

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
September 18, 2008
1:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Kenneth Gerhardt, Chair; Dr. Joseph Delfino, Dr. Richard Dickinson (GCAC), Dr. Maureen Keller-Wood, Dr. Michael Marsiske, Dr. Jeffrey Needell, Dr. Leslie Odom, Mr. Bret Seferian (GSC), Dr. Sharleen Simpson, Dr. Betty Smocovitis, Dr. Christopher Stanton, Dr. Peggy Wallace, Dr. Kim Walsh-Childers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Bridget Franks, Dr. Henry Frierson, Dr. Christopher Janiszewski, Dr. Panagote Pardalos

GUESTS PRESENT: Mr. Aaron Rising (GSC alternate), Dr. Zina Evans (Office of Admissions), Mr. Steve Pritz (Office of the Registrar), Dr. Stephanie Hanson (College of Public Health and Health Professions), Dr. William Mann (Occupational Therapy), Ms. Emily Pugh (Occupational Therapy)

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Laurence Alexander, Ms. Rimjhim Banerjee, Dr. Karen Bradley (recording), Ms. Gann Enholm, Ms. Stacy Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 P.M.

Action Items

1. **Minutes from May 2008.** Approved: 11 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain.
2. **Proposal to accept the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) as an alternative to the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) as part of the MHS program admission requirements.**

Dr. Hanson, Dr. Mann and Ms. Pugh present for discussion. The non-thesis Occupational Therapy MHS program was developed 6 years ago as a distance learning format for working professionals to obtain an advanced degree consistent with increasing educational changes in the field. The MAT evaluates skills that are much more applicable to the discipline than the skills evaluated by the GRE. The three AAU competing programs all accept the MAT. The MAT would be a substitute for the GRE and used as part of the established holistic admission process. Like the GRE, no minimum will be required. The College already has a successful model of using GRE alternatives for admission in another program. Council raised the question of whether approval of this alternative for this program would mean many other programs might request alternatives. This might be an important issue for other degrees in disciplines that require licensure, such as Engineering using the Fundamentals of Engineering exam. Approved unanimously for Spring 2009, pending approval by the UF Board of Trustees.

3. **Proposal to Change the Requirements for Supervisory Committee Attendance at Examinations.**

Current Graduate Council policy requires that all committee members, except one who can participate via video/telecommunication, must be physically present with the student at the qualifying and final examinations. The proposal modifies current policy to require that only the student and chair or co-chair be in the same physical location. All other committee members may participate from remote sites via technological means. Dr. Gerhardt presented this possible solution to address the growing problem of students not being able to schedule exams in a timely manner due to faculty absences from campus, especially in the summer and with our increasing international obligations.

The extensive discussion raised several issues, noting that:

- individual programs may modify the requirements more stringently, including specifying who must be present with the student, and restrictions/limits of the technology;
- an external member who is not physically present can adequately assess the situation;
- substitution of committee members would follow current policies of notification deadlines;
- if the technology fails or is not available, the exam cannot take place;
- lack of interaction and ability to read body language could detract from the quality of the defense; it is very important that the faculty be involved with the student, and not let technology control the activity;
- there should be language which requires a committee decision concerning number and location of faculty;
- it is the committee chair's responsibility that ALL committee members know current policy;
- Not all units can afford the physical resources and financial responsibility for providing this type of defense setting.

A motion was presented and seconded to change the current proposal to include the language that there must be a minimum of 2 faculty physically present with the student and one must be the chair or co-chair. This motion did not pass.

Another motion that the current proposal be tabled was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

The proposal will be revised by Dr. Gerhardt and placed on the October Council agenda for action.

Announcements

1. The Graduate School is in the process of moving to electronic submission of the ETD signature page, which will also include UF publishing agreement timelines.

Discussion Items

1. A memorandum clarifying the role of the external member on doctoral supervisory committees.

Dr. Kenneth Gerhardt presented a memorandum which was the result of multiple conversations and work of a Graduate Council subcommittee. Additional comments:

1. Make sure everyone understands that an external member has additional responsibilities
2. It should spell out specific responsibilities, even though the policies and procedures are in the Graduate Catalog
3. It was suggested that the memo provide an example of a situation an external member would encounter.

2. A draft of a regulation governing admissions of graduate students.

Dr. Kenneth Gerhardt informed council that in June, the Board of Governors (BOG) devolved the section of Florida statutes that deals with admissions requirements for graduate students (6.300C) to the local Boards of Trustees. The SUS graduate deans have been meeting to discuss implementation. There are 3 critical issues for Graduate Council and the Office of Admissions to be aware of.

1. Requirement that the Bachelor's degree must be from a regionally accredited institution:
 - There are a variety of regional and national and specialty accrediting organizations
 - Some institutions create an accrediting body to accredit themselves
 - Some legitimate institutions are working on obtaining regional accreditation
2. GRE requirements:
 - UF dropped the language requiring a 1000 on the GRE
 - Two years ago Graduate Council changed the requirements so that a student must post GRE scores and the 3 subtests must be considered as part of an holistic evaluation
 - Therefore, UF no longer maintains a minimum threshold and does not validate the use of combined scores
 - Also need to look at appropriate substitutes for the GRE
3. Language exists about exception to admission requirements for up to 10% of students.
 - What will we want for UF?

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 P.M.