

**Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)**  
**Minutes for Thursday, October 10, 2013**  
**Dean's Conference Room, Constant Hall**  
**9:00 am to 10:30 am**

Attending: Brenda Neumon Lewis, Chair, Brian Payne, Bryan Porter, David Selover, Isao Ishibashi, Ali Ardalan, Bonnie Van Lunen, Lynn Ridinger, Gail Dickinson, Shirshak Dhali, Kevin DePew, Robert Wojtowicz, Ravi Mukkamala, Mary Swartz, Jane Dané, Missy Barber

Guest: Jeanie Kline

**Approval of September 12, 2013 Minutes**

- Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Announcements/Updates**

- Master's Student Full-Time Status Notification Form – Dr. Lewis advised Council that the Office of Graduate Studies was in the process of cleaning up and renumbering all of the graduate forms. The new forms will be posted on the website within the next couple of weeks. She reminded Council of the new Master's Student Full-Time Notification form that had previously been sent electronically and advised that a printed copy of the form was provided in the packet for their reference.
- Graduate Administration Workshop - The Graduate Administration Workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2013, in the Hampton/Newport News Room in Webb Center. The event will start at 11:45 am and end at 2:30 pm. Lunch will be included. Please note the start time change. Participants are encouraged to arrive on time. As part of the Graduate Administration Workshop, Dr. Lewis would like to have table leaders to facilitate group discussion. She indicated that she may be calling on the GAC members to assist. She would like a mix of GPDs and Associate Deans.
- GSO Mentoring Workshop - Dr. Lewis announced the upcoming GSO Mentoring Workshop is to be held on October 24, 2013 at 6:00 pm in the Education Building, room 131.
- GSO CV Writing Workshop - Dr. Lewis also announced the upcoming GSO CV Writing Workshop on November 15, 2013 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. The GSO will be looking for college facilitators from each college for this event. The facilitators would be faculty members to provide assistance to students within their colleges with the development of their CV and to help students with the differences between a CV and a resume.
- New M6 Master's Leave of Absence Form - Dr. Lewis advised Council of the creation of a new Master's Leave of Absence form. This form is the equivalent of the Doctoral Leave of Absence form. Dr. Ishibashi asked if the leave of absence form corresponded to what was in the policy. Dr. Lewis advised that leaves of absence have always been allowed for both master's and doctoral level students. She asked the policy review sub-committee to review the current policy and update it, if necessary.

## **Graduate Certificate Update – Dr. Jeanie Kline**

- Dr. Lewis advised Council that the Graduate Certificate updating process started last spring with a goal to notify SCHEV of all of our graduate certificate programs. It has been an on-going project with a sub-committee looking at enhancing and improving processes relating to certificates. Progress has been made; however, it has been slower than expected because it has been such a complex process. At this point, all certificates have been coded into Banner. The Admissions online application now allows non-degree students to select and enroll in a graduate certificate. Clean-up is in progress for the website and the catalog. Dr. Lewis stated that one of the internal challenges is capturing degree seeking students pursuing certificates. The sub-committee, which includes Mary Swartz, Robert Wojtowicz, Bill Heffelfinger, Laura Vann, Michael Moore, Judy Bowman, and Brenda Lewis, are continuing to work to bring resolution to these issues. Dr. Lewis reiterated that certificates are issued by the Registrar's Office. Colleges should not be issuing their own certificates. Colleges should process the "Certificate Program Departmental Certification" form through the Registrar's Office.
- Jeanie Kline has been assisting with the SCHEV notification process. The process included sending batches, by college, to Dr. Monica Osei at SCHEV. The last one was sent a couple of weeks ago. As batches have been reviewed, there were a few which required revision by SCHEV. Not all certificates have been cleared, but most have.
- Council was provided with a copy of the certificate policy in the faculty handbook and a proposed revision to the policy. The policy has not been updated since 1976. Dr. Lewis asked Council members to review the proposed policy and provide their feedback to her via email by Thursday, October 17.
- SCHEV has identified possible CAGS (Certificates of Advanced Graduate Study). Dr. Kline said that there was language that raised red flags and caused further review of a few of our certificates. If a certificate is considered to be a CAGS, then it has to be submitted as a new degree proposal to SCHEV.
- Council raised the issue of the policy being in the Faculty Handbook and asked how it could be removed. This will be explored.
- By revising our policy and specifically defining what ODU considers to be a CAGS, we can reduce red flags and be in a better position to respond to questions from SCHEV. The definition in the new policy indicates that usually certificate programs would take 9 to 21 credit hours to complete; certificates of advanced studies would take 24 credit hours to complete.
- With the new college, the policies need to be more detailed with regard to credit and non-credit.
- Dr. Wojtowicz asked about non-degree students being enrolled beyond the 12 credit hours and the graduate hold preventing registration. If a student is pursuing a certificate, they are coded differently in Banner. They have a status of certificate/life learner and they are not subject to the 12 credit hour hold. He also asked why students would complete CAGS when they can get a master's degree often with as few as 30 credit hours. Dr. Lewis said it was more common for disciplines in Education and health fields to develop CAGS for professional training.
- Dr. Lewis reiterated the challenge of identifying degree seeking certificate seekers and the importance of notifying the Registrar's Office of students receiving certificates. She advised that when a certificate is awarded there is a notation on the student's transcript like when a degree is awarded.

