

**Graduate Academic Council
2006 – 2007**

Minutes of the Council meeting of April 20, 2007
Approved by the Council on October 18, 2007

In attendance: A. Pomerantz, F. Bolton (staff), G. Burke, J. Gangolly, J. Bartow (staff), L. Kranich, M. Pryse & S. Friedman (Chair)

Unable to attend: S. Saleh, J. Hayes, J. Newman, L. Scoville, & L.-A. McNutt,

1. Minutes of the GAC meeting of 3/19/07 were considered, amended (Dean's Report) and approved (6-0-0).
2. Dean's Report – M. Pryse
 - Dean Pryse provided Jon Bartow the opportunity to bring to the attention of the Council the "Open Access" dissertation publishing option now available to our authors via UMI/Proquest. This option provides for greater and/or easiest promulgation of dissertation studies and findings, as works are published as fully web downloadable pdf files. There are no royalties for authors, nor per copy profits for UMI. The "Open Access" publishing option currently costs an additional \$95, a cost that must be incurred by the author. Ass't. Dean Bartow suggested that the GAC may want to take a policy "position" on open access dissertation publishing in the future.
 - Dean Pryse reported that we are nearing the end of the doctoral recruitment season, with some "backstopping" of awards. Funding program refinements will continue, but the current overcommitment/backstopping model has been successful.
 - Prof. Hayward Horton of the Sociology Department will be appointed as the .50 Associate Dean of Graduate Studies effective June 2007. Dean Horton will initially focus on issues of diversity and non-terminal masters programs.
 - The GSO survey of student satisfaction (via survey monkey) has garnered around 500 responses. I report is being prepared for the presidential search committee and Graduate Dean.
 - Dean Pryse will be attending the GSO meeting tonight (4/20/07) and will be ready to clarify information about graduate student funding and stipends.
3. Chair's Report – S. Friedman
 - Prof. Friedman engaged a brief discussion among Council members about the housing needs of incoming graduate students and particularly incoming international graduate students. There was consensus that such needs are deserving of attention.
 - The Chair reported that the Senate recently approved the three bills introduced by GAC.
 - The University Ombudspersons will be invited to attend the GAC meeting of 5/4/07 to discuss the Ombuds programs with the Council.
4. Committee on Educational Policy & Procedures – L. Kranich

Prof. Kranich addressed the Committee's report (appended to the end of these minutes). After a period of brief discussion, the Council voted to accept the report and approve the recommendation contained therein

(6-0-0). Dean Pryse noted that she will be pleased to follow-up on the informal advice regarding TOEFL guidelines for all funded students with the graduate program directors.

5. Committee on Curriculum & Instruction – F. Bolton for S. Saleh

Ms. Bolton summarized the 2 Committee reports (appended to the end of these minutes) – the first (3/29/07) containing one action item – a recommendation to approve changes to the MA Criminal Justice program. She clarified a question about the program “core” raised by Prof. Friedman. The Council voted to accept both reports and in doing so approve the one curriculum change recommended (in the 3/29/07 report) (6-0-0).

6. New Business – M. Pryse

Dean Pryse raised the concept of re-naming Graduate Studies to become The Graduate School and provided a document addressing the issue (appended to the end of these minutes). Prof. Pomerantz suggested the change was warranted – “just do it!” Prof. Gangolly indicated that all the institutions he is familiar with have a Graduate School. Prof. Kranich echoed both theses remarks. After brief period of healthy discussion the Council voted unanimously to support the re-naming (6-0-0).

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned.

END OF 4/20/07 GAC MINUTES

To: Graduate Academic Council

From: Laurence Kranich, Chair
GAC Committee on Educational Policy & Procedures (CEP&P)

Date: April 19, 2007

Re: Report and Recommendations

The CEP&P met on March 13, 2007 and resumed discussion of the matter of policy pertaining to English language proficiency of graduate study applicants. In attendance were M. Casserly, L.-A. McNutt & L. Kranich, with J. Bartow as staff.

