

**Graduate Council Meeting
January 28, 2005
Minutes**

Faculty Members Present: Dave Cannon, Cindy Coviak (chair), Cynthia Grapczynski, Rita Kohrman, Mark Luttenton, Nancy Mack, Barb Reinken, Ben Rudolph, Roger Wilson

Absent: William Crawley, George Grant, Jeff Ray

Student Members Present: Dorjee Damdul, Rachel Stern, Jennifer Treat

Administrative Ex-Officio Present: Claudia Bajema, Bryan Cole, Irene Fountain, Priscilla Kimboko

Absent: Lynn Blue, Steve Lipnicki

C. Coviak called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

1. Approval of Minutes

a) November 5, 2004 minutes:

Action: C. Coviak noted corrections. B. Reinken motioned to approve, B. Rudolph seconded. November 5, 2004 minutes approved.

b) Dec. 3, 2004 minutes:

Discussion: R. Kohrman asked that in the minutes "Rita" be distinguished between R. Grant and R. Kohrman. Brian Cole represents CUII, not Continuing Ed. Under "Report from Colleges," CLAS/Biology's report should indicate the PSM proposals, not biology proposals.

Action: B. Rudolph moved and B. Reinken seconded approval of minutes. December 3, 2004 minutes approved with corrections.

2. Approval of Agenda

Discussion: C. Coviak has additions which she will address after Report from the Dean, regarding actions she has been working on for the GC. Other items will be addressed under new business.

Action: B. Reinken motioned to approve the agenda. B. Cole seconded. Agenda approved.

3. Report from the Dean

Discussion: P. Kimboko discussed the graduate student roundtable. The students were very articulate and made good comments. GC members could refer to the handout for comments. The students who participated are not a totally representative group. BlackBoard is not getting a lot of traffic except for those who participated in the event. GC members were asked to let their students know about it. Announcements can be posted that are of interest to grad students. Please encourage them to use the BB site.

Some students requested that Grad Studies send blanket e-mails to them. This is difficult and requires permission. She asked what other ways might there be to reach students.

The graduate strategic plan is coming along well. Some GC members attended. The facilitator was good. The next step is to put together some action steps. Another meeting will be set up, but will probably be a smaller group.

The grad directors are meeting this afternoon. GC members are welcome to attend. Some of the topics to be discussed are: help for grad students in the Writing Center, admissions, graduate strategic planning and a session on the R & D Center's annual report. Please note that it funds faculty and student travel; and also monitors human and animal subjects. The meeting will also cover the outcome of the fall presidential research grants. Three students from CJ and one from Biology were funded. The next deadline is March 15 for work students will do in the summer. The research they are doing can be related to their thesis or project.

P. Kimboko discussed the Council of Grad Schools' annual survey. Phil Batty in Institutional Analysis completed the report this year. The numbers are for Fall 2004 enrollment. There is information on gender, part-time, full-time, ethnicity, and so on, in each program. It is an excellent report and is part of a national report on grad enrollment. We will check into how DPT is classified and counted. CGS provides the categories, thus they do not have a category for every degree program GVSU has. Some programs, like Reading, are included in the "Other" education category.

R. Wilson noted that the numbers reflect a societal trend, e.g., more women in grad programs.

C. Grapczynski inquired about the health and medical sciences datasheet. Those numbers look low; e.g., there are grad degrees in Biomed, OT, PT, PAS, and Nursing. The Grad Studies office will check with Phil Batty to see how those were counted.

4. Report from GC Chair

Discussion: C. Coviak reported on tasks that she had carried out on behalf of the GC. First, she followed up with the chair of UCC regarding misdirection of proposals.

C. Bajema noted that there had been some difficulty finding out what happened to SCB's proposals. P. Kimboko cited the PSM programs as an example of the process not going well. M. Luttenton noted that the emphasis in aquatic sciences and course proposals have been in the system a long time. Additionally, the online distribution of proposals has not worked well.

R. Wilson noted that Rita Grant is stepping down as UCC chair. The GC will continue to monitor any graduate actions that arise.

The other tasks she had carried out were 1) to compose memo of support for Laura VanderBroek concerning a writing course she is developing for grad students; and 2)

composing a memo to get Grad Director representatives to assist the policy subcommittee to review and recommend changes in the grad bulletin. Steve Lipnicki had volunteered. The subcommittee is to be formed this coming month, and will include S. Lipnicki, a person from the policy committee, and two grad directors. Revisions need to be done by the end of the calendar year, while some changes might be finished sooner.

P. Kimboko stated that the Provost wants to make changes to the whole university bulletin, so the timing is good.

5. Report from GC Curriculum Committee

Discussion: R. Wilson and B. Reinken met with the UCC Chair a week ago to discuss what the UCC expects from the GC curriculum committee. This subcommittee must articulate baseline, minimum standards as to what a grad programs/courses should look like. GC-CC is not to look at staff and resources – UCC does that. We are to look at content. CC's are supposed to send copies of the minutes to UCC as they help UCC with their discussion. P. Kimboko suggested looking at the strength of credentials of faculty.

B. Reinken addressed the CG-CC minutes. The chemistry concentration proposals were approved some with revisions. The method of distribution has changed. GC-CC will send hard copies to GC-CC members. Documents will post on e-mail and BlackBoard.

B. Reinken went to the Provost's office to sign off on documents. Lisa Haight has only hard copies; she is not receiving the electronic version of proposals.

GC divided into small groups to discuss criteria for graduate level programs/courses through analysis of what was evident in the Chemistry concentration documents.

