

GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

103 H. T. Chick Building
Dean's Conference/Work Room

March 27, 2008 • 1:00 PM – 3:05PM

Presiding: Dr. Geraldine Munn, Chair

Upon arrival, attendees were given, for their perusal, a folder containing the meeting agenda with 11 attachments which included minutes from the last council meeting.

Call to Order

The second meeting of the Graduate Council of the Fayetteville State University Graduate School was called to order by Dr. Geraldine Munn, Chair.

Roll Call

Present: Dr. Geraldine Munn, Dr. Leontye Lewis, Dr. Amy Craddock, Dr. Marvin Curtis, Dr. Valentine James, Dr. LaDelle Olion, Mr. Bobby Wynn, Ms. Kaity Parson, Dr. Kim Kirkpatrick, and Dr. Assad Tavakoli. Absent: Dr. Akbar Aghajanian, and Dr. Bo Zhang
(Please note: Dr. Assad has replaced Dr. Constance Lightner on the Graduate Council)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the February 26 Graduate Council meeting were reviewed and approved.

Graduate Council Meeting Schedule

A Graduate Council Scheduling Reference Report (attachment 2) was reviewed by the attendees; changes and updates were discussed and it was agreed that Thursdays at 2-3:00 p.m. was the best time available for the remainder of graduate council meetings for this year. For those not able to attend, Dr. Munn suggested, and it was agreed by those present, that a copy of the minutes would be emailed to members who were unable to attend.

FSU Policy on Policy and Rules

Dr. Munn said it was brought to her attention by one of the Council members that the Council needed more information on how to make policy before proceeding. Dr. Munn provided a copy of the FSU Policy on Policies and Rules issued on February 17, 2005 (attachment 3) and asked for council members with information concerning policy under the decentralized model help with anything that may need correcting. Dr. Olion stated there was a booklet, a whole set of policies for graduate studies of which all of the Dean's and Chairs had copies. He said the booklet of policies contained information about how the policies were put together and structuring, as well as policy management. However, Dr. Olion did not think there was anything in the booklet that would supersede what Dr. Munn had provided.

Dr. Olion stated he thought the important issue, was "What is now?" Then he asked, "When we changed back to centralized from decentralized, is there a set of policies that were put

together for the University?" The consensus was no. Dr. Curtis said his college used the University catalog for guidelines to create policies as needed.

Dr. Munn asked if that was pretty much what they did in the School of Ed and the School of Business and the responses were in agreement.

Dr. Munn said, "We were centralized, decentralized and recentralized. So now, the policies were moved from Graduate Studies to the schools and colleges and then from the schools and colleges back to Graduate Studies." She asked Dr. James, "Were any of those policies considered null and void during the transition? Are all the policies that were in effect before the decentralization now still in effect?" Dr. James responded, "They are still in effect. What's serving as knowledge is what Dr. Olion put together."

Dr. Lewis inquired as to whether there would be one set of policies or policy manual.

Dr. Olion spoke of the name change of the graduate program, from Graduate Studies to Graduate School, as an example of having policies and procedures and knowing the process required to properly make the change. Also, he spoke about how the Graduate Studies was constructed by following a process which was taken into consideration, and which came from the Graduate Council. He said most of the time approval went from the Graduate School through the Provost office and in most cases through the Faculty Senate and back to the Provost and to the Chancellor –everybody signed off on it. It was laborious, but it worked. Dr. Olion also noted that previously all the deans were on the Graduate Council.

Dr. James interjected to clarify that he had received the okay from Chancellor Hackley to change the name to Graduate School. He agreed that we should get the affirmation in writing. He stated given the urgency of the matter and to get our Graduate School running well, they needed to act the way they had. He reminded the Council that they were in the process of putting together the best working mechanism and if the mechanism was laborious, they would not be able to move quickly. Dr. James explained the rationale behind the current Graduate Council membership with the following: 1) He was using the experience that he had from previous Graduate School/Council experiences that worked well; and 2) Adding the graduate coordinators as previously suggested would be too much for the size of the University. Dr. James also suggested that Attorney Jenkins be consulted as policies are put in place.

Dr. Olion said much of the policy making functions or recommendations coming through the Graduate Council were for programs from Schools and Colleges of the University and the Deans wanted to be part of the decision making. Dr. Olion, speaking from experience as an Assistant Dean and Chair of Graduate Studies, suggested to Dr. James that having the Deans on the Graduate Council would be in the best interest of the Graduate Council and the University and not having them on the Council could create possible violations of rules and regulations.

Dr. James's response was the Deans were not left out of the process when he was putting the Council together. He said he talked to the Deans and they helped with the selection.

Dr. Tavakoli discussed the importance of input from Program Directors. Dr. James said there was another group, Program Coordinators, about 24 in number, with whom he meets with and their goal is to inform the Dean of important information needed to move forward with the graduate program.

Dr. Lewis expressed, based on INCATE requirements, her concerns that policies not infringe on what is needed for accreditation. She also said when she realized that the Deans were not automatically on the Council, she replace Dr. Hicks in order to be on the Council.

