

**Graduate Council Meeting
Minutes
September 24, 2004**

Present:

Faculty Members: C. Bajema, Dave Cannon, Cindy Coviak, Cynthia Grapczynski, Rita Kohrman, Jeff Ray, Ben Rudolph, Elaine Schott for George Grant, Roger Wilson

Graduate Student Member: Dorjee Damdul

Guests: Rita Grant

Ex-Officio: Claudia Bajema, Brian Cole, Steve Lipnicki

Staff: Irene Fountain, Priscilla Kimboko

The meeting opened at 9:05.

Council members were reminded that, if they could not attend a meeting, they could send a substitute so that their College has representation.

1. Approval of Minutes

Discussion: Two items in the minutes were agreed to last week. They are: 1) the GC would look at the strategic plan to help with prioritizing things on policy side; 2) the GC would split activity into two subcommittees that work independently and come together to full Council. One would be curriculum related; the other, policy related.

Action: The GC will take more time to review the minutes and wait until the next meeting to approve them.

2. Approval of Agenda

Rita Grant is on the agenda, and will be discussing how the GC should work in relation to UCC, plus GC will hold a discussion on strategic planning.

Action: The agenda was approved.

3) Report from the Dean

a. Meeting with Provost

P. Kimboko had met with the Provost and had talked about the GC and strategic planning. The Provost would like to discuss her thoughts on strategic planning and graduate education. She will attend a GC meeting in October.

b. New Members

Dorjee Damdul was nominated by his program and the Student Senate appointed him as one of the two Graduate Student members. Another student was appointed as well, but has conflicts on Friday mornings. There were four nominations; so possibly one of other two can serve. Dorjee Damdul is a grad student in the School of Communications. This

is his second year. He is the GA in the GSGA office. P. Kimboko explained his role with grant searches and his activism with Tibetan issues.

c. Sample Meeting Schedule

P. Kimboko distributed a tentative schedule, suggesting that subcommittees meet on certain dates and meet with the GC as a whole less frequently.

d. Updates on CLAS/CCPS Elections

CLAS is waiting for A & H nominees. Neal Rogness had indicated they may have elections next week. One CCPS person had withdrawn because of schedule conflicts. They are having a hard time finding someone to serve on Friday mornings. Today, Elaine Schott is subbing for George Grant.

4. Discussions

a. Rita Grant, UCC and Graduate Council Interface

P. Kimboko introduced Rita Grant, chair of the UCC. As GC is new faculty governance committee, picking up some of the matters previously handled by UCC, her input is needed. P. Kimboko is not the chair, but has been serving as such until the GC holds elections. P. Kimboko explained to Rita the things the GC discussed last week: what does it mean to evaluate a course as a graduate course? The GC had referenced GVSU/UCC materials and others. There were interesting ideas from Sonoma's critical thinking community.

i. How GC Works with UCC

R. Grant opened her discussion, saying that UCC is excited that there will be a mechanism for graduate review. The UCC is looking at this as being parallel to the Gen. Ed. Subcommittee. Over the last three years, that subcommittee has evolved. There previously had been a lack of communication and duplication of effort, e.g., questions were asked at subcommittee level but discussions were not communicated to UCC. This is one reason why UCC had asked to make sure that GC has representation on UCC. C. Grapczynski and R. Wilson are both on the UCC. Gen. Ed looks at how the course fits into the Gen. Ed. curriculum. The GC will be looking at courses but will probably look more at programs than Gen Ed does. UCC looks at them from the university's perspective. This review makes sure gen. ed. issues are taken care of. The issue of what to do with graduate courses came up at UCC last year. There were a large number of undergraduate courses being recommended for one graduate program. UCC worked with P. Kimboko to come up with guidelines as to what courses have to include in order to be part of a graduate program. The GC might want to review and make further recommendations. GC's role can be to set policy as to what goes into a graduate program. UCC will look at proposals to see if there is any balancing to be done; e.g. resource demands between grad & undergrad. One big question is always, how many resources will get diverted from undergrad for a grad program. If undergraduate programs are understaffed, then grad programs are, too. Part of the UCC's job to ask those questions and look at overall policy. UCC's questions will diminish because the GC will be asking those.

How it works with the Gen. Ed. Subcommittee: After their chair approves and the dean signs, the proposal goes to academic governance, then the Provost's office, to Lisa Haight. She logs proposals and sends to Gen. Ed. Rita will know when something is in the log. The UCC wants to have things submitted electronically and are meeting with college curriculum committee (CCC) chairs and clerical staff in each dean's office to institute this change. Submissions will be the original copy with all signatures; and one hard copy for the files. Everything else will be electronic. Lisa makes copies and sends to the Gen Ed, which reviews the submissions first and gives their recommendation, and UCC then put it on the agenda. Gen Ed works this way: if the proposal is not approved, they send it back to the originating unit. There has been an argument that UCC could override Gen Ed. If Gen Ed does not approve a course, there is something wrong with it. If the GC says no, UCC would probably not approve it either. If GC sees a problem, then it should go back to the college. UCC makes recommendations on program proposals. Programs sometimes withdraw their materials when UCC asks questions. The Chinese Studies program is a good example. This was sent back to the college to retool. That will probably be the protocol to follow most of the time. In the beginning, Grad Council will have to establish criteria for overall program reviews and what elements each specific course has to meet.

