

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

January 15, 2003

100 KRESGE LIBRARY

APPROVED: 29 Jan 2003

Present: Beth Black, Randy Gu, Ranald Hansen, Lisa Hawley, Mildred Merz, Kathleen Moore, Dale Nesbary, Sherri Oden, Mohinder Parkash, Claire Rammel, Darlene Schott-Baer, Ishwar Sethi

Absent:

Call to Order

This meeting was convened at 2:10 p.m. by Ranald Hansen, Interim Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Study

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The MOTION was made, Seconded and Passed to approve the minutes of December 18, 2002.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Completion of Graduate Program Review Guidelines

Randy Hansen thanked Kathleen Moore, who chaired the Program Review Subcommittee, for her excellent job and hard work. Dale Nesbary and Kathleen Moore are the Review Team assigned to the MPA program using the proposed Graduate Program Review Guidelines established by the subcommittee. The goal of Graduate Council is to have the new guidelines implemented by the end of the semester.

B. Status of Graduate Certificate Programs approved by Graduate Council

Claire Rammel informed Graduate Council that according to Ron Sudol, Associate Provost of Academic Affairs, Graduate Certificate Programs would receive final approval by the Provost and appear on the Senate agenda as an information item. Therefore, market position will not be compromised by the longer timeline required in the full governance approval process. Ms. Rammel indicated this was very good news for graduate education. The Graduate Council will be receiving a memo from the Provost approving Graduate Certificates for Nursing Education, General Management in Business, and the three (3) Health Science proposals. Randy reminded Graduate Council that these five (5) Graduate Certificate programs are budget neutral.

C. Cooley Law School

John Nussbaumer, Associate Dean of Faculty at Cooley Law School, delivered course catalog descriptions to Claire Rammel for distribution to Graduate Council. President LeDuc has

extended an invitation for Graduate Council members to visit Cooley Law School in Lansing for a tour of their campus.

Randy Hansen clarified a statement he made earlier to Graduate Council regarding terminology to describe the type of degree program to be offered by Cooley Law School at Oakland University. Mr. Hansen explained that the current program Cooley Law School has with Western Michigan University, is a joint degree program, not a dual degree program as he had stated in an earlier meeting. Students in this program complete requirements for the JD/MPA with fewer credits than if they enrolled in each program separately. Before Oakland University decides to proceed in this direction, the Faculty Subcommittee plans to examine this model and report information back to Graduate Council.

D. Nomenclature

Claire Rammel indicated she would like to finalize the proposal reviewed by Graduate Council on “Graduate Nomenclature” before the publication of the next two-year catalog. Final draft of the Graduate Catalog is expected May 2003. Randy Hansen has shared the documentation with the all the Deans, who in turn have requested review by department chairs. He thought all schools were in agreement with the proposal with the exception of the School of Education and Human Services, in particular, the Department of Counseling. Claire Rammel will talk with Luellen Ramey in the Counseling department to clarify any issues from their area.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Dean/Director Searches

The search for the Dean of the School of Nursing has been reopened. The Provost also announced searches will be initiated this term for a Dean in the School of Health Sciences and a Director in the Eye Research Institute.

B. Undergraduate Enrollment in 600-Level Graduate Courses

Claire Rammel circulated the current Oakland University graduate policy, which precludes undergraduate students from enrolling in 600-level courses or above. Last term an exceptional student sought permission to register for a 600-level course, with approval from his Dean, the Chair and Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Study. That action has apparently opened the floodgates for other undergraduate students to request permission to register for 600-level courses. Randy Hansen asked for a position from the Graduate Council...should the current graduate policy be modified or stand? Graduate Council inquired whether the Banner student system currently restricts such enrollment. Claire Rammel explained that Banner rules were built to mirror current graduate policy, thus enrollment in 600-level courses is limited to graduate students. However, Ms. Rammel indicated that prior to Banner implementation, the Banner team confirmed with the College and the schools that the current policy stood with no modifications. The Banner implementation team received confirmation that 600-level or above courses would continue to be restricted to graduate students.

Ishwar Sethi suggested that independent studies are designed to offer learning opportunities to students seeking subject content outside of the regular program curriculum. If there is an exceptional undergraduate student have him/her sign up as an independent student. Kathleen Moore agreed that such credit would be granted on an elective basis; therefore an independent study would best serve the purpose. Darlene Schott-Baer pointed that there are prerequisites associated with 600-level courses, and we should not be waiving prerequisites. Sherri Oden felt that for the occasional student there should be some process whereby an exceptional undergraduate could enroll in 600-level courses, but an independent study would be a good compromise position.

Randy Hansen wanted Graduate Council to be aware that this is the first student he has granted permission to enroll in a 600-level course in his four years. Therefore, he felt the position that Graduate Council takes on this policy should be made very clear in the Oakland University graduate policy. Based on discussion from council, he suggested a sentence should be added to the currently policy saying “600-level courses and above are restricted to graduate students. Undergraduates may seek permission under exceptional conditions.” Graduate Council was in agreement with him and suggested a statement be added to the policy for endorsement at the next Graduate Council meeting.

A MOTION was seconded and passed for this to be a first reading. The Graduate Council will return to it at the next meeting.

C. Reducing Number of Credits Required for Degree Programs

Currently, Masters degrees offered at Oakland University have credit requirements that range from 32 to 60 credits. In response to increasing market pressures, several academic units have been asking to reduce the minimum credit requirements to a range of approximately 28 to 30 credits. Mohinder Parkash stated that in the School of Business Administration, their former MBA program required 56 credits, but they decided to reduce the number of credits. He indicated credits were not just eliminated, but many were moved into a prerequisite category. He pointed out that some of the academic disciplines are using 3 credits courses, while others are 4 credits. Therefore, a minimum of 32 credits doesn't make sense for all programs. Kathleen Moore agreed, and in addition this credit variation results in a different number of courses required.

Randy Hansen felt that if a proposal request comes to Graduate Council to change the number of degree hours, especially if substantial, it would make good sense to incorporate a review of the program as part of the proposal request. He senses the Graduate Council wants graduate program directors and chairs to have flexibility, but should we suggest setting a minimum number of credits? Units who are wishing to change the number of credits bear a responsibility to justify the change. Professor Moore suggested that the individual units/schools assess the minimum number of credits for their own Masters programs. Randy Hansen asked that the General Council bring a document to review at the next meeting.

D. Cross-Listing 300 with 600 Level Courses

Claire Rammel brought forward to Graduate Council a request to cross-list a 300-Level undergraduate course with a 600-level graduate course. Graduate Council discussion emphasized the need for continuity in graduate policies. Professor Moore stressed the necessity for distinguishing different requirements for students enrolled in the higher-level course. Council suggested a statement detailing the distinctions should be added to the request for cross-listing courses. After further discussion, Graduate Council agreed cross listing of undergraduate courses (300-level or above) should be restricted to 500-level graduate courses. Again, Council understands the need for flexibility, but at the same time graduate policy should set parameters.

A MOTION was seconded and passed for this to be a first reading. The Graduate Council will return to it at the next meeting.

E. Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Professor Schott-Baer, the School of Nursing, raised a concern with regards to the IRB approval process when it involves an entity outside of Oakland University. She asked the feasibility of designing a process where Oakland University could work directly with the IRB at another institutions. Students are becoming very frustrated with the complexity of the process. Randy Hansen indicated the problem exists at many institutions. He suggested identifying critical partners.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. in 100 Kresge Library.