

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL
October 16, 2008
1:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Henry Frierson, Chair; Dr. Joseph Delfino, Dr. Bridget Franks, Dr. Maureen Keller-Wood, Dr. Michael Marsiske, Dr. Jeffrey Needell, Dr. Leslie Odom, Mr. Bret Seferian (GSC), Dr. Sharleen Simpson, Dr. Betty Smocovitis, Dr. Peggy Wallace, Dr. Kim Walsh-Childers

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Richard Dickinson (GCAC), Dr. Christopher Janiszewski, Dr. Christopher Stanton

GUESTS PRESENT: Ms. Chandra Mitchell (Office of Admissions)

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

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

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Minutes from September 2008.** Approved unanimously.
2. **Tabled proposal from the September 18, 2008 Graduate Council meeting to Change the Requirements for Supervisory Committee Attendance at Examinations.** Dr. Frierson summarized the revised proposal concerning the stipulations about attendance of committee members during examinations if all cannot be in the same location. The revised language permits committees or academic units to set their own standards for attendance at oral examinations that meet or exceed the minimum requirements of Graduate Council. Proposal approved: unanimously. Effective date: Fall 2008.

NEW BUSINESS

Council spent some time talking about the implications of changing admissions requirements, particularly removing a minimum threshold for GRE scores. Dr. Frierson reminded the Council that ETS has always indicated that GRE scores should be part of an holistic evaluation of applicants, and not combine the components into a single number; nor should cut-scores, i.e., thresholds, be used to screen applicants. It is unlikely that strong applicants would be less inclined to apply to graduate programs if score thresholds are eliminated. Almost all AAU institutions are eliminating the use of GRE thresholds for screening purposes. Top tier institutions are complying with ETS and using GRE scores along with other criteria in a more holistic manner. UF will still require that the students submit test scores, but individual programs are responsible for determining the levels or ranges that they deem as acceptable scores. Advantages and disadvantages of having a threshold as the external reference for programs, faculty and students were discussed. Some of the points: the incorrect perception

that a score slightly below a threshold is substantially different than the threshold level; students from groups that traditionally do not score well might not consider applying or are at a disadvantage; faculty might treat students who are admitted as an “exception” differently; scores may not be predictive of desirable characteristics for a particular program. The suggestion was made that the Graduate School requires each program to articulate the admissions standards, including programmatic historical admission data and peer group analysis. The point was made that requiring each program to define criteria will make the program more vigilant in developing and maintain such criteria. It is important to have the standards published. Dr. Gerhardt reminded Council that GIMS collects data that will allow the evaluation of this granularity over time. Dr. Frierson assured Council that analyses will be performed.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 P.M.