Now that there is a formal requirement to have UCC representation on the GC, this will help with communication issues. With Gen Ed., their UCC rep only comes to meetings when there are gen. ed. issues. UCC sets aside 2 weeks per month to look at prospecti, final plans, and policy issues, and 2 weeks to work on course proposals and routine things. Proposals from gen. ed. are all done in one meeting so that person only has to come once a month.

ii., iii., iv. Criteria & Checklist for New Course & Program Proposals

GVSU has to have established guidelines for grad courses. The university has a minimum. 33 credits for grad programs; some have more. The biology masters came through last year; UCC agreed there had to be 33 grad hours and undergrad hours could not count toward the program. There are programs that have far more than 33; but have a few undergrad credits. Regarding tentative guidelines for cross listed courses: GVSU came up with a policy long ago. There can be cross listed courses, but there has to be in the proposal a plan for both levels of courses. The best place to establish policy on grad courses is with the GC.

P. Kimboko stated that the confusing issues with the graduate course numbering system should be something the GC will try to deal with. Some programs don't follow the university policy. R. Grant said that the numbering system is in the faculty handbook. The UCC reviewed it last year. UCC will make sure CCC chairs abide by it from now on.

Discussion of 500/600 level courses ensued. An interesting issue to be discussed is whether undergrads can enroll in graduate courses. They are prohibited from enrolling in 500 but can enroll in 600 level courses. The rule about undergrads is that they must have at least 85 undergrad credits and a 3.0. The GC can look at this policy.

R. Grant indicated that the UCC had reviewed the PSM/Bio Programs, and questioned why they are not housed in CUII, but CLAS. The term “interdisciplinary” was used in their documents. They had suggested that CUII is an extra layer of administration they prefer not to deal with.

At Dean’s Council, the Provost demonstrated the new online faculty handbook. However, there is no mention of the GC except in the Senate bylaws. It is not in any diagrams, flowcharts, etc. The GC can review the whole faculty handbook to see where it should be included. When the GC prospectus was done, the committee had proposed where the GC would fit in the matrix of curriculum procedures. The GC and UCC can look at those together to be sure we agree.

Regarding the DPT curriculum, the GC members will need to receive it at least one week prior to reviewing it. GSGA staff can provide support, make copies, and distribute the documents.

Per R. Grant, UCC has scheduled a review of PT and OT curricula, but will hold off on the final approval until the GC takes a look at it. Normally, the GC will get it first, but the DPT was started last year.

The PSM/Bio programs were asked to send answers to everything. UCC had not seen the course proposals yet. The GC will not review these new programs, but could use them to start looking at the full program review process.

R. Grant discussed numerous situations that interfere with a smooth flow of the curriculum review process: a final plan moved through without courses. There had been interim approvals, but the courses were rewritten and finally got approval. A final plan should not be approved without courses. The DPT was done the same way. It was program already, but shifting from a masters to a clinical doctorate. Most courses are course changes rather than new course proposals. If more than three boxes on the course change form are checked, it is usually considered a new course.

Regarding course numbering, if a course is killed, the number cannot be resurrected for ten years. This avoids problems with people taking different courses, but having the same course number several years later. However, DPT could not kill so many courses and still be able to offer their curriculum. It will work for them, since their students are go through a lockstep cohort program.

v. UCC Forms/Establishing Criteria

R. Grant is using a checklist for proposals that come in to ensure that they are complete. With the volume the UCC receives, they were often missing copies or the proposals were incomplete. They now don’t get logged now until they are complete.

With online submissions, the goal will be to prevent people from submitting materials that have missing answers. If they skip a question, the program will prevent them from

continuing. The UCC is also developing a template for the syllabus of record. Everything that is needed will be on the document. For example, they recently got a proposal with a grading scale that was not the department's scale. Questions such as how student assessments are going to happen, e.g., a term paper, will be on the syllabus of record.

Students are interested in having a syllabus of record made available to them. It helps them decide what courses to select. R. Grant is working with the provost and students on that.

Students need to understand that the syllabus of record sets a minimum for the course. However, some departments have the same thing for all their syllabi. Others have major topic areas but not the specifics.

A graduate syllabus of record would have fundamental differences from an undergrad syllabus. There are two reasons why a student would want a syllabus of record: 1) because the professor teaches whatever they want; 2) they want to have a general idea of what the course covers before they sign up. This way they know if they want to take it without having to go to the class and find out it's more than they can handle and have to drop. It is more difficult for students to find another course than it used to be. Many are full.

