

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 8, 1996

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Bill Chamberlin, Dr. Nicolae Cristescu, Dr. David Jones, Dr. Pauline Lawrence, Dr. Scott Powers, Dr. Rachel Shireman, Dr. Patricia Ashton, Dr. Karen A. Bjorndal, Dr. Patricia Craddock, Dr. Susan Frost, Dr. Allan Burns, Dr. Richard Yost, Ms. Ruth Troccoli, Dr. Karen Holbrook

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Lisa Rowe

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Richard Lutz, Ms. Dorothy Long, Ms. Helen Martin, Ms. Julie Shih, Ms. Bernice Thornton, Ms. Coralu Clements

STAFF ABSENT: Mr. Robert Woods, Ms. Phyl Schmidt

GUEST PRESENT: Dr. Richard Downie

The Graduate Council meeting was called to order at 1:36 p.m. by Dr. Karen Holbrook.

ACTION ITEMS

1. The minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of February 8, 1996, were approved with one correction. On page three, line eight from the bottom of the page, Avirtually@should be Amutually.@
2. Dr. Richard Downie presented a recommendation that visiting research-only international students enroll for a minimum of one credit of supervised research or another appropriate course while they are on our campus. He presented the rationale for this recommendation. Traditionally graduate students have been hosted by colleagues on an informal basis to work closely with experts in their field. However, instead of this tradition becoming easier in an era of increased ease of transportation and communication, the movement of graduate students for this purpose seems to be more complex and more formal. There are a number of reasons for this development.
 - 1) Risk management and liability issues: Students not Ain the system@are not accounted for yet are present on our campus at our invitation and often work in labs. UF is generally vulnerable to negligence.

- 2) No charge for services rendered: Visiting scholars regularly utilize faculty, staff, and facilities without payment to UF. That is generous and certainly maintains very good relations with our overseas partners. That is often not reciprocated, however.
- 3) Increasing number of requests, especially from Europe: Growth of ERASMUS has stimulated/motivated students to seek internships outside of their home country.
- 4) Changes in immigration regulations regarding students: Such students are required to come on a J Exchange visitor visa, which once was a very flexible visa to use for this purpose but has become more restrictive.

By enrolling these students in the system, UF addresses potential liability issues, demonstrates that we are not giving free services to nonresidents, and meets the requirements of the exchange visitor program. An alternative would be to keep the current policy of a minimum of three credits for graduate students. Dr. Downie felt that a charge at this level would be inappropriate and deter further productive liaisons with colleagues abroad. We need to be careful not to discourage these interactions.

This policy would not apply to those students visiting just for a few days, but rather to those who are here for an extended time (but less than a semester, typically) to work with a professor or in a laboratory. It also would not apply to students from foreign countries who are part of a formal exchange program.

The Council raised the question: Why not offer Visiting Scholar status to student? After some discussion, it was decided that that status should be reserved for faculty.

The policy would apply only to those students who enroll at UF as nondegree-seeking students. As such, the Council agreed that these students are not really UF graduate students and should not be governed by the Graduate Council or the Graduate School. The Council was persuaded by Dr. Downie's arguments in favor of the policy and gave its blessing to it. However, the policy is not under the purview of the Graduate School. He is free to institute the policy under the aegis of the Office of International Student Programs.

3. A proposal was made to remove the restriction that only Graduate Faculty may teach graduate-level courses. The proposal states:

Any member of the University of Florida faculty may teach a graduate-level course, if s/he is assigned this responsibility by the department chair or dean of the college.

This was approved unanimously by the Council. It will be voted on by mail ballot by the entire Graduate Faculty.

During the discussion, it was suggested that a cap be placed on the number of non-members of the Graduate Faculty that may serve on a supervisory committee. However, it

was decided to separate the two issues , i.e., teaching graduate level courses vs. serving on a supervisory committee.

A second proposal to allow nonmembers of the Graduate Faculty to serve on supervisory committees without Graduate School approval was rejected. During the discussion of this proposal, it was noted that the external member of the supervisory committee is considered to be a representative of the Dean of the Graduate School and, presumably, is a more objective observer of the process.

4. Dr. Holbrook and Dr. Lutz asked for volunteers to help set the agenda for the Spring 1996 meeting of the Graduate Faculty. Dr. Karen Bjorndal, Dr. Susan Frost and Dr. Patricia Ashton graciously volunteered.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. The Council discussed the preliminary report on the Graduate Education Strategic Planning Retreat. The Council commended the committee on the hard work that went into this report. The Council was in agreement that it is a very good idea to have a strategic plan for graduate education. The next step is to produce a streamlined, readable document that summarizes the committee's deliberations. More specific objectives will be developed to support the general goal of moving UF from the second tier to the first tier. It is important to have goals in order to reallocate (or seek new) resources; we need to demonstrate what we produce in order to attract resources.

An interesting point is that various units are already doing many of the things that are recommended by some of the subcommittees. If nothing else, we can improve internal communication with respect to what we do. Current work on graduate education in IFAS, plus a recent study conducted by Dr. Shireman regarding graduate education issues, are examples of the kind of information we need to accumulate and disseminate.

A question was raised as to whether the views of graduate students are represented. It was suggested that from a student perspective, the plan should include an assessment of each graduate program, its strengths and weaknesses. It was pointed out that several students serve on the committee as well as the subcommittees. Others will have an opportunity to see the report for commentary and input. Another question was raised regarding what audiences are important. Among them are internal administrators, students, faculty, and external constituents.

The Council felt that for the strategic plan to have any meaning and impact, the Council needs to be actively involved in it. For example, one important emergent theme is program reviews. At some other schools, the Graduate Council is the ultimate authority that receives and takes action based on external reviews of graduate programs.

INFORMATION ITEM

1. Due to personal reasons, Lisa Rowe, a representative from the Graduate Student Council, is unable to continue serving on the Graduate Council. Ruth Trocolli will work to fill this position as soon as possible.

Adjournment at 3:30 p.m.