



11-13-2008

Graduate Council Meeting : 2008 : 11 : 13

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**USF ST. PETERSBURG
GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday, November 13, 2008

10:00 a.m. – Nelson Poynter Memorial Library Conference Room

Attending were: Tom Ainscough (COB), Bonnie Braun (COE), Chris D'Elia (AVC, Research and Graduate Studies, Ex-Officio), Deni Elliot (CAS), Wei Guan (COB), Donna Knudsen (Graduate Studies), Ambe Njoh (CAS), Jim Schnur (LIB), Zafer Unal (COE).

Regrets: None

Guest: Jim Fellows (COB)

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Tom called the meeting to order at 10:05 am with quorum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 16 MEETING

Jim distributed the minutes via electronic mail prior to the meeting and provided paper copies for review. After review, the Council accepted the minutes as presented.

CURRICULUM REVIEW: COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

On behalf of the College of Business faculty, Jim Fellows presented the following proposals:

- A. **Change to MBA Requirements for All Students Entering Fall 2009 or Later**
Students will take two new courses: Managerial Analysis and Financial Analysis. The Managerial Analysis course would replace Dynamics of Individuals in Technology and Organizations, which would no longer be offered. The Financial Analysis class would take the place of Global Economic Environment, which would remain as an elective. The new courses focus on quantitative areas of study, an area that presently needs to expand. A third course, the strategic management class (Organizational Strategies for the 21st Century) is often taken by students early in the program, prior to the acquisition of certain base competencies in the MBA program. As part of the proposal, Jim Fellows says that the faculty members expect students to have at least eighteen hours of the MBA completed (including Managerial Analysis and Financial Analysis) before enrolling in this formal exit course. Finally, with the proposed removal of Global Economic Environment as a required course, students should still be expected to complete at least one course with an international perspective.

Conversation by Council members focused on the AACSB's expectation that College of Business graduate programs add greater emphasis to quantitative skills and assessment tools. These revisions would not change the present expectation that students with "dated" undergraduate business degrees (i.e., older than five years) or applicants with undergraduate credentials in other fields (such as engineering or the liberal arts) would still be required to take the "essentials" courses to prepare them for the MBA curriculum.

Jim Fellows also submitted templates of possible course syllabi to Donna.

On motion by Jim S., seconded by Zafer, the Council supports the aforementioned and substantive changes to the MBA curriculum. Motion carried unanimously. At this point, the documents will be forwarded to the ACE workgroup of the Board of Trustees for their review.

B. Change of Course Name for Course in MBA Program

Jim Fellows then submitted a proposal to change the course name for GEB 6930 from “Creating Community Leaders and Partners” to “Leadership and Corporate Accountability.” The course is awaiting approval for a unique course number from officials in Tallahassee. This measure will allow us to modify the title when approval is made. Since the changing of a course name is considered a non-substantive modification, this was submitted for informational purposes but requires no formal action by the Council. The Council accepted the memorandum into its record.

At this point, Jim Fellows left the meeting.

CURRICULUM REVIEW: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

On behalf of the College of Education faculty, Zafer presented the following proposals in place of Deanna Michael:

A. Change of Course Number for Graduate Practicum

On nine occasions since greater autonomy, the College of Education has offered a Graduate Practicum (focusing on K-5 teachers). The course number presently used is a generic holder for a “selected topics” course (EDG 6931) rather than a unique course number. Tampa has already moved this course to an approved course number (EDG 5940). This proposal is for the Council to give its approval of moving the Graduate Practicum from the selected topics number to a specific number already in use.

On motion by Jim, seconded by Deni, the Council supports the aforementioned reassignment of the course from EDG 6931 to EDG 5940. Motion carried without objection, with one Council member abstaining.

B. Catalog Corrections for the MAT Degree in Exceptional Student Education

Kim Stoddard submitted a request to modify published requirements of the Master of Arts in Teaching for Exceptional Student Education. The document proposed amending course numbers and descriptions to reflect numbers that have changed and courses that have changed or have been deleted. The document corrects mistakes in course numbers in the 2007-2008 catalog, and also takes into account updated requirements from the Florida Department of Education.

