

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

October 26, 2005

Approved: November 30, 2005

Present: Tom Blume, David Downing, Lisa Hawley, Mildred Merz, Claire Rammel, Darlene Schott-Baer, Meir Shillor, Joseph Shively, Lorenzo Smith and Kris Thompson

Absent: Mohinder Parkash, Krzystof Kobus

Staff: Julie Delaney, Lynette Folken

Call to Order

The meeting was convened at 2:15 p. m. by David Downing, Chair

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The MOTION to approve the minutes of March 16,2005, was made, Second and Passed, unanimously.

II. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Endowment Support for Graduate Education

Dave Downing announced that he is close to securing the first endowment support for graduate education at Oakland University. An emeritus professor, who is very committed to graduate programs, wants to provide both an immediate gift and then a planned gift to be used at the discretion of Graduate Study to support graduate education in a variety of ways, such as student presentation and travel or incremental support for a stipend or assistantship. If the donor agrees, Mr. Downing will share a copy of the endowment agreement with Council members.

Module Use

Mr. Dawning informed the Council that there is discussion ongoing about module use. In particular, there is a push from some of the professional schools to move to a 2-day module as opposed to the 3-day module in use, i.e., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It would be either a Monday/Wednesday module, as one hypothetical example, or a Tuesday/Thursday module. Mr. Downing reported that there are some strong pedagogical concerns that have historically been presented from areas such as the mathematics/statistics and language areas. These units have expressed a need for more frequent interaction with students in a classroom as opposed to just 2 days per week. Also, there are some concerns about not wanting the campus to be completely empty on Fridays. A number of groups will discuss this topic and, at some point of time, it may come to the Graduate Council for a recommendation.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Proposal to Roll Fees into Tuition

Mr. Downing announced the active consideration of rolling standard fees (general service, recreational center, student activity and course fees) into tuition. The proposal was passed in the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees where it was strongly supported. A decision will be made at the next Board meeting. Advantages include a benefit for part-time students who would not have to pay the same amount in per-semester fees as full-time students; the counter to that is that full-time students would pay a little bit more. Program fees, e.g., the applied music fee and the physical therapy fee, would still exist. A question was raised about the continuous enrollment policy which was recently approved by Graduate Council with the proviso that no fees be attached. Ms. Rammel asked whether the policy should be brought back to the Council. Mr. Downing suggested that perhaps a flat rate should be imposed rather than one related to the number of credits.

New Program Approval Process Flow

Ms. Rammel stated that SPRC is reviewing a new program approval process flow. Upon completion, SPRC will provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee regarding adoption of the process. Ms. Rammel asked whether a copy of the proposed process would be shared with Graduate Council before going to Senate. Mr. Downing suggested the process should be brought to the Council for discussion.

Dissertation/Thesis Awards

Mr. Downing has been directed by the Provost to assemble a group of faculty to develop the guidelines, timeframe and criteria for the newly announced Dissertation/Thesis Awards. He asked the members whether or not the group should be a subcommittee of the Graduate Council with representatives appointed from other areas. Mr. Downing suggested that it would be appropriate for the group to be a subset of Graduate Council. The following Council members volunteered: Lorenzo Smith, Meir Shillor, Joe Shively and Tom Blume.

Program of Study Template

Ms. Rammel explained highlighted the benefits of moving to Banner 7 and discussed some of the modules which will be available for faculty and students. One of these, WEB CAPP (degree audit) will be available beginning Fall 2006. Ms. Rammel indicated students and/or advisors will be able to run degree compliance on a student's academic record to review satisfactory academic progress toward program requirements.

Key information, such as Plan of Study, Transfer Credit & Course Substitution, are critical to keeping current and accurate student records. In order to generate discussion and elicit feedback from Council members and their departments, Ms. Rammel distributed a handout to illustrate examples of program requirement information essential to CAPP functionality. Graduate Study is asking for suggestions on how to design a process to collect the required data.

Drafting process flow guidelines (i.e., the flow from student to adviser to Graduate Study) to keep Graduate Study informed about changes to Plans of Study and progress toward meeting degree requirements was also discussed. The necessity to produce something that does not take away

flexibility from academic units was acknowledged, as was the recognition that process flow for a discipline or program are often outlined in Student Program Handbooks. Ms. Rammel emphasized that Graduate Study is not looking to change governance processes, but is trying to find a way to keep Graduate Study “in the loop.”

Mr. Downing asked Council members to take the discussion to their unit colleagues and ask for input.

Prerequisite Checking in Banner

Ms. Rammel reported that when prerequisite checking is turned on in Banner, it will check the student’s academic history to see if they have fulfilled course prerequisite requirements. This is recognized as a huge benefit for undergraduate programs. Graduate programs will need to review published prerequisites and remove any undergraduate courses listed in Banner catalog. Ms. Rammel explained Banner confirms prerequisites against OU academic history, so if a graduate student did not attend OU than Banner could not validate the prerequisite and would stop registration.

Meir Shillor asked if there will be the ability to override soft prerequisites, such as “instructor permission” or “department permission” and will it be possible to find out who initiated the override. Tom Blume asked if advisers/instructors could override a prerequisite while away from campus. Ms. Rammel answered that instructors will have the ability to override “hard” prerequisites via the Web and provided an explanation. The “soft” prerequisites will be defined in the course description and labeled “recommended” prerequisites. Julie Delaney explained that the faculty member will be able to override the prerequisite, allowing the student to register by SAIL without having to visit campus, thus eliminating some steps in the current progress. Kris Thompson asked if directors or department chairs could override prerequisites if the faculty is unavailable. If so, could multiple administrators be assigned permission to override courses? Ms. Delaney offered to research this area and provide an answer at a future meeting.

Schedule of Classes

Darlene Schott-Baer complained about the lead time needed for the Schedule of Classes and asked if there was a way to shorten it. Also brought forward was the complaint that the Schedule of Classes information is not released soon enough for students to make any productive use of it. Mr. Downing stated that there has been considerable discussion about providing a mechanism whereby students can plan for an entire academic year more effectively. He reminded Council members that in order to do so would require a more reasonable timeline for when the course information is required from the units. He suggested also the possibility of future informal discussions with associate and assistant deans from the units, as well as individual unit graduate committees, to talk about issues such as this.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

MA in History Program Review

David Downing reported that the Provost has charged Graduate Council to be creative when looking at the history program review in identifying solutions and problems that are articulated. He acknowledged the discomfort expressed at the last Council meeting about cross-listing of 300- and 500-level courses within the program, and the extent to which it is done in other programs. He suggested that this review should be used as a mechanism to begin the general discussion about the broader issue of cross-listing, the cross listing of 300- and 500-level courses, in particular.

Updates on Other Programs Approved by Graduate Council

Claire Rammel announced that the Doctor of Nursing Practice is already at Senate Budget and Senate Planning subcommittees. The Post-Master's Certificate in Local Government Management and the Post-Master's Certificate in Nonprofit Organization and Management are on the agenda for the next Senate meeting

Ms. Rammel reported that Sheryl Klemanski has reviewed the budget submitted in the PhD in Music Education proposal. Specific budget concerns were identified and communicated to the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance. The department has been provided a deadline for correcting the budget.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 9, 2005.