

GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 17, 2016
1:00 P.M.

264 GRINTER HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. Paul Duncan (chair); Dr. Nancy Fichtman Dana; Dr. Christopher Hass; Dr. Ann Horgas; Dr. Joanna Peris; Dr. Cindy Prins; Dr. John Shea; Dr. Dietmar Siemann; Dr. Pamela Soltis; Dr. Jane Southworth; Mr. Nathan Blinn (GSC rep); Ms. Mirna Amaya (GSC alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Henry Frierson (chair); Dr. Tom Frazer; Dr. Connie Shehan

GUESTS PRESENT: Dr. Timothy Brophy (Office of the Provost); Ms. Suzanne Burns (Office of Admissions); Ms. Mary Ann Hagler (Office of the University Registrar); Dr. Andrew Noss (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences); Mr. Mark Zakshevsky (Distance and Continuing Education)

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Caroline Lentz; Mr. Matt Mitterko; Dr. Rhonda Moraca; Mr. Robert Parker; Ms. Stacy Wallace

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Minutes from the February 18, 2016 Graduate Council meeting** (Enclosure 1).
A motion to approve was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

MODIFICATION OF THE CURRICULUM OF MAJORS:

2. **Proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for a modification of the curriculum of the major in Sustainable Development Practice for the Master of Sustainable Development Practice to add AGR 5277c Tropical Crop Production to the list of Sustainable Development courses for major credit (#10300).** Dr. Andrew Noss was present for discussion and verified that this is a core course, not an elective.
A motion to approve was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

UF PUBLISHING AGREEMENT:

3. **Update UF Publishing Agreement language-Embargo vs. Restriction.**
Ms. Stacy Wallace presented a proposal from the Graduate School requesting an update to the language used on the UF Publishing Agreement. Specifically, the request asked that the term *embargoed* be updated to the more widely used term of

campus-restricted. Ms. Wallace explained that there would be no change to the restriction periods offered to the students, and that this update only addressed the terminology used on the form. She further explained that at the time UF first start processing Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs), they were one of the originators in the field. In turn, UF created some of the early language used. At the time, the term *embargoed* was intended to be used when a document's view was restricted to campus access and the term *secret* was used for documents that were blocked from view, allowing only an abstract view of the publication, during the restriction periods. Since this time, the field has grown extensively and around the country, the term *embargoed* closer aligns with our use of the term *secret*. In order to align with the current terminology used in the field and to avoid confusion to our students coming from other institutions, Ms. Wallace requested a change from *embargoed* to *campus-restricted*.

A member of the Graduate Council raised issue with a need for the terms to be clearly defined for the students directly on the form. Ms. Wallace confirmed that currently a list of definitions of these terms appears on the form and will remain in place. Ms. Wallace also addressed concerns that were raised about the ProQuest Publication Agreement completed by all of our doctoral students, although nothing in this motion concerned that form.

A motion to approve was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

2016-2019 BALLOT:

4. Selection of candidates to include on the proposed ballot for election to Graduate Council 2016-2019.

GC Member: I was quite surprised to learn that this committee prefers faculty of senior status. Is that well-known, because I did not realize that.

Dr. Duncan: The terminology in the minutes supports that traditionally the members of this committee have been of more senior status. In the past we have had a bio sketch that we have used to see how many PhD committees the faculty has served on, etc. There is no rule, but we can certainly think about having a broader election. We really value faculty with experience, and typically we think more of senior faculty being able to advise a student on their PhD programs. We do have Dr. Prins on the committee who runs a PhD program, despite her more “youthful” rank.

GC Member: Just because something is a tradition, does that mean that we have to follow it? Why preclude someone at the associate professor level and take them off the ballot?

GC Member: In addition to the experience of running committees and presiding over doctoral dissertations, we need people who have the feel for how programs have grown and evolved over time so they know what changes will impact a program and those that will not impact them as much. We consider faculty at the associate professor level, but assistant professor level is considered less than senior status.

Dr. Duncan: Current and/or former graduate coordinators bring great value to the table. If the council feels that we need to expand the ballot to include the sixth nominee we can do that, or we can approve the slate as it is. If this version of the

ballot is approved, we will create the ballot in GIMS, send a reminder in about two weeks, set a deadline and report the outcome.

A motion to approve the proposed ballot was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

5. **Draft policy on Final Examinations for Master's degrees.** Dr. Paul Duncan was present for discussion (Enclosure 5).