One problem with a syllabus of record is that students may be given an assignment and then complain because it's not on the record.

Some syllabi submitted do not have the correct number of hours on them; examples of faculty coming from elsewhere and writing syllabi to fit quarter systems, longer semesters, etc. were cited.

In programs like nursing, the syllabus of record has to fit the standard of the accrediting body with regard to prerequisites, hours, etc. A syllabus of record makes them have accountability.

R. Grant wants the GC input on syllabi of record for graduate courses. Milt Ford had written a document about objectives for College Four that may be useful. The UCC will start adding helpful hints on the UCC website, e.g., frequent problems with proposals or frequently asked questions.

Another thing to add to the syllabus of record would be faculty qualifications to teach grad courses. Accrediting bodies might have standards. Faculty may have practitioner degrees rather than terminal degrees. Programs such as music may have different kinds of faculty expectations. Also, the program must have more than one faculty member to support the program and qualified to teach courses.

The process to drop a course is that if it's not offered in 5 years, Lynn Blue sends a list. UCC sends a memo. If the program hasn't offered a course in that many years, what is

their plan to offer it? If there is no plan, the course is dropped. This raises issues with required vs. elective courses.

R. Grant asked for recommendations on the various course forms that UCC uses.

**b. Strategic Plan: Review, Revise, connect with University
Vision/Mission/Values/Goals/Objectives/Strategies**

P. Kimboko discussed the “1999” handout, which was created after the NCA visit. This document has information that the GC should look at. One of the concerns at the time was with the direction of graduate education. P. Kimboko was hired as Graduate Dean in response to that need.

The GC will look at the vision, mission, and values statement on the GVSU Strategic Plan and see how they relate to the graduate strategic plan. The GC’s objective is to see that all graduate goals are in line with university’s.

Discussion: C. Coviak volunteered to be the temporary chair to begin the discussion of critical issues.

Action: J. Ray motioned; B. Rudolph seconded. Motion approved.

Discussion: C. Coviak began the discussion of the strategic plan, looking at the vision and mission and see what is stated concerning graduate education. The graduate strategic plan document preceded the university strategic plan.

Also not present is the relationship of grad ed. to a liberal education, but it is implied. It would be easy to integrate liberal education that reflects the university’s mission. Liberal arts graduate programs have begun to be approved, e.g., English and Biology. Traditionally, GVSU focused on professional programs.

There is not much emphasis in the graduate vision on the graduate student experience; but there are comments regarding superior student centered teaching. The document does not define student centered teaching. Thus, it may fall under ‘values,’ which is an abstract idea. D. Damdul offered that the teacher acts more as facilitator and students have more interaction. Some teachers do this, but others are lecturers. ‘Student centered’ suggests more involvement from students.

B. Rudolph posed the question: is looking at the pedagogy the GC’s role? Different subject matter benefits from different types of teaching. Is that up to the GC to prescribe?

Council members agreed to break into groups at the next meeting to discuss the three separate pieces. The groups will look at goals and objectives, then strategies, and what is it the GC wants to accomplish. This way, the GC will give graduate education a voice in the university strategic plan, which is due to have 3-5 year strategies and action plans by March 2005.

Review of the three goals in the graduate strategic plan can also help set an agenda for the GC, regarding which policies and actions to focus on.

Action: The GC selected their discussion groups as follows:

Role of Graduate Education in the University: C. Coviak, S. Lipnicki, D. Cannon

Relationships with publics: B. Cole; D. Damdul; J. Ray; B. Rudolph

Resources: C. Grapczynski; R. Kohrman; R. Wilson

Discussion: There is currently nothing in the plan that addresses how the students are integral in their own education, student government, assessment, and so on. There is no unified grad school plan to assess students and achievement at a broad level. This relates back to ‘what is student centered teaching and learning?’ This piece was not previously addressed because there was no organizational structure in place (the Graduate Dean, the Graduate Council). It was agreed that there graduate students may want to create a graduate student council. With the number of fulltime grad students at 807; and a total of 3700, this could be done. However, full-time students don’t represent all the student issues, so part-time students would need to be included as well. This Graduate Student Council would probably need to be registered as a student organization and a governing body, just like the current Student Senate. Currently the Student Senate holds the funding for all the other student organizations. Grad students can sit on the Student Senate, but it doesn’t work well.

5. Reports from Colleges

No reports given.

6. Adjournment

The GC now has C. Coviak as temporary chair. There is no release time for the chair. The Grad Studies office will provide support to relieve the chair of clerical duties. The chair will help set agenda. CLAS will need a couple more weeks to elect members. The GC will elect a permanent chair when CLAS joins.

S. Lipnicki handed out Maya Angelou tickets.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10.

September 24, 2004 Graduate Council minutes approved on October 8, 2004.