Discussion of the potential policy matter resulted in the following (2) recommendations for action by the GAC:

1. That a minimum TOEFL score of 550 on the written exam (or its equivalent) be required of all international applicants with the exception of those who have completed two full-time semesters of study at a college or university whose primary medium of instruction is English.
2. That an exception to this requirement be granted in the event a department, through its chairperson, wishes to certify competence and attest to a student’s English proficiency. In that event, the department should bear the burden of any necessary English language remediation and, in particular, that such a burden should not fall on other academic and/or support units.

In addition to the above, the CEP&P recommends that the Graduate Dean reconsider the matter of extending the 600 minimum TOEFL requirement to all international students receiving merit-based funding (assistantships & fellowships), rather than those with immediate instructional responsibilities only, and that the Dean solicit broad input from all academic units regarding this matter.

Finally, the CEP&P recommends that the Graduate Dean contact and consult with student support service units for the purpose of preparing a memo for graduate program chairs and directors identifying which English language support services are available on campus and their intended scope. In addition, the committee recommends that the Dean invite the service units to propose measures the University Senate might undertake to ensure the proper use of such services.

To: Graduate Academic Council
From: Florence Bolton on behalf of Shadi Saleh, Chair
GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction (CC&I)
Date: March 29, 2007 (scheduled but later cancelled)
Subject: Report and Recommendations

CC&I members: J. Gangolly; R. Irving; J. Newman, A. Pomerantz, J. Rivera-Wilson; S. Saleh, B. Thiel, J. Bartow (staff), and F. Bolton (staff).

One item of business was considered.

1. School of Criminal Justice – Request for program revisions to the MA in Criminal Justice program

As background the present MA in Criminal Justice program requires the completion of a support sequence of statistics and research design and the completion of area requirements in three of the four substantive areas of the curriculum. In order to make the program more integrated Criminal Justice has now proposed to require the completion of two foundation courses, Crj 607 and 640; the completion of the support statistics and research design sequence, Crj 504 and 505 or equivalents; and the passing of a comprehensive examination.

At its March 15, 2007 meeting the Curriculum & Instruction Committee sought clarification concerning the content material of the capstone comprehensive exam and its evaluation. Questions were asked of Professor Krohn whose email response was shared with Committee members. He explained that one general question would be presented to students which would require them to apply knowledge gained in the four foundation courses to their chosen area of expertise. The examination committee is to be made up of two faculty members selected by the Associate Dean and its sole responsibility is to evaluate the exam, not to develop it. The student's curriculum and career intentions are to be the first criterion for selecting the committee. Professor Krohn stated that this "was intended to ensure that the evaluation committee would know what courses the student took and be able to evaluate an essay geared to the area of expertise represented by the student's curriculum."

According to the rationale given for the proposed program changes criminal justice as a discipline is moving away from the type of specialization that is currently reflected in the program. It was successfully argued that completing core courses in each of the two foundational aspects of criminal justice, Theories of Criminal Justice (Crj 640), and Criminological Theory (Crj 607), provided a basis for other studies and related to most other course work in the discipline. This proposal brings the MA in Criminal Justice into compliance with the University's requirement of a "capstone event" and provides a curriculum that lends itself to providing students with a common educational experience.

Due to its prior discussion of the proposal earlier in the month and email circulation of Professor Krohn's response among the members, the Committee was able to vote electronically 5-0-1 in favor of program revisions and move it forward to the GAC for further action.

To: Graduate Academic Council
From: Florence Bolton on behalf of Shadi Saleh, Chair
GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction (CC&I)
Date: April 16, 2007
Subject: Report and Recommendations

CC&I members: J. Gangolly; R. Irving; J. Rivera-Wilson; and F. Bolton (staff). A. Pomerantz, J. Newman, S. Saleh, B. Thiel and J. Bartow (staff) were unable to attend.

Invited Guest: Professor Arthur Applebee

One item of business was considered.

1. School of Education – Department of Educational Theory and Practice’s request for program revisions to the MS in General Educational Studies

Professor Applebee provided the Committee with a brief explanation of the revisions requested by the Department of Educational Theory and Practice to the MS in General Educational Studies program. The current 30 credit program requires a foundations course and a research course for total of 6 credits. The remaining 24 credits