Dr. Olion stated, from experience, that Graduate Deans do not have any real power; the Dean's job is one of quality control –to monitor and look at policy control. The programs are in the Schools and Colleges, not in Graduate Studies. Dr. Olion said, when you have four Deans representing as a stance, you have the might to get a lot of things done which is an asset to the Council and fosters universal acceptance.

Dr. James stated one of the reasons for meeting was to put things in place to service us well. He said people are already applying for candidacy to be a graduate faculty member. He asked for the Council to look at the current forms and move forward expeditiously, but with caution, so that those who qualify will have the opportunity. Dr. Tavakoli reiterated the need to move forward cautiously.

Graduate Faculty Status

Dr. Munn asked Dr. James for clarification of item 6 on the agenda. Dr. James provided the Council with 4 items for review concerning graduate faculty status; one from the College of Basic and Applied Science, an email of the requirements from Dr. Tavakoli concerning the School of Business and Economics, a print out of the former College of Humanities and Social Sciences graduate faculty requirements, a Guidelines and Procedures for Graduate Faculty Status printout, and the Guidelines for Selecting and Evaluating Graduate Faculty (Revised 1990). This information was provided for the Council to review (see attachments 4-8). Dr. James asked the Council to pull this information together and establish a new policy for evaluating faculty for recommendation.

Dr. Olion updated the Council on the background/history of the Graduate Faculty Status. He said the Graduate Faculty Status was created to facilitate the programs passed at Chapel Hill and there was a lot of concern about the quality of the faculty at FSU. "After consultation with General Administration," he said, "we came up with Graduate Faculty to help ensure that the persons who would be teaching in our classes would have specific types of skills." He said the initial requirements were low due to the status of the faculty, at that time, to meet the minimum standards. He suggested that with our current higher faculty status, the minimum requirements might need to be upped. Dr. Olion also said some of the material provided (attachment 8) was taken from a National Survey of the Council of Graduate School which is a national organization consisting of 300-400 graduate schools all over the country.

Dr. James noted the need to require a certain level from Graduate faculty and the need for them to be scholarly.

Dr. Munn asked the Council, between now and the next meeting, to review the materials provided and to come prepared to make recommendations at the next meeting.

The Standing Committees of the Graduate Council

Dr. Munn asked for volunteers for Chairs of the Standing Committees. *(Note: Two additional people will be appointed to each committee.)* The Chairs, which are listed first and followed by volunteer members, were approved by the Council as follows:

Admissions: *Dr. Assad Tavakoli, [REDACTED]*
Program and Curriculum Review: *Mr. Bobby Wynn and Dr. Geraldine Munn*
Student Affairs: *Dr. Kim Kirkpatrick, and [REDACTED] (tentatively)*
Academic Policy and Evaluation: *Dr. LaDelle Olion*
Graduate Faculty Review: *Dr. Leontye Lewis*
Executive: *Dr. Valentine James (the Chairs of standing committees make up the members of this committee)*

Dr. James announced that Dr. Marvin Curtis would soon be leaving Fayetteville State University to take a position as Dean at another University. Dr. Munn congratulated Dr. Curtis on his appointment and everyone and wished him well.

Dr. Kirkpatrick and [REDACTED] were excused due to other appointments and it was noted by Dr. Munn that the Council no longer had a quorum. The discussions continued.

Establishing an Advisory Board for Graduate Students (To meet once a year)

Dr. James requested Dr. Tavakoli's assistance in identifying people in the business world affiliated with the MBA program who could help the Graduate School raise monies and increase the schools visibility in the community.

Graduate Student Government

Dr. James said he would like to see a stronger student government voice. Dr. Olion mentioned that, previously, there had been efforts made to acquire a percentage of the funds from snack machine and from admissions to help run offices, but efforts had not been very successful. Dr. Olion said he also wrote a constitution for a student government organization, but ended up having only one or two meetings. He indicated some of the problems were due to higher numbers of commuting students, work, and family commitments. He said one of the more successful organizations was AUTOS, an off-campus organization. Dr. Olion mentioned the need to have activities for graduate students. Many Council members agreed. Also mentioned by Dr. Lewis and others were such things as coffee and donuts for evening students and/or special holiday events. Dr. James said he had spoken with [REDACTED] and she was interested in helping to mobilize the students to help them have a voice. The Council was in agreement.

Dr. Munn said one of the ways to help mobilize our graduate students was to address the issues that they had put on the table for years, evening daycare. Dr. Lewis suggested that maybe something could be worked out with the early college/early childhood centers. Dr. Olion mentioned the alumni association as a contact.

Dr. Tavakoli spoke about problems caused when student emails are cut off shortly after students left campus and about concerns due to comments from students saying they were unable to access the library. Mr. Wynn said the students always had access to the library. However, the students need to renew their card so it is current and they can check out materials.

Funding was discussed. Dr. Olion spoke briefly about problems, in the past, with being informed concerning funds. Dr. James stated he would definitely be asking questions about the previous fund history and current graduate fund status.

