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Graduate Council Annual Report : 2008-2009

Graduate Council

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**ANNUAL REPORT OF USF ST. PETERSBURG GRADUATE COUNCIL
SUBMITTED TO FACULTY SENATE
12 JUNE 2009**

MEMBERSHIP

Tom Ainscough, College of Business, Chair
Bonnie Braun, College of Education
Chris D'Elia, AVC, Research and Graduate Studies, Ex-Officio
Deni Elliot, College of Arts and Sciences
Wei Guan, College of Business
Donna Knudsen, Research and Graduate Studies, Ex-Officio
Ambe Njoh, College of Arts and Sciences
Jim Schnur, Poynter Library, Committee Secretary
Zafer Unal, College of Education
VACANT, Graduate Student Representative

SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Meetings were held with a quorum of voting members present on the following dates:
16 October 2008, 13 November 2008, 4 February 2009, 12 March 2009, 16 April 2009.
Minutes were approved and posted on our webpage for all meetings except 16 April
2009. Those minutes will be approved at the next scheduled meeting in the fall
semester. Archive of meeting minutes and agendas is located at:
<http://www.stpt.usf.edu/FacultySenate/Graduate_Council_Minutes.htm>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Activities of the Graduate Council tend to fall into one of two areas: policy or curriculum. Along with the USF St. Petersburg Undergraduate Council, this body serves the important role of faculty guardianship of the curriculum. In previous years, the Council tended to focus its work on ratifying or affirming policies coming over from Tampa. During the 2008-2009 academic year, the Council envisioned itself taking a proactive role developing policy. We continued to work under the foundation of the University-wide Graduate Executive Coordinating Council (GECC). Our role in curricular matters was somewhat limited since USF St. Petersburg could not make substantive changes to programs or create new degree programs while on SACS probation. Throughout the year, the Council also discussed the importance on

USF St. Petersburg Graduate Studies and Graduate Council need to coordinate at the USF system level because the University currently has a Graduate Executive Coordinating Council for that purpose. The role of the USF St. Petersburg Graduate Council is "extremely critical" in shaping curriculum and policies. While under SACS probation, we cannot make substantive changes to programs or create new programs, meaning that much of the year's activities will focus on policy matters and academic program review (with a review of Journalism and Media

Studies on the horizon). Leadership on graduate initiatives must emanate from the faculty; oversight is “our responsibility.”

Tom noted that in the past year, the Council’s work tended to be reactive in nature. Chris added that we could become proactive as well, especially as possibilities may develop for multiple campuses to host components of graduate programs (such as system-wide graduate programs with faculty involvement on our campus).

CURRICULUM REVIEW: COLLEGE PROPOSAL

Katharine Rasch presented four proposed changes to degree programs and one change in course status in the College of Education. These proposals are the result of changes by the Florida Department of Education regarding program approval, which in some cases has required that USFSP submit program review information even if the program was previously approved by FDOE when offered as part of the Graduate School headquartered at USF Tampa. All proposals have received unanimous approval of faculty who teach in the fields covered and all have received unanimous approval of the College of Education Council.

- A. College of Education: Change to Degree Program: Reading Education**
Katharine described a change to the Reading Education MA that would require a reduction in prerequisites because of some redundancy in the curriculum that was discovered after course audits. For certified students in Secondary education, undergraduate pre- or co-requisites would still include Foundations of Differentiated Reading Instruction (RED5240). However, under this change Adolescent Literature (LAE4464) would replace the older requirements of either Linking Literacy Assessment (RED4511) or Literature and the Learner (LAE6415). Non-certified students would also continue to have RED5240 as a pre- or co-requisite and take either LAE4464 or Literature in Childhood Education (LAE4414), and all would continue to take RED5240. *The Graduate Council affirmed its support for these changes by a unanimous vote on a motion by Jim seconded by Wei.*
- B. College of Education: Change to Degree Program: Educational Leadership**
Katharine described a change to the M.Ed. program in Educational Leadership that would clarify program requirements to ensure compliance with the Florida Department of Education. These changes updated program

admission requirements to reflect FDOE changes with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) requirements, completion of Florida Educational Leadership Examination, and other state-mandated changes. She announced that FDOE has never approved these programs before, and that USF St. Petersburg was the first to seek approval. *The Graduate Council affirmed its support for these changes by a unanimous vote on a motion by Jim seconded by Tom.*