Dr. Duncan: This policy draft is the attempt to gather information from a few different places and present it in one cohesive document. There are four main parts of the document. The first part is the final exam and the second gives the units more autonomy whereby final exams are implemented and recorded. Third, there has to be a committee. However, that could consist of one person in a lockstep program, so it could be a faculty member in an administrative function. And, there has been the question over the past decade or so on whether or not the master's degree committee, when it is composed of one person had to be input into GIMS. This policy explicitly states that it does. Fourth, this policy attempts to soften but not ignore the physical presence requirement for the final exam. If a student is in a traditional thesis-based program, at the very least the chair and the candidate should be in the same room. But if a student is in a program that has a final project, a capstone project or is delivered online, that same requirement does not make sense. And, the committee chair has to be faculty, not staff. I can tell you from experience that the some online students really enjoy coming onto campus for their final lectures and exams. This policy just gives the department the option to change this requirement if they choose to do so.

GC Member: Historically, we have had a system of internal checks and balances, and the programs enjoy that flexibility. But, I'm not sure about students presenting to only one person and not experiencing the true "peer review."

Dr. Duncan: I would be surprised if the units move too far down this path. The intent is to give the nonthesis programs more options. Even if theses are submitted electronically, there must still be a committee and there must be a minor representative present if the student is to be awarded a minor.

Please review the document carefully and we will review and be able to vote on it as an action item at our next meeting.

6. **Dual degree.** Dr. Paul Duncan and Mr. Matt Mitterko were present for discussion.

Dr. Duncan: Matt and I have been working on trying to capture the pluses and minuses of these types of programs. Our framework for what we sent the committee for a discussion item is for your review and could be brought back as an action item. If the Graduate Council wants to do nothing, the existing way of approving these types of degrees on an ad hoc basis would stay in force.

Mr. Mitterko: We have spent two years developing the structure of the template and the policy. The template we have created is a more holistic way of informing the academic units.

GC Member: Can you give us one or two reasons why we should approve programs like this?

Dr. Duncan: First, the opportunity that these programs present reflects the outward looking/global expression of UF's willingness to collaborate. Second, I want to reiterate that these proposals are rare, but they provide genuinely innovative opportunities for faculty to collaborate through the graduate student. One of the negatives is if there is enough distinction to justify the candidate earning two degrees. The student does not do the exact same work but there is certainly overlap to the work.

GC Member: Why do we not award dual-issued degrees instead of these?

Dr. Duncan: Dual-issued degrees are a logistical nightmare, especially for European and Asian institutions. In those instances, the diploma is the legally binding document, not the transcript as it is at UF. In some places, the diploma has to be signed in real ink and, in Spain, by the actual king. The differences are such in these cases that the student suffers. With the dual degrees we're discussing now if something goes awry in any way, each program is set up so that the student could fall back on one of the two degrees.

GC Member: But they earn two degrees for one body of work? Are there different dissertations between the universities?

Dr. Duncan: They are not explicitly different, but the two dissertations could be in different languages or the abstracts in countervailing languages. We have never said that the two dissertations have to be expressly different.

GC Member: I think with these it is very important for the faculty member or student to be able to prove that there would be something quite substantial different if the student were to be awarded only one degree.

Dr. Duncan: But we do have to be careful with the language, because we are trying to protect the language that allows for the student to be awarded at least one degree if something goes wrong with the dual degree. We expect the faculty member and student to be present at the council meetings when these are voted on so they are available to explain why they are pursuing the dual degree and answer any questions the council may have.

GC Member: I have met and worked with many faculty members who interact and collaborate with other institutions but their students do not earn dual degrees. In the College of Medicine for instance, we may have students completing research in England, but it's not one of these dual degrees. And the justification with the kind we are discussing has been that the student will have access to better equipment, but that does not work for me.

Dr. Duncan: If the council did not perceive enough value in one of these proposals, they have the option to decline it. The students pursuing these types of programs take on a sufficient magnitude of work, so much so that the other institution is willing to grant the second degree autonomously. It would be worrisome if we set it up where we were approving a large number of these types of proposals a year; that would be very different than approving on the ad hoc basis as we are now.

GC Member: What precedence is there in the preeminence category?

Dr. Duncan: When Matt and I worked on the template we looked at sister institutions, big state universities like UNC and Michigan but also at small private institutions,

because they're aggressive with these. One such example is Rice University. So, I think that UF is in fairly reasonable company with these.

Dr. Brophy: A question to consider "Is the value worth the added effort? SACS takes considerable interest in these, particularly if they are between SACS accredited universities and those accredited by other entities.

