

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
April 19, 2007
1:40 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Laurence Alexander, Chair; Dr. Kenneth Campbell, Dr. Eileen Fennell, Dr. Abraham Hartzema, Dr. Linda Hon, Dr. Jeffrey Needell, Dr. Betty Smocovitis, Dr. Christopher Stanton, Dr. Colin Sumners

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Jane Brockmann, Dr. Nicholas Comerford, Dr. Bridget Franks, Dr. Kenneth Gerhardt, Ms. Cynthia Gomez, Ms. Becky Hayes, Dr. Panagote Pardalos, Dr. Dietmar Siemann,

GUESTS PRESENT: Dr. Barbara Curbow, Ms. Barbara Earp, Ms. Megan Forbes, Dr. Robert Frank, Dr. Stephanie Hanson, Mr. Steve Pritz, Dr. Mary Peoples-Sheps, Dr. Mickie Swisher

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Karen Bradley, Ms. Gann Enholm, Mr. Gary Hartge, Ms. Anne Taylor

I. ACTION ITEMS

1. **Minutes of the March 22, 2007, Graduate Council Meeting.** Approved unanimously.

2. **Proposal for a Ph.D. in Behavioral and Community Public Health, College of Public Health and Health Professions (PHHP).** This proposal was tabled at the March Graduate Council meeting so that the faculty of the Department of Health Education and Behavior, College of Health and Human Performance (HHP), could have time to adequately review the proposal. Council allowed the department one month to review the proposal and provide comments so that the original proposal could be considered at the April 19, 2007 Graduate Council meeting. On April 17, Dean Gerhardt received a letter from the department stating that the proposal from PHHP was redundant to the concentration in health behavior under the PhD degree in Health and Human Performance. This letter was forwarded by the Graduate School in PDF format to all council members and the dean of PHHP. After consulting with the Provost, Dr. Gerhardt informed the two departments/colleges that the agenda item would be pulled from the April meeting. Dr. Alexander, who chaired the April council meeting in place of Dr. Gerhardt, informed Council that this item had been pulled from the agenda by agreement of the Graduate School and the Provost. However, several Council members wanted to discuss the response letter from HHP. Members of Council expressed opinions that the letter from HHP represented a position statement and did not include adequate data to support the assertion of redundancy, whereas the PHHP proposal was a structural document. Another view was that where an established program exists, the burden of introducing new information for a new program lies with the new program department. Another point was that the HHP letter arrived very late, with little time for council members to

reflect/review the information. Some Council members suggested that in the interest of equity to both parties, there should be the opportunity for written rebuttal, and verbal information exchange with members of both colleges/ department present. The issue of PHHP's Public Health Program accreditation visit in Spring 2008 was acknowledged. Some members noted that the late arrival of the HHP letter with its brief response and lack of specific data would not allow Council the opportunity to deliberate adequately. Another focus of conversation addressed the issue that HHP was given a 30-day response timeline after the March meeting, which Council thought was reasonable for a detailed response. It was noted that the PHHP PhD proposal implied that it had been previously discussed between both units. However, the letter from HHP indicated that such discussions had not occurred. At the end of the discussion, Council unanimously approved a motion to have a special meeting in one week (April 26) to review written documents from both colleges addressing the issue of redundancy.

Actions following the April 19 Graduate Council meeting: The special meeting was set for April 26. Dr. Gerhardt reviewed Council's motion with the Provost. It was decided that a special meeting in one week to consider new information and address the original proposal would not allow enough time to adequately review and act upon the original proposal. Therefore, the special meeting was cancelled. Dr. Gerhardt will form a committee of 2 faculty from each college and 2 Graduate Council members to meet and discuss the proposal and all supporting documentation during the summer. It is anticipated that the committee's recommendations will be presented to Council in the Fall.

- 3. Proposal for a concentration in Family and Youth Development under the programs Master of Family, Youth, and Community Sciences and Master of Science with a major in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences.** Dr. Mickie Swisher presented the proposal. There is need for students to focus more intensively on youth and their families, and how to work with them through community based programs. The 15 credits concentration has 3 core courses for 9 credits, and requires 2 additional courses (6 credits) for more extensive study. This concentration would apply to both masters degrees offered by the department. The non-thesis Master of Family, Youth and Community Services requires a 2 hour practicum, resulting in a project that is presented, which is why that degree is 32 credits. Motion: approved unanimously. Effective date: Fall 2007
- 4. Proposal to accept substitute measures for the TOEFL exam required of international applicants.** Dr. Alexander and Dr. Bradley summarized the proposal to allow alternate evaluation mechanisms of English language skills as part of the holistic admissions criteria. These methods are the TOEFL, IELTS (International English Language Testing System), MELAB (Michigan English Language Assessment Battery), or successful completion of the UF ELI program (English Language Institute). TOEFL examination sites are not always easily available for students in certain countries. The IELTS and MELAB are well-recognized alternative tests, and there are well-established rubrics to correlate the various scoring levels. Ms. Megan Forbes and Ms. Barbara Earp talked about the evaluation criteria

