

**MINUTES**  
**GRADUATE COUNCIL**  
January 15, 2015  
1:00 P.M.

**264 GRINTER HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dr. Henry Frierson, Chair; Dr. Ann Horgas; Dr. Christopher Janelle; Dr. Ellen Martin; Dr. Heather McAuslane; Dr. Kevin Orr; Dr. Joanna Peris; Dr. Connie Shehan; Dr. Dietmar Siemann; Mr. Nathan Blinn (GSC alternate)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr. Nancy Fichtman Dana; Dr. Amir Erez; Dr. Cindy Prins; Dr. Pamela Soltis; Ms. Courtney Reijo (GSC)

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Ms. Suzie Burns (Admissions), Mr. Rajeeb Das (Office of Institutional Assessment), Ms. Mary Ann Hagler (Office of the Registrar), Mr. Brian Marchman (Distance and Continuing Education), Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda (Public Relations), Dr. Mike Weigold (College of Journalism and Communications), Mr. Mark Zakshevsky (Distance & Continuing Education)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Rhonda Moraca, Ms. Caitlin Nelson (recording), Mr. Robert Parker, Ms. Stacy Wallace

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. Dr. Frierson wished everyone a happy new year.

**I. ACTION ITEMS**

1. **Minutes from the December 18, 2014 Graduate Council meeting.** Motion to approve was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.
2. **Form a nominating committee to create the ballot for new members to serve on Graduate Council.** Explanation: The nominating committee is traditionally made up of those members who are leaving Graduate Council. This year that includes: Ms. Courtney Reijo, Dr. Erez, Dr. Janelle, Dr. Martin, and Dr. McAuslane. The task of the committee will be to work with Dr. Duncan and Lorna Dishman of the Graduate School to come up with a slate of nominees to replace the departing members. The new members would start at the beginning of the academic year in August, 2015. Motion to approve the committee was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

**II. INFORMATION ITEMS**

3. **Graduate Programs – Distance or Self-Funded (No new items)**
4. **CIP code change from 13.0501 to 13.0301 for graduate certificate in Managing Distance Education Environments** that was approved electronically by Graduate Council in December 2012, Item 13.

### III. DISCUSSION ITEM

5. **Policy change for College of Journalism and Communication's specialization in Public Relations & Communication Management and GRE requirements.** Dr. Juan-Carlos Molleda and Dr. Mike Weigold were present for discussion.

#### **Introductory remarks:**

The College of Journalism and Communication is requesting that for this program, which will be for Spanish-speaking students and which will be taught in Spanish, the GRE and TOEFL exams be replaced with the EXADEP.

Dr. Weigold: We have one of the top three Public Relations programs in the world – certainly in the states – and are privileged to be led by Dr. Molleda. Our goal is to have global leadership in Public Relations, and professional development in all parts of the world, particularly in the developing world. Dr. Molleda has assembled a group of bilingual scholars in the field to offer the same courses and content [as the current English-only Masters of Mass Communication with a specialization in Public Relations] in Spanish, particularly to students from South America, where the students are expected to speak almost exclusively Spanish. So the questions before us are: One, do we wish to be a global leader in a language other than English? And, two, if yes, it brings us to a consideration of whether a test that has been developed for Spanish language students is appropriate for this program.

Dr. Molleda: Thank you for having us and considering our request. In putting together this program, I researched identifying an exam that would be the same as GRE. Many Spanish-speaking students and other professionals will have some knowledge of English, but to ask them to take the GRE will be an impediment to completing the application. We are proposing instead the EXADEP, which is administered by the same institution (ETS) which offers the GRE and TOEFL. It includes the competencies which we would like to see in a graduate student, and components of ESL [English as a Second Language] as well. [As for other schools who offer programs in a language other than English,] FIU offers a masters in journalism in Spanish; we believe we [UF] have an opportunity to make a difference in this field. I've been in this department for 15 years, and because of my background and relationships I receive a lot of inquiries from bilingual students for degrees and jobs.

#### **Questions:**

- Q: Will this program be distance learning? A: Yes.
- Q: Is the EXADEP the equivalent of the GRE? A: Yes, it's mostly used in Puerto Rico. Many Latin American universities have their own tests.
- Q: Are other major universities offering similar programs? A: Yes, especially in the northeast and New England area – they use this exam. We requested a list of universities from ETS, but they didn't get back to us soon enough for this meeting. Reply: That information would be helpful.
- Q: ESL is a component of the EXADEP – is that embedded in the test? A: Yes, it cannot be taken stand-alone. It generally measures the capacity for reading rather than speaking.
- Q: The entire test is in Spanish? A: Yes.
- Q: The implication is that it could be taken in lieu of the TOEFL – would there be an option to take this instead of the TOEFL in other programs? A: No, it's not a stand-alone language test. It works well for this type of program though.

- Q: Are similar exams for other languages? A: I'm not familiar with those. Reply: The implications for replacing the GRE in another language than English are pretty broad.
- Q: If students took the masters they could continue to Ph.D. but then they would have to take the GRE, is that right? A: Yes, that's right, to move from other programs into the Ph.D they have to take the GRE. If they complete the master's in Spanish mode, they would have to take the GRE also. Reply: Wouldn't it be better for those individuals to take a program in English if they want to take the Ph.D.? A: Yes, but who knows – some people will want to go on, but we expect most people to be professional-oriented.
- Q: Is this a self-funded program? A: Yes.
- Q: Your current request is simply to replace the exam – there's not a grade specified. A: No, we will need to evaluate what scores they will need, in terms of percentile, etc. in order to be compatible with UF admissions standards.

**Conclusion:**

This item will be on the Graduate Council agenda at a future meeting. The next step will be for Public Relations to begin preparation for the proposal itself, and to work closely with Graduate School staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.