course sequences are not clear; it varies from program to program. Students need to be taught incrementally, problem posing, problem solving. Where does the student begin?
- Every graduate program should have a methodology. Is writing taught? No, but implied. It is difficult to offer a course to resolve the problem. A prospectus course could be offered, modified to be language and literature of the field.

Graduate Financial Tracking

- Are the Dean's offices in the colleges tracking graduate assistantships and funding? Yes.

Data Subcommittee

- There are lots of stove pipe systems. A discussion needs to happen with Rusty Waterfield to combine the data, and not just data for graduate students.
- Subcommittee volunteers – David Chapman, Bill Heffelfinger, Jane Dane, Bryan Porter, Holly Gaff. May want to include Jimmy Patel and David Kozoyed.

Other Topics for Discussion

- Issues arise when a graduate student receives a fellowship and his/her advisor has to serve as the PI, specifically when the PI and the graduate student disagree on how funds should be spent.
- Suggestions were given, i.e., to change the PI to the GPD instead of the advisor or perhaps to set up a research advisory committee.