for the UF ELI, and that students will need to reach levels of competency in both spoken and written English before they can successfully complete the program. There are a number of students each year who do not pass the ELI examinations. Admission to the ELI program is separate from admission to a graduate program; ELI issues its own I-20s for the students. The ELI program believes it can meet the expected demand. Departments would be able to use any or all of these evaluations as part of their admissions process. Council members were reminded that they can include Academic Written English and Academic Spoken English as part of any student's plan of study. Consistent with existing policy, international students who will be TAs will be required to successfully pass the TSE (Test of Spoken English) or the SPEAK test given here on campus at the beginning of each semester. Motion: approved unanimously. Effective date: Fall 2007

5. **Proposal to modify the requirements for the GRE.** Dr. Karen Bradley presented this proposal. Current minimum admissions requirements for graduate work include a "B" average, and a baccalaureate degree from an accredited US institution or an international equivalent. In addition, all students are also required to submit appropriate GRE scores, or other approved alternate test such as the GMAT. This proposal seeks to eliminate the GRE "1000 combined score" statement from admissions pages and graduate catalog to encourage more holistic admissions evaluations. Using this combined measure conflicts with ETS (Educational Testing Service) guidelines, because validity studies have not been conducted. The Board of the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) advises against using cutoff scores. Departments will need to determine an appropriate range of GRE score components. They should post information which reflects the average range of their students GRE scores on their webpages and other admissions material. The Office of Institutional Planning and Research will continue to submit annual data to the state Board of Education on our enrolled students' GRE scores. Discussion also focused on the issue of conditional admissions, which currently must be approved by the graduate school if the student does not meet both the "B" average, and the "1000 combined GRE score." Departments will no longer need to petition the graduate school for conditional admission. Departments and colleges will need to decide the appropriate criteria for conditional admission. Students MUST be notified in writing by the academic unit as to the nature of the conditional admission. Motion: approved unanimously. Effective: Fall 2007

6. **Proposal to modify the language in the Graduate Catalog pertaining to "Required Full-Time Registration".** Dr. Karen Bradley explained the rationale behind this proposal. Students on assistantships must be appointed at ≥ 0.25 FTE to receive a tuition waiver, which is a key portion of an assistantship. Assistantship appointments of less than .25 FTE will not be permitted. Catalog language will be changed to reflect this clarification. For fellowships, the current requirement for a fulltime registration of 12/12/8 credits is based on a minimum stipend level of \$3150. This level has not been changed in 10 years. The minimum stipend level for fellowship fulltime registration will be increased to \$4,000. Discussion included information that there is not a maximum number of credits a student can enroll for in

a particular semester, but there are limitations on the number of credits that tuition waivers will cover. Motion: approved unanimously. Effective: Fall 2007

7. **Proposal for new Graduate Catalog wording to explain the extension called “Cleared Prior”.** Dr. Karen Bradley explained that “cleared prior” is an administrative concept that helps students in extraordinary circumstances, who narrowly miss one of the stated deadlines, to graduate in the next semester without having to register. The proposed language clarifies that this concept is for exceptional circumstances and is not to be used as a typical mode of operation. Discussion included information that clarification of the criteria and timelines will be very helpful to departments. It is often difficult to convene committees in the summer. The information about “cleared prior” will be posted on the graduate school website and catalog. Motion: approved unanimously. Effective date: Fall 2007.

II. INFORMATION ITEM

8. **Status of Graduate Council ballot.** The balloting began on April 12, and ends April 30. Council members were requested to encourage their colleagues to vote. As of noon on April 19, there were about 350 graduate faculty, out of 3,000, who had voted. The Graduate School will be sending email reminders each week.
9. **Information about Commencement.** The Graduate School commencement will be on Thursday, May 3. This was approved by the colleges, the president and the provost. Because the university graduation classes have gotten so large, there was the need to make several smaller college ceremonies. Yet there was the need to have one university-wide ceremony, where honorary degrees would be awarded. Several Council members expressed general faculty displeasure at this process. They felt that the faculty, and graduate students, would now have to sit through 2 ceremonies: the graduate ceremony, and the college ceremony. In addition, there was strong sentiment that the graduate students should graduate from their college, where their training occurred. The problem of lack of venues for large gatherings, except for the football stadium, was raised. Other models from large universities were presented.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.