Dr. Munn asked Dr. James if the Council could ask [REDACTED], since she was interested, if she would provide a framework at the next meeting as to how we could proceed with the Graduate Student's Association. Dr. James said absolutely.

Admissions Standards (Uniformity) GRE, GMAT, Postal

Dr. Olion, who stated he served on the GRE board for five years, said he realized other schools were combining the scores, but at FSU, the inappropriate practice of combining the GRE scores needed to change. He said numerous times he had pointed out, to the Deans and Chairs, the appropriate use of GRE scores and reminded them that scores could not be combined, but needed to be considered individually. Dr. Olion suggested GRE contacts be contacted to discuss the appropriate use of GRE scores and the variety of measures used to get into graduate school.

Dr. Lewis said it was her desire to see the scores by the difference areas of the GRE posted. She wanted to see at least minimum practice scores by section. Dr. Olion was in disagreement with the posting of scores and referred to doctoral enrollment limits. Dr. Tavakoli said the record clearly shows there is a high correlation between GMAT scores and the performance in programs.

Dr. James asked the Council to remind the Colleges and Schools that the Graduate School needed to keep records of their activities; to keep track of the number of students in each school/program.

Dr. Olion asked about Admissions. Dr. James announced that the Graduate Admissions was now housed in the Graduate School and all the official records are centrally within the Graduate School which should improve processing and positively affect retention and record keeping.

Website

Dr. Lewis asked that some of the links be removed because of old/incorrect information. Dr. James asked Dr. Lewis to email him her request and they agreed to discuss details at a later date.

Dr. Curtis discussed the confusion caused by difference school/college deadlines. Dr. Lewis asked about the possibility of a deadline link on the Graduate School website.

Dr. James said he had spoken with the Provost about different issues that needed to be updated or corrected and, as was requested by the Provost, was making a review list.

Professional Development Standards

Dr. James said the maximum hours that could be transferred from professional development to the graduate program were 12 hours. He stressed his frustrations concerning the number of people who have more than 12 hours wanting to come into the program. He wanted the College/Schools to make sure to inform the students and/or refer them to the catalog. Dr. Lewis expressed her concern for students who were locked out of the system, and could not complete a degree. Dr. Olion stated that, at one time, the system was set up to lock out any student when registering who was not admitted into a program, if they had 12 hours, at which time, they had to request special permission. However, the procedure continued for only one semester due to issues with the process. He thought the implementing of new controls with the new online enrollment process would be successful, at this time. Dr. Olion said some of the problems with enrollment were due to unsupervised students and professors who inappropriately tell students to take classes. He stated the only way to correct the problem would be to have Chairs, Advisors, and the system adhere to the rules and policies. Dr. Lewis agreed we needed to “bite the bullet”, but felt the need to alert borderline students, by email and hard letter, of their status. Dr. Curtis reminded the Council that letters were sent out to borderline students, to remind or alert them of their status and of policy requirements to stay in the program.

Dr. Munn said that we should grow from the lessons learned, and so she suggested, at our preschool conference, we meet with graduate faculty to discuss graduate issues.

Dr. James agreed it should be explained to the students “at the gate” of their status, so when they are told no, they understand. Dr. Curtis suggested the possibility of sending each student a letter, and/or email reminding them of their status, if they are not admitted into a program by a certain date/time.

Professional Development Standards

Dr. James announced that the Graduate School had developed/revised the Clearance for Graduation form to include a signature line for the College/School Dean.

Dr. Lewis felt we should find a way to get credit for seeing students; counted as completers, and recognized as part of student training, which would help graduate school numbers.

Dr. Olion wanted to know, if a student had a degree, and came back to FSU, how the student would be classified. Dr. James said as a graduate student. Dr. Olion said in the past students were allowed to enroll as undergrads. He noted that this change would help the graduate school numbers and give more support to the University.

Dr. James pointed out that a signature line for College/School Deans had been added. He said this would help indicate that the scholarship was sound, and help in terms of the quality of the work or quality control. Dr. Olion mentioned the previous hiring of consultants, to review dissertations, to provide strengths and weaknesses. Dr. James said part of his plan would be to hire retired English professors who could assist in the review of dissertations. Dr. Olion agreed, and stated he also had FSU English professors and professors from other campuses assist. Dr. Munn said she had worked with the graduate students for approximately 1 ½ year and also wanted outside evaluations of our dissertations. She felt serious thought was needed to identify the strength and weakness. She agreed with Dr. Hackley's philosophy, when you realize that issues exist, you are not right if you do not do something about it.

Forms

Thesis/Dissertation Cover Page, Certificate of Approval and Graduate Faculty Application forms were reviewed/discussed (attachments 9-11).

Admissions

Dr. Tavakoli commented on the previous problems with application backlogs. Dr. James reminded all in attendance, that Graduate Admissions was now located within the Graduate School, processing was streamlined, and delays should be minimal.

Adjournment

There being no other business, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Robinson

Graduate Council Recorder

Assistant to the Dean

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Please Note: Corrections to the minutes are respectfully requested to the attention of the recorder, Deborah Robinson. Thank you.