

## Graduate Council 2010-2011 Annual Report

Prepared by: Mark Luttenton, Chair

**Graduate Council Faculty and Administrative Members:** S. Alaimo (CCPS), C. Bajema (ex-officio), W. Boeve (CHP, vice chair and acting chair during fall), S. Borders (CCPS), A. Bostrom (KCN), D. Cannon (SCB), S. Choudhuri (PCEC, sabbatical replacement during winter), B. Cole (ex-officio), N. Diarrassouba (COE), D. Epple (CCPS, substitute for S. Borders 2010-2011), I. Fountain (administrative), T. James-Heer (ex-officio), P. Jorgensen (PCEC), S. Lipnicki (ex-officio), V. Long (UL, Chair of Grand Council Policy Subcommittee), A. Lowen (SCB), M. Luttenton (CLAS, Graduate Council Chair), J. Montag (ex-officio), J. Potteiger (ex-officio), M. Staves (CLAS, Chair of Graduate Council Curriculum Subcommittee), J. Stevenson (ex-officio), S. Sridhar (CLAS, sabbatical replacement during fall) R. Wilson (COE)

**Graduate Council Student Members:** A. Crosby, J. Amisi

**Ex-Officio Students Attending:** A. Schulte, Y. Nath, J. Ott

The Graduate Council (GC) convened on September 3, 2010 and met monthly during fall and winter semesters. The GC will conclude business on April 22, 2011. Because the GC addresses policy issues and reviews graduate curriculum proposals, the members of the GC not only serve on the GC, but also serve on either the Graduate Council Curriculum Subcommittee (GC-CC, Mark Staves, Chairperson) or the Graduate Council Policy Subcommittee (GCPSC, Valeria Long, Chairperson). Consequently, the GC is in the unique position of reviewing graduate curriculum actions and reviewing, refining, and proposing graduate policy. Because curriculum proposals often generate questions/issues related to graduate program policy, this continues to be a functional model. The GC-CC and GCPSC generally met twice each month in addition to regular GC meetings. Both subcommittees have committed significant time and effort during the 2010-11 academic year. The GC-CC reviewed over 100 curriculum proposals including the College of Education Experimental Program Change, the PCEC program change proposal (creation of a new graduate biomedical engineering program), the Certificate in Non-profit Sustainability and the full-time MBA program change proposal, among others. The GCPSC proposed/revised several policies and spent considerable time researching standards to develop new or revise existing policies. All discussions were conducted in the context of the GVSU Strategic Plan.

The GC received from the ECS a memo directing GC action for the 2010-2011 academic year. The GC was charged with three primary tasks in that communication including:

1. Propose policy and procedural revisions to the language in the Faculty Handbook to promote high quality, uniformity, and consistency among graduate programs within the university.
2. Examine policies and propose revisions or develop policies where necessary concerning: (1) student theses, dissertations and doctoral research projects requirements; (2) university wide graduation degree audit policies and practices; and (3) fostering a graduate student community (e.g., social, or a graduate-level "Student Scholars Day"?).
3. In collaboration with the Academic Policies and Standards Committee, examine the degree to which, if at all, grade inflation occurs at the graduate level at Grand Valley within its various Colleges and programs in comparison with its peer institutions and share those finding with the Executive Committee of the Senate along with any committee recommendations for action.
4. Assess the extent of dual-listed courses (400/500 and 400/600) across the university, and propose policy development and revisions, if deemed appropriate.

**Charge 1:** The Graduate Council in total and GCPSC specifically has continued to discuss issues that currently lack policy, and review existing policy that influence uniformity and consistency across graduate programs. The GC is acutely aware of the need for clear policy governing graduate education, particularly as graduate offerings have expanded. Discussion and work on several policies (either revisions or new policy) has been ongoing since spring 2010 including graduate admission categories and standards for graduate faculty. Work on these policies was complete during fall 2010. Several issues including dual degree programs and academic review and dismissal will continue into 2011-2012. Additional issues continue to emerge and the GC acknowledges that much work remains to fully define policies and procedures relevant to graduate education, but the GC remains committed to the task.

**Charge 2:** During 2010-2011, the GC completed development of policies for (1) student theses and dissertations. Policies relating to doctoral research projects were not included in this policy. To address (2) university wide graduate degree audit policies and practices, GCPSC determined that policies addressing several related topics needed to be completed before degree audits could be addressed. Work on those policies has been completed and include:

1. Graduate Academic Policy on the Minimum Graduate Program Grade Point Average Required for the Award of a Graduate Degree
2. Graduate Academic Policy on the Minimum Number of Credits Required for the Award of a Masters Degree
3. Graduate Academic Policy on the Award of Two or More Masters Degrees
4. Graduate Academic Policy on the Transfer of Credit to a Graduate Program
5. Graduate Academic Policy on Approval of Course Waivers, Course Substitutions, and Individual Program Plans

These policies provide a framework which can be used to establish graduation audits at the graduate level. Finally, the GC addressed (3) fostering a graduate student community, through support of actions and proposals initiated by the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) representatives to the GC.

**Charge 3:** The GC has completed a report of findings and recommendations and has forwarded that report to the Chair of ECS.

**Charge 4:** Prior to 1993-94, GVSU supported dual-listed courses at the 400/500 level. Starting in 1993-94, GVSU abolished dual-listed courses, and instituted the dual-credit form. The GC determined that currently, some programs are *de facto* using a dual-listed course model. During 2010-11, the GC deemed it appropriate to reinstitute the dual-listed course format and developed a policy to guide the development of such courses. That policy, Graduate Academic Policy on Dual-Listed Courses, was approved by UAS.