C. College of Education: New or Changed Course: EDG6931

Katharine noted that students enrolled in the M.Ed. in Educational Leadership were expected to take Technology and Data Analysis for School Leaders. Also, students who earn state administrative certification through USFSP's alternative certification program take this course. The content of the course does not change. This proposal would, however, led to a unique course number for the curriculum covered (EDG6931). *The Graduate Council affirmed its support for this plan to create a unique course number by a unanimous vote on a motion by Jim seconded by Wei.*

D. College of Education: Change to Degree Program: Elementary Education

Katharine stated that at the present time, students earning an MA in Elementary Education may complete a Literacy and Curriculum option as an existing track. This proposal would allow the College of Education to offer this option instead as a formal concentration with a uniquely assigned concentration code. This will improve data gathering and reporting to the Florida Department of Education and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). *The Graduate Council affirmed its support for these changes by a unanimous vote on a motion by Jim seconded by Wei.*

E. College of Education: Change to Degree Program: Elementary Education

In the last proposal, Katharine presented a Plan II for initial certification in the MA in Elementary Education. At this time, the College awaits a response to this proposal from FDOE, though we can affirm our support of adding Assessment in Literacy (RED6540) to the program as a way of ensuring that all state-mandated competencies are met in the curriculum. *The Graduate Council affirmed its support for these changes by a unanimous vote on a motion by Jim seconded by Wei.*

F. College of Arts of Sciences: Professional Science Masters Proposal

Since Chris could not attend the meeting due to other important administrative matters, Donna reported on a meeting that he and Noreen Noonan attended with other Graduate Deans of Florida's public universities recently held in Tallahassee. During this meeting, discussion of a Professional Science Masters took shape as people looked at possible programs that may benefit from NSF funding or federal stimulus dollars. The Professional Science Masters would serve as a terminal degree with greater emphasis on policy and management practices than laboratory activities and

hard sciences. This degree would require an internship or practicum as opposed to a thesis. At this time, only USF Tampa offers such an option among Florida's public universities. Institutions that decide to offer such a program could build upon partnerships with other agencies, universities, and employers. At this time, the only area that USFSP could pursue with a Professional Sciences option would be in Environmental Sciences and Policy. Presently, the ESP masters is a thesis program, and if a professional option is offered, internships could occur with appropriate partners already working with ESP faculty (such as USGS, Swiftmud, etc.). A pre-proposal was submitted by Chris and Noreen. There is no need for additional action by the Graduate Council at this time; this was provided as a point of information in case a future decision is made to move forward with a professional masters option.

POLICY PROMULGATION: COORDINATION OF POLICY ISSUES IN USF SYSTEM

At our March meeting, members of the Graduate Council expressed their desire to advocate concurrence within the Graduate Executive Coordinating Committee that oversees graduate curricular matters across all USF campuses. Seeking a timeframe of implementation for concurrence (possibly a thirty-day timeframe), the Council requested that Donna draft a note expressing our sentiments. Donna reported that GECC has received this request, and plans to discuss this matter at its meeting on the Tampa campus on Thursday, April 23, at 1pm.

POLICY PROMULGATION: SUMMERTIME COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Since some faculty members will travel and be away during the summer, no formal summertime meeting schedule was established. Jim, who has a twelve-month contract, agreed to be an on-campus contact person for the Graduate Council during the summer if Donna needed to bring a matter before the group. All members are encouraged to provide Jim and Donna with a secondary email if they do not check their USF accounts frequently during the summer. Verbal consensus was reached that the Council could conduct business by email voting if a matter required prompt attention. If such a situation exists, either Tom or Jim could forward the proposal via email to all members. Voting members would be given a window of at least seventy-two hours to reply with a vote; once quorum is established and a vote recorded, Jim would share the results with all members and provide a summary of actions as official minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Donna announced that USFSP will now receive the \$35 new graduate student orientation fees. In the past, these fees went to Tampa. These fees will compel our Graduate Studies office to offer a new student orientation in the fall. Donna requested assistance from other committee members in preparing for the orientation. Jim offered to explain library services available at USFSP that support graduate-level research.

It is imperative that the Graduate Council include student representation. There are some students who have worked with Bonnie in the College of Education that may be able to serve.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Schnur