



2-4-2009

## Graduate Council Meeting : 2009 : 02 : 04

Graduate Council

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**USF ST. PETERSBURG  
GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING**

Wednesday, February 4, 2009

10:00 a.m. – Special Collections Reading Room, Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

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

Regrets: Tom Ainscough (COB), Wei Guan (COB), Ambe Njoh (CAS)

Guests: None

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Tom was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Having a quorum of voting faculty members present, Jim chaired the meeting and called the assembly to order at 10:10 am.

**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, with a first by Bonnie and a second by Zafer. Jim will submit for placement on the webpage.

**CURRICULUM REVIEW: COLLEGE PROPOSAL**

- A. **College of Education Proposals Tabled in November**  
Zafer reports that we should table these proposals once again until our next meeting.
  
- B. **Mass Media Applied Research Project Request for Variable Credit (MMC6950)**  
Deni reports that this proposal has not finished its journey through the College of Arts and Sciences, and should be tabled until our next meeting. She did, however, briefly describe the purpose of the request. Students in the program have the choice of either completing a thesis (by enrolling in what should amount to six thesis hours upon submission of the thesis) or enrolling in the Applied Research Project. Allowing students to take this Applied Research Project course with variable hours would permit them to continue enrollment (similar to the "Z" grade for continued enrollment in thesis hours), without facing the penalties associated with failing to complete course requirements at the end of a single semester (i.e., not completing a project that may involve multiple semesters of research). We will review at the March meeting.

**CURRICULUM REVIEW: FOLLOW-UP ON GRADUATE CATALOG REVISIONS**

Donna distributed proposed changes and updates for the 2009-2010 USF St. Petersburg Graduate Catalog. The ACE workgroup of the Board of Trustees will review and approve all changes. The purpose of this presentation is to inform the Graduate Council of modifications and get the consent of members that such changes are appropriate and reflect our teaching mission.

By consent of faculty in attendance, Donna presented each of the ten changes to the catalog in the following order, with discussion of each taken individually.

**A. First Course Attendance**

Policy rescinded to allow for return to the previous policy allowing College Deans at USFSP to set policy instead of requiring the automatic drop of a graduate student who fails to attend the first class. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**B. “Incomplete” Course Grade Policy**

Students shall no longer receive an “I” grade; instead a student-faculty agreement contract will outline the grade earned at the time of the request and enumerate the missing assignments that should be submitted by the student to allow for a grade change. If nothing further is submitted, the grade appearing on the agreement becomes the grade of record. The policy also limits the extended time for completing such work to one semester as a way for the university to manage enrollment. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**C. Major Professors**

If the student’s major professor is no longer affiliated with the University, or if the student’s research interests change and differ from the area of the major professor, the burden is on the student to find another major professor. Students may elect to withdraw from the University without penalty if they are unable to select a major professor. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**D. Readmission to Graduate Studies**

If a student fails to attend for a semester or fails to complete a minimum of six semester hours over three semesters, they are considered “inactive” and must go through the readmission process that requires a \$30 readmission fee. Similar to the changes in the “Incomplete” course grades, this measure is aimed at encouraging retention and orderly progress towards the degree. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**E. Time Limitation for Acceptance of Credits into Program**

This policy clarifies the seven-year limit on accepting credits into a degree program. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**F. Time Limitation for Acceptance of Transfer Credits**

This policy places acceptance of transfer credits from other regionally accredited institutions in synchronization with the acceptance of credits, generally, towards a degree. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**G. Added Sections: Academic Dismissal and Assistantships**

This revision spells out policy for Academic Dismissal in the Graduate Assistants’ handbook. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**H. Separated Academic Integrity and Academic Disruption Issues**

The Academic Affairs Management Council (AAMC) was involved in the process of separating regulations governing the “Disruption of Academic Process” from those

governing “Academic Integrity of Students.” *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**I. Immunization Policy**

Changes were made to policy after the meningitis scare on the Tampa campus. The new narrative specifies updated immunizations required prior to registration, as well as those required to live in on-campus housing, and the waiver process available in some circumstances. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

**J. Stand-alone Nature of Our Graduate Program**

Except in areas where resources are best utilized on a system-wide basis (such as handling of theses), support and administration of USFSP programs will occur at USFSP. We now have full autonomy in these regards and will provide the “full graduate experience” within the University setting. *Those in attendance expressed support for this measure.*

After discussing these proposed revisions, in a motion by Bonnie seconded by Zafer, the Graduate Council affirmed its support for these changes to the USFSP Graduate Catalog and such support should be communicated to the ACE workgroup.

**POLICY PROMULGATION: POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS**

Chris distributed a printout of a Power Point that describes the University’s postdoctoral pay plan slated to take effect on July 1. Although post-docs will continue to have OPS appointments, they will be eligible for benefits usually unavailable to those with an OPS classification. If USFSP attracts postdoctoral fellows, they will be served through an office in Tampa. Economies of scale at this time make it cost prohibitive to create an office at USFSP. The University seeks to attract and retain postdoctoral fellows. Deni asked if agreeing to a system-wide handling of post-docs might set a precedent that would allow for reverting to the “one-size-fits-all” approach in other areas of graduate studies. After discussion, those in attendance agreed that having a single “post-doc” school approach makes sense at this time.

**POLICY PROMULGATION: GRADUATE SCHOOL REVIEW**

Chris discussed an outside consultants’ review of USF’s Graduate School practices and program administration. The review process was “Tampa-centric,” and involvement and input was largely done by college deans and academic administrators at the Tampa campus. While the previous perspective that graduate programs located on all campuses fall under a single University-wide Graduate School has changed, elements in this report fail to recognize the autonomy of our USFSP graduate programs. Jim noted that USFSP leaders have had to battle for adequate resources since he first arrived as a student in 1986.

All agreed that the ongoing issues of developing our graduate programs at USFSP will require the Graduate Council to take faculty governance issues seriously; we should play a larger role in formal program review, keep an eye on program development, and try to maximize the potential of our resources. The declining fiscal resources available to fund educational programs at USFSP have not reduced the pressure or expectations that we continue to support a growing graduate presence. We must consider the quality of programs, content, performance, and enrollment management issues. The Graduate Council should engage in an informal, rolling review of

USFSP graduate programs and ask program coordinators to programs to attend Council meetings on a rotating schedule so they may keep us informed. By ascertaining the needs and strengths of our programs, we can look at possible areas to expand graduate offerings that fall within our strategic plan. This is a great idea because our graduate programs do not face direct competition with academic initiatives at St. Petersburg College (except the University Partnership Center). All agreed with should move in the direction of reviewing graduate programs.

Consensus was reached that the first programs we should ask to meet with the Graduate Council are Environmental Science and Policy (at the March meeting) and Florida Studies (at the April meeting).

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Journalism's new handbook clarifies that the program is now a stand-alone USFSP program, no longer under the auspices of the Tampa-based Mass Communications department.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next agreed-upon meeting takes place on Thursday, 12 March 2009, at 10:00 am. Jim will reserve the Library Conference Room. If it is unavailable, the Council will meet in the Special Collections Reading Room.

With no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Schnur