General discussion followed as to whether these amounted to non-substantive or substantive changes. Committee reviewed the proposal and found an item that stated “Addition of RED 6540: Assessment in Literacy to the program.” Committee decided that this was a substantive change and requires additional documents a course

syllabus and a statement that clearly explains that RED6540 is already approved course but the course needs to be included in the program catalog. In other words, even though this is not a new course to the USF system, it is a new course to the program and catalog. Therefore, committee agreed that this proposal shall be tabled for review at a later date.

Donna noted that the College of Education submitted a third proposal but she received only the cover page with the signatures. There were no other attachments or documentations for the change request. The committee agreed that this proposal needs detailed documentation on what the requested change is. Therefore, this proposal shall be tabled for review at a later date.

POLICY PROMULGATION: PROCEDURES DISCUSSION

Donna discussed procedural issues that Council members should understand. While the goal should be to create clear “black and white” policies, the complexity of having a parallel system with the Tampa-based programs sometimes leads to a “gray” situation. Even when we follow the appropriate and prescribed method of reviewing and approving courses, there are sometimes incidents in which decisions made by us run into obstacles due to different definitions of “concurrence.” For example, some course proposals initiated in St. Petersburg have stopped in Tampa rather than progressing through the state system because individuals over in Tampa asserted that the proposed changes did not have proper concurrence.

This upcoming Tuesday (November 18), the Graduate Executive Coordinating Council will meet. Chris and Donna plan to have a voice in the process on behalf of USF St. Petersburg graduate programs.

Chris added to the conversation by describing the three legs of the stool: We have had the ability to bring programs to fruition. However, two of the other legs (the ability to change course numbers and the ability to change policy) have not been provided. We are in the process of negotiating certain elements. Tampa-based colleagues are receptive to discussing these matters.

One example of a policy that fell into our laps was a recently changed policy regarding incomplete grades that the USF Graduate School just approved for system-wide implementation without informing faculty at USF St. Petersburg and without hearing input from USF St. Petersburg faculty.

POLICY PROMULGATION: REVIEW OF INCOMPLETE GRADES POLICY

Donna distributed the new policy on incomplete grades. There are two phases as we move away from the existing policy. During the first phase (applicable in Fall 2008 semester), faculty members must submit a present and provisional grade for students requesting incompletes due to extenuating circumstances. No longer will faculty award “I” grades that would become “IF” grades if the student failed to complete assignments. Now, for students who have shown evidence of “qualitatively satisfactory” progress (i.e., students “passing” the course at the time of the request), faculty must provide the grade a student has earned at that moment (at least a “C-minus” to denote a minimally passing grade), as well as the grade a student would earn if no further assignments were received by an agreed-upon date not extending beyond two semesters.

Although many in attendance noted that this was a well-intentioned policy, they did state their concerns. How would we handle a student who has turned in early assignments that have minimal impact on their final grades if they have done poorly (i.e., asking to get an "I" after making a "D" or "F" on one quiz that represents only ten-percent of the final grade), but if they have the potential to earn a passing grade? In such circumstances, a student quantitatively may have a "D" or "F," and would not be eligible for a higher grade through an "I" that offers an extension unless qualitative impressions and quantitative scores blurred. How do we handle pass/fail students? What financial aid ramifications exist? Should the document apply to graduate students (those accepted by the Graduate School) even if the course is an undergraduate course approved as part of their degree plan? Even with good intentions, the promulgation of this policy in the middle of the semester in which it takes effect and the lack of clarity (gray areas) on these matters provide an excellent example of why we need to take on a greater level of involvement.

Although students supposedly received an email mentioning this policy, how do we handle students in St. Petersburg-based programs that incorrectly submit (as the forms imply that they should) their forms to the Tampa campus? What level of information needs to be shared with the faculty immediately to inform them of these changes?

Much discussion followed. Donna agreed to revise the form for USF St. Petersburg, contingent on any other changes that come out of the upcoming GECC meeting, so that they will at least be available in time for faculty to use at the end of the semester. Tom will draft a brief memorandum outlining some of the concerns discussed to share with our Tampa colleagues.

NEW BUSINESS

Donna mentioned that an Associate Dean of the Graduate School from the Tampa campus planned to visit with the Council at some future date. We will inform him of our next meeting date (December 4) in case he is available to visit at that time.

ADJOURNMENT

The next agreed-upon meeting takes place on Thursday, 4 December 2008, at 10:00 am. Jim will reserve the Library Conference Room.

With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Schnur