

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
April 11, 1996

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Bill Chamberlin, Dr. Nicolae Cristescu, Dr. David Jones, 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, Dr. Karen Holbrook, Ms. Laura Sullivan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Pauline Lawrence, Ms. Ruth Trocolli

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

STAFF ABSENT: Mr. Robert Woods

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 March 21, 1996, were approved with one correction. Under Action Item 3, referring to the graduate student as Ms. Sonja Radas is incorrect since she already has a Ph.D. She should be identified as Dr. Sonja Radas.
2. Dr. Rachel Shireman presented the nominations subcommittee's report on the slate of candidates for Graduate Council. It was sent back to the subcommittee with a request to include some women and to represent the humanities. The slate will be circulated to the Graduate Council by mail rather than wait until the May meeting.
3. The College of Dentistry requested a non-thesis option to allow one of their students to be awarded the degree of Master of Science in Medical Science-Oral Biology. The student is continuing into the Ph.D. program and must have this degree in order for her to qualify for a full stipend from her country. This petition was approved unanimously.

It was pointed out that the non-thesis option is consistent with Graduate School policy. The only requirement is that a Ph.D. program exists in the department. Since Oral Biology is a new Ph.D. program, the department had not yet formally requested the non-thesis option.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. The official policy regarding credit transfer from a previous degree has been that no more than 30 credits of a master's degree from another institution will be transferred to a doctoral

program. In practice, up to 30 credits have been transferred from previous Ph.D. degrees as well as previous UF masters degrees in other fields. In order to establish a policy consistent with current practice, the Council voted unanimously to modify the policy to the following:

No more than 30 hours of a master's degree or a Ph.D. degree from another institution or within the university will be transferred to a doctoral program.

The Council will deal with other credit transfer issues by exception if the dean deems their input necessary.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. The Council wants to see the actual certificate that will be used in conjunction with the Vanderbilt/UF International Executive Program. Dr. Lutz reported that the program cutoff date is November 1996. At that time, based on student demand, the decision to actually offer the program will be made. The certificate will be designed at some point after that.
2. Dr. Richard Lutz gave a report on the Graduate Student Forum, which was highly successful. There were over 140 participants and 30 faculty judges. Dr. Holbrook reported that President Lombardi told students in the opening session that the arcane titles on academic research reports are bad public relations with the general public. They need to communicate better with lay people about the value of their research. Mentors need to encourage their students to reduce jargon and broaden their audience appeal.

A discussion ensued regarding possible modification of the commencement program to help describe dissertation research more effectively. One solution would be to include an explanatory sentence about each dissertation, but this would probably make the program too long. Another option would be to omit the titles because the general audience reacts negatively to them. The titles cannot be changed; they are the intellectual property of the student and are essential to situating the dissertation in the student's scholarly discipline.

Another idea was to highlight certain dissertations that are directly relevant and understandable to the public; however, this practice would serve to diminish the others. Instead, it might be useful to prepare a pamphlet that describes the dissertations in more general terms, particularly the nature of the contributions.

It was suggested that dissertation supervisors, deans, or department chairs write a brief paragraph regarding the lay-level contribution of each dissertation. This is to be submitted by the advisor with the letter of transmittal at the time the dissertation is submitted for first review to the Editorial Office. Some members of the Council felt that there is a need for a synthesis by the department chair or a dean. After some debate, it was decided that copies

of all summary paragraphs should be sent to the department chair and dean, with encouragement that they synthesize them for use in external relations efforts.

The paragraph should summarize new knowledge and its relevance to State of Florida, the nation, society in general, and /or the discipline. A policy statement will be prepared that requires a one-paragraph lay abstract to accompany the letter of transmittal. It should include the dissertation title, the student's name, and the advisor's name. The paragraph should be used in the announcement of the final defense as well. The suggested label for it is the **Ageneral audience abstract.** It should be sent to News and Public Affairs as well as the relevant academic recipients discussed above.

3. Laura Sullivan was introduced as the newly elected Graduate Student Council representative for next year; Clay Scherer will be the alternate.
4. The time/location of the Graduate Faculty meeting was announced. It will be held on Wednesday, April 17, 1996 at the University Auditorium. It was suggested that graduate students be invited to future Graduate Faculty meetings.

Laura Sullivan distributed copies of the GAU newsletter to the Graduate Council members.

Dr. Holbrook announced a meeting to consider a special sexual harassment workshop for Graduate Teaching Assistants. They have special needs, since they are sometimes harassed by their undergraduate students. The general university sexual harassment workshops do not cover such instances.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.