Results of small group discussion:

- Students should be able to identify gaps in knowledge and be self-reflective and critical. Be able to challenge ideas, be critical of what is read, and be able to develop an argument
- Programs should have a baseline for entry level knowledge that students could build on (e.g.; the chem. program that accepts only chemistry teachers)
- Indicating a baseline competency for entry into programs should be applicable in all disciplines
- Including the research component; the Chemistry concentration specified that it is early in the program
- Address research in 3 ways, 1) teaching participants to be consumers of research; 2) giving them the ability to conduct research; 3) applying research to practice so they can make informed decisions
- Authors of documents are modeling what is expected of students
- Teaches students the very best and most recent knowledge in their fields
- The program should show an element of building the knowledge; documents should follow logic of what students are learning. However, concern here was that this could speak to having sequencing in grad programs.

- Fostering independence in students for their own learning; encouraging students to facilitate their own learning
- Emphasizes mentoring
- The sample proposal makes a specific statement of how students need to begin to understand the nature of scientific research, which speaks to a liberal education foundation
- Breadth and depth of content; students need to be able to think of things from more than one perspective, be able to compare and contrast opinions based on evidence.

B. Reinken will draft a proposal to present to Program Directors to get their input. These standards for reviewing curricula will have to go through UCC. The standards will be generic and minimal, represent what is expected at GVSU of all grad programs. After the Grad Directors review it, other input will be obtained, e.g., from deans.

M. Luttenton reflected upon the issue of applying this strategy for new programs, but the necessity of also deciding how the expectations and standards would be imposed on existing programs.

6. Report from GC Policy Committee

Discussion: R. Wilson reported that this committee has not met since before the break. The policy committee is looking at timetables to get together. A memo was sent to the policy subcommittee on things that need to be covered. A number of things that came up at strategic planning are pertinent to this committee.

7. Report from Graduate Students – Results and Comments from Grad Student Roundtable

Discussion: D. Damdul provided a handout of the roundtable summary. Most of the programs were represented.

- Students desire more grad assistantships and scholarships
- Inadequate computer lab resources, library journals, lack of resources in the library
- Grad students would like a unified voice
- A Writing and Research class, and thesis need to be emphasized. Students did not have an understanding of research so they have a problem with knowing what constitutes plagiarism. Writing help is needed.
- They feel they are disconnected from each other and want to have more social events that fit grad students' schedules. Most of the time they want to attend programs but they have to be in class.
- Distinguish between grad and undergrad; grads feel their status needs to be respected; e.g., differences in library resources, and other policies for grad students. Issues exist regarding the policies by which grad students hired as adjunct faculty are governed. They are treated as students, not employees.
- Strong comments on pros and cons of a grad student senate. Many are very pro, but others are suspicious of the extra layer. To others, that is the answer to all

- their problems. Most of them feel they don't know how it would work; more discussion is needed on a grad student senate.
- Students feel the Grad Council is important for grad students; but they have very little knowledge of the GC.
 - The need to address diversity; this is very broad, not just racial, gender, age, etc.; it can promote a good academic environment, with different ideas and issues. Students are open to this.
 - They don't have a forum or opportunity where they can have scholarly expression, e.g., their skills and knowledge need to be fostered through other opportunities.

The grad student forum is just the beginning. What is next? Is it a grad student senate? Students want follow-up.

J. Treat presented the evaluations. There were many good comments. Some issues were more relevant than others, e.g., library and resource issues; communication between programs. Students feel isolated. At the roundtable, they enjoyed hearing from other disciplines. Regarding using BlackBoard, some were optimistic, others not. Many want to get e-mails. It can be difficult to do for great numbers of recipients. One suggested electronic newsletters.

Grad students want to know what resources are available to them. They talked about orientation. They want to extend it to have a week long. Extracurricular activities, parking, scholarships, assistantships, more benefits, support services, a grad lounge, and a grad student voice are desired. There was also concern about policy and procedure as far as grad study goes. What do they want the grad student reps to be doing on their behalf? They want reps to facilitate communication; everything that is discussed in the forums should be expressed to the GC. They want contact information for reps and to have them be part of orientation. They want the GC to not to stand in place of a senate but want to advocate and provide more events.

P. Kimboko said that Steve Lipnicki, Pew Campus Student Services Coordinator, has initiated the process to create a graduate student organization; to get it on the roster and eligible for funding. With BlackBoard, we can publish an electronic newsletter. However, mass e-mails are considered spam. The communication issue is important.

C. Coviak suggested communicating with the people who attended. Have them pass it on to people in their area. Then ask them to send it to others. It will have to be a staged process until P. Kimboko can get permission to send mass e-mail.

Alternative methods of communication were discussed.

Now that this information is compiled, it can be made available to students to view and provide feedback.

C. Coviak related the grad student organization to the strategic plan discussion, regarding making graduate studies known and more visible to the larger community of faculty on campus. The GC is here to help if students want that help. When talking about strategic planning, we discussed ways to educate the university. Grad students who want to have a voice and have someone deal with issues need to know that there is someone doing this. C. Coviak has developed a list of things to do, including speaking to the faculty senate. The student voice can be part of it.

P. Kimboko had asked the provost to have an opportunity to present the results of the grad student roundtable to the Dean's Council.

C. Coviak will put ideas for how she thinks council can proceed with some of these ideas from strategic planning on BlackBoard. On the theme of educating the greater university and getting access to resources, please let C. Coviak know what your thoughts are.

Next meeting, February 11 at 9:00 AM in 303C DEV. There is a tentative meeting scheduled for February 25 with a different agenda than the regular meeting, possibly with Grad Directors re: the strategic plan.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:06 AM.

Minutes approved 2/11/05.