Dr. Duncan: We include language in these proposals that UF's SACS accreditation cannot be used by other institutions by association. And, each proposal is signed by the Provost and has to clear many hurdles before it is signed by the university.

GC Member: Have there been any issues with ones we have approved in the past? Have any been denied?

Dr. Duncan: There have been instances when we asked too many questions in the proposal preparation phase, so the proposal just went away without making it to council. We have not had any explicit denials from council.

GC Member: These issues that we're bringing up would be good to have on the form, so the proposal gets to us with everything we want to see in it.

Dr. Duncan: We will share the template with you, because we worked hard to include all of that information.

GC Member: I think the process to approve these is fine, and there is nothing wrong with the way we look at these. This is a philosophical argument.

Dr. Duncan: The faculty members who propose these are supportive of them.

GC Member: Is the value in the awarded diploma or in the collaboration with the other institution?

GC Member: When a PhD student transfers credit, there is a limit to the number of credits that can be transferred. Are there any limits in these proposals?

Dr. Duncan: All transfer credit rules apply and must meet UF requirements.

GC Member: So a student could earn thirty credits from Ohio State, thirty from somewhere else and thirty from UF and earn two degrees? We do not ever allow a PhD degree made up of ½ cumulative credits.

GC Member: When looking at someone's resume when the PhDs have obviously been earned simultaneously, we will ask them to explain.

Dr. Duncan: Council should worry if it seems the institution is riding the coattails of UF. But most of the participating institutions have been continental European schools and most of these proposals have been in engineering or the biological sciences.

GC Member: But, the research requirement could be met anywhere.

GC Member: There wouldn't be a clear benefit to the student unless there is no disparity in the quality of the other university.

Dr. Duncan: There is much value to European students tacking on a UF degree. For UF students, there is not as much value to earn degrees elsewhere unless it is a prestigious institute.

GC Member: If there is more benefit to other universities, why do we do these dual degrees? Aren't we just concerned with UF work? How does this affect us?

Dr. Duncan: We are responsible for the UF degree. The intent here is to establish truly collaborative situations that have synergistic value.

GC Member: The other institutions do not need our permission to award separate degrees. If a student can transfer in thirty credits and be approved to transfer in fifteen more, then the issue is really copyright of the dissertations.

Dr. Duncan: If we had more of these I would worry more about the variation.

Mr. Mitterko: In our conversations with partner institutions, they want the student to remain enrolled at their institution, so their focus is on how to make it valuable to students. These types of dual degrees can benefit the graduation rate.

GC Member: Students in these programs have funding help and scholarships.

Dr. Duncan: There are funding applications for these kinds of students available through NSF and some private foundations that target these international students and dual degree programs.

GC Member: These are different than the “dual degree” programs I am used to, such as those for the M.D. and Ph.D. The type we are talking about here are not different programs and there is no standardized rule about how much overlap there can be in coursework and how different the two dissertations should be.

GC Member: Are we saying that we will reject these outright and they will be off the table?

Dr. Duncan: I would be concerned if that happened. We have spent time and received approval from the Provost on the template.

GC Member: Are we going to vote for or against, or do we just need to define what we need to see? These dual degree proposals have been reviewed and approved by Graduate Council, but the approvals seem to be of some concern to the Council.

Dr. Duncan: We can give you access to the template that we present and we can distribute that prior to the April meeting.

GC Member: What programs have made use of these types of dual degrees? What types of faculty, students and institutions?

GC Member: What action are we taking today on these?

Dr. Duncan: We have been approving these for about a decade, at the rate of about one per year. Council has three options: move to see more of these, see less or none of these, or continue on an ad hoc basis. Hopefully, we can come close to a consensus on this issue.

GC Member: If we choose to allow these, we need to set a framework for approval.

Dr. Duncan: Correct. We can expand or adhere to the current process.

GC Member: I realize that not all faculty are aware that these types of dual degrees are possible.

GC Member: It’s a concern that as faculty realize that, more and more of these will come through.

Dr. Duncan: Matt has invested a lot of work with these in communication with the faculty and the student, and sometimes they just don’t pan out. A large number would be concerning. But, these proposals are a huge investment for faculty because they work hard on the proposals and also agree to put in all of the time mentoring the student.

Dr. Brophy: There is a six month prior notification requirement by SACS, especially if the other institution is not SACS accredited.

Dr. Duncan: It would be easiest to flat refuse these, but I would be hesitant to close that door to faculty.

III. INFORMATION ITEMS:

7. Graduate Programs-Distance and/or Self-Funded (no new items).

Meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.