- Dr. Lewis referred Council to the Curricular Change Approval form included in their packets. Formerly, there was no process in place for discontinuance of a program. The form should be used and the Provost must review and approve requests for discontinuance. The Curricular Change Approval form is also to be used when creating a new certificate program or changing an existing one. Also, in the packet, is the SCHEV template. This is an external form that will be completed when a new certificate program is to be submitted to SCHEV. Jeanie Kline will contact the department to assist in completing the form.
- Once the certificate update project is complete, all of the certificates will be visible on SCHEV's website.
- Dr. Ishibashi brought up the Advanced Engineering Certificate and said that it was likely a CAGS. It requires a master's degree or enrollment in a doctoral program. Dr. Kline is to follow-up with Dr. Dhali on this. The Advanced Engineering Certificate for energy systems has been approved. Dr. Kline advised that SCHEV needs to be notified of the additional tracks.
- Dr. Lewis asked again that Council review the proposed policy and send confirmation of approval or concerns to her by Thursday, October 17, 2013. If possible, she would like to present the proposal at the Provost's Council meeting on October 22, 2013. After that, it would be reviewed by Committee C of the Faculty Senate before final approval.

#### **Report from Sub-Committee on Graduate Policies – Dr. Robert Wojtowicz**

- Dr. Wojtowicz reported that the sub-committee met on September 28. The first issue they discussed was related to students that were admitted as provisional but never updated to degree-seeking.
- It is important that provisional students be identified, limits are set on their provisional status, and the consequences for students that fail to meet the transition. The sub-committee suggests that students have 9 to 18 credit hours to meet the criteria to be degree-seeking. If they do not meet the criteria, then they will be dismissed from the program
- Dr. Wojtowicz advised Council that students that are in provisional status are not set up as provisionally admitted students in Banner. They are considered degree-seeking. There is no way to track these students in Banner at this time. It is the Graduate Program Director's responsibility to ensure graduate students are moved through the process. GPDs need to inform Admissions so the student's record can be updated. Failure to do so can impact the student's financial aid status.
- Council brought up that international students must be admitted as degree-seeking, they cannot be admitted provisionally. It was suggested that a different type of status be used like conditional instead of provisional.
- Dr. Wojtowicz discussed the reasoning behind the 9 to 18 credit hour limit to meet the criteria for degree-seeking status. Students that are full-time will complete 9 credit hours in their first semester, so ideally that would also be the time they would satisfy the criteria to be degree seeking. If they do not, they have another semester. Dr. Dhali suggested that there be no minimum listed to meet the requirement. Council agreed.
- There was concern expressed regarding offering assistantships to provisional students. Dr. Lewis advised that the rules for assistantships were different.
- Dr. Lewis requested a motion; a motion was made and approved. Dr. Lewis will take the proposal forward to the Provost's Council.

## **Introduction of Jane Dané, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management**

- Dr. Lewis welcomed and introduced Jane Dané from SEES. She is a new addition to the Graduate Administrators Council.

