

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 16, 1995

- MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Michael Weigold, Dr. David Jones, Dr. Rachel Shireman, Dr. Patricia Craddock, Dr. Patricia Ashton, Dr. Karen Bjorndal, Dr. Anita Spring, Dr. Richard Yost, Dr. David Powers, Ms. Ruth Troccoli, Dr. Karen Holbrook
- MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Pauline Lawrence, Dr. Nicolae Cristescu, Dr. Susan Frost, Ms. Lisa Rowe
- STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Richard Lutz, Mr. Robert Woods, Ms. Dorothy Long, Ms. Helen Martin, Ms. Phyl Schmidt, Ms. Julie Shih, Ms. Bernice Thornton, Ms. Coralu Roessner
- GUESTS PRESENT: Dr. Jack L. Fry, Ms. Rita Cowan

The Graduate Council meeting was called to order by Dr. Karen Holbrook at 1:07 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The minutes of the October 12, 1995 meeting of the Graduate Council were approved as presented.

Mr. Robert Woods, Acting Director of the Office of Graduate Minority Programs, was introduced.
2. The guidelines for developing a new concentration were amended in the section entitled **Assessment of Current and Anticipated Faculty for the Proposed Concentration** to include:

“Supervision: Identify the faculty member who will certify the student’s completion of the concentration requirements”

The proposal was unanimously approved as amended.
3. The Council discussed a proposal to remove the 30-hour rule for graduate student employment. Rita Cowan was present for the discussion and pointed out that if the 30-hour rule was removed, it would lessen the workload within the University. The Council unanimously approved the proposal. Henceforth, any graduate student

(except those holding J-1 or F-1 visas) may work up to 40 hours per week without Graduate School approval.

4. The Council discussed the responsibilities that are afforded to the members of the graduate faculty. Some outsiders may teach courses at UF by exception. The Graduate School does not monitor faculty assignments to graduate courses. There are several instances throughout the University where non-graduate faculty routinely teach graduate courses. Previously, and currently, departments may petition to have non-graduate faculty teach a graduate course. This is onerous for the department and a nuisance for the Graduate School. It is undesirable for the new graduate faculty system to prevent faculty from teaching graduate courses and serving on supervisory committees.

The change from the GSF/DRF system was designed to allow colleges/departments to make their own decisions about who holds Graduate Faculty status; however, some colleges appear to have low standards. Perhaps the Graduate School should provide the departments with a model set of standards. There should be an allowance for disciplinary variation, i.e., have a set of criteria, but allow for departments to make a case for deviations. The new system is an all-or-nothing decision, but it had been expected that departments would determine (and in some cases restrict) the range of responsibilities permitted individual faculty. This has not proven to be the case.

Should there be a process of reviewing current graduate faculty? Such a policy is in place, but has not been enforced in years. In the past when it was enforced in a few cases, the reaction from the departments was quite negative. One of the Strategic Planning subcommittees is looking at program review and may also consider the issue of reviewing graduate faculty.

A proposal was made to separate responsibilities for teaching graduate courses and mentoring graduate students, especially doctoral students. It was proposed that a new tenure track faculty member can (1) teach graduate level courses and (2) participate as a member of a thesis or dissertation supervisory committee with department approval. Graduate Faculty status would be needed to chair a supervisory committee for a thesis or dissertation. Also, any faculty member serving as co-chair of a supervisory committee or as the external member should have Graduate Faculty status.

The same approach could be used to remove people from graduate faculty status, but not immediately. If implemented, it should be phased in over time.

Research needs to be done on the Constitution regarding teaching privileges of faculty. A formal proposal will be submitted to the Council for endorsement. The Council of Academic Deans, the Graduate Coordinators Advisory Council and other groups will also be consulted. Then, the proposal will be voted on by the entire Graduate Faculty.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. The Council discussed proposed changes in the graduate student grievance procedure. Dr. Robert Cousins faxed some comments, which Dr. Shireman shared with the Council. He thinks the time limits proposed for the various steps are an improvement. However, he sees many weaknesses in the proposed procedure. For example, no role is specified for the department chair. The policy foregoes specific information that the chair may have. This may cause misinformation in the process. Other ways of dealing with the informal stage should be explored.

There is no way to protect the student from potential reprisals. A mediator may need to be appointed to help handle problems informally in order to avoid large numbers of formal grievances. It may be useful to have a Graduate School ombudsman.

It should be made clear up front that Graduate School is an advocate for the process, not the student. The document should also protect the faculty member. Feedback on the proposal should be sought from students and faculty who have gone through a grievance process.

If Graduate Coordinators were trained to hear the concerns of students, it may be possible to resolve more of the problems locally. A session on this topic could be included at the Graduate Coordinators workshop.

After further revision, the proposal will be sent to the Graduate Council for additional comment.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Julie Shih reported that interdisciplinary academic concentrations will now appear on students' transcripts. Concentrations within discipline will not appear but this is less important in communicating the nature of the student's degree.
2. Dr. David Jones reported that the subcommittee to develop a white paper on the nature of doctoral research is making process.

The Graduate Council adjourned at 2:58 p.m.