

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 19, 1998
1:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Karen Holbrook, Chair, Dr. Patricia Ashton, Dr. Barbara Barletta, Dr. William Chamberlin, Dr. Christine Chase, Dr. Joseph Delfino, Dr. Thomas Gallant (substitute), Dr. Pauline Lawrence, Dr. Frank Nordlie, Dr. Michael Perfit, Dr. Hugh Popenoe, Dr. Ann Progulske-Fox, Mr. Clay Scherer, Dr. Richard Yost

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Frederick Gregory

GCAC REPRESENTATIVE: Dr. Douglas Dankel

GUESTS PRESENT: Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi, Dr. Stephen Humphrey, Dr. Rachel Shireman

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Helen Martin, Ms. Phyl Schmidt, Ms. Julie Shih, Ms. Bernice Thornton, Ms. Linda Vivian, Ms. Dorothy Long, Mr. Bob Woods

STAFF ABSENT: Dr. Richard Lutz

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

I. **ACTION ITEMS**

1. The minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of January 15, 1998, were approved with a correction to Item #4 in the second paragraph. A misplaced comma should be removed to read Environmental Engineering Sciences.
2. Dr. Rachel Shireman requested deletion of the Master of Agriculture degree and the addition of the nonthesis option to the Master of Science degree in the Department of Agronomy. It was approved unanimously with no discussion.
3. Dr. Stephen Humphrey presented a proposal for establishing master's and doctoral degrees in ecology in the new College of National Resources and Environment. Forty-four department chairs have endorsed the program proposal. Law, Business

Administration, Landscape Architecture, and Urban and Regional Planning would like to offer joint degrees if the Board of Regents approved the ecology degree program. This interdisciplinary graduate program has been designed to combine course work in the science of ecology incorporating social, political, and economic sciences while providing competence in a recognized discipline in one of these fields of study. The master's degree with thesis requirement is 36 credits. A nonthesis option will be offered on a limited basis for those students with external constraints. This option must be completed within one year and students must pass a written comprehensive examination. Doctoral students are required to declare a minor, but this may be waived by the dean, if deemed appropriate. The affiliate faculty of the college will identify appropriate core and elective courses, and the student and the student's supervisory committee will choose the specific program of study. This requirement for an external committee member is waived since the supervisory committee is already diverse by representation from two or three departments.

Slow growth is planned, allowing for advertising and funding with the expectation that one to three students at a time will be managed by 18 departments. State funds will cover two-thirds of the cost of the program and the remaining one-third will be funded by participating departments. Potential costs to the departments constitute faculty time, physical space, and support through research grants. A vigorous fundraising effort is being launched to provide a social cohort for students through visiting scholar programs. Dr. Humphrey expressed faculty concern that students in this program will be physically dispersed throughout the University and need a forum for interaction.

Currently, the College staff will be comprised of the dean, executive secretary, and program assistant. The plan adds a half-time senior clerk, projected to become full-time in the fourth year, to the college student-services office. A request has been initiated for a .40 FTE faculty who would assist the graduate coordinator in administering the program.

The Council expressed concern that the program title of ecology masks long-standing programs with specialized and traditional environment-oriented disciplines, diluting the image or esteem of existing programs. Dr. Humphrey conveyed that the reason for the program's creation is to provide a synergistic and supportive effort that would bring attention to this area of study at the University of Florida. The motion to approve the program proposal was approved unanimously by the Council as interdisciplinary ecology.

4. Provost Capaldi discussed issues related to increasing graduate enrollment. Graduate students currently comprise 18% of the total enrollment, a lower percentage than found at other AAU institutions. A larger national representation of University of Florida graduates as faculty in other universities would increase the visibility and reputation of the University.

To accomplish this goal and to maintain adequate state funding, enrollment in graduate courses is planned to increase by 250 FTE next year from the current level. Within the next three years, another 256 FTE will be added. College deans have submitted enrollment targets to be achieved within three years. Expanding 4/1 and 3/2 programs, encouraging superior undergraduate seniors to enroll in graduate courses, and building nonthesis master's enrollment are some methods for reaching the enrollment target. Increasing stipend levels for PhD students is another viable strategy. Provost Capaldi discouraged any lowering of admissions standards as a way to achieve higher enrollment numbers.

In anticipation of legislative allocations, \$2 million was distributed among the deans to use for graduate stipends at their discretion. They are required to submit a report to the Provost by June 15 specifying their planned use of these monies. Funds that are allocated by the legislature are recurring and may help increase the number of quality applicants to the University who are now lured away by better offers at other institutions. Departments must compel students to enroll in classes if they are using campus facilities, especially during the summer terms. The Council expressed concern that the limitation of fee waivers to nine credits contributed to lower FTE hours.

Faculty are disinclined to participate in interdisciplinary programs because credit is not allocated among all represented departments. Dr. Capaldi clarified that the counting of a degree for performance-base funding is totaled at the university level and not identified by department or major. Faculty credit is given to the supervisory committee chair.

5. The outgoing members of the Council agreed to serve as the nominating committee for their replacements and will submit their nominations at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.