## **Full-Time Designation for Graduate Assistants – Dr. Brian Payne**

- Dr. Payne discussed changing the policy for full-time designation for graduate assistants and he is proposing that the number of credit hours required for full-time be based on assignment type rather than funding type. This means that GRAs would have to register for 6 credit hours to be considered full-time and GAAs and GTAs would have to register for 9 credit hours to be considered full-time for the fall and spring semesters. Dr. Payne's recommendations have been reviewed by the auditors and by legal counsel. Both have said his recommendations are ok. Dr. Payne said that the summer could be flexible with 6 hours. Council suggested proposing 3 hours for full-time status in summer for both graduate assistant categories. Dr. Payne said that SCHEV is only looking at fall and spring, so he did not see an issue with making the change to 3 credit hours for summer.
- A motion was requested and approved. Dr. Payne will move forward with his request.

## **Continuous Enrollment Policy Proposal – Dr. Ali Ardalan**

- Dr. Ardalan gave a brief history of the reasoning behind the request to change the continuous enrollment policy for PhD students that are ABD. Doctoral students who are ABD are currently required to register for one credit hour in the summer and they may or may not actually be working with a faculty member on campus. The immediate issue to address is whether or not students should be required to register and pay for one credit hour when they are not receiving faculty support. Along with that, the issue of faculty compensation for summer needs to be addressed as well.
- The current policy says that when students have advanced to candidacy, they must be continuously enrolled through graduation. This also allows them to be considered as full-time. Very often faculty are not employed during the summer. Because of that, students may not be able to get the assistance they need. So, if the students are not able to receive the assistance they need, they should have the option not to enroll.
- According to Jim Duffy, the review he conducted showed the financial implications of implementing a change to the policy and making summer registration optional are not large.
- There is a problem with PhD students not registering for the required one credit hour for multiple semesters and then being required to register and pay for those credit hours in order to be able to graduate. This causes significant hardship for the students plus it sends a negative message to students at the end of their studies at ODU.
- Dr. Wojtowicz stated that a good argument would be that doctoral programs follow the semester model, so summer is not critical. He also said he didn't think students were working on their dissertations in the summer anyway.
- It was also suggested that for the little bit of money lost, the University is more accurately reflecting the students' actions.
- Council agreed that the proposal change for students should go forward. Dr. Lewis advised the sub-committee that the proposal needs to be more detailed for the Provost's review. There needs to be greater justification and more solid numbers representing how much tuition revenue might be lost.

- Jane Dané expressed concern about the ability to know whether or not students are in a program. If they aren't registered, they aren't "here." It was pointed out that we do not have a mechanism in place to track master's students that do not have to register now. That issue may need to be addressed in a different way.
- Mary Swartz stated that the Registrar's Office is not notified in a timely manner of students' advancement to candidacy. If they are not notified, then they can't provide information back to departments.
- A suggestion was made to eliminate summer registration completely unless the students intend to graduate.
- Dr. Lewis suggested to the sub-committee that they work together to make a more formal proposal and bring it back to GAC.

### **Additional Topics to Address this Semester**

- A council member requested that the forms be renamed on the website to have the form number first. Dr. Lewis advised that we were in the process of updating the website with revised forms and would rename the forms accordingly.
- Issue of doctoral students as voting members when hiring faculty members. Some institutions do not allow students on committees, some have as non-voting members, and some have them as voting members. Dr. Lewis said that GAC can discuss further. It was mentioned that there is a student on the Dean for the College of Education Search Committee. Questions were also raised as to whether or not this issue was under GAC's purview. Dr. Lewis advised that GAC can always make a recommendation. Dr. Ardalan suggested that the issue should be addressed by a broader committee, not GAC.
- Summer compensation for faculty – there is some discussion about compensation being dependent on the number of students in the class. Dr. Ardalan asked for a list of the members of the summer school task force so this issue can be addressed. Jane Dané will send the list to all of the associate deans.

### **Other Topics to be Addressed**

- Maternity/Medical Leave Policy for Graduate Assistants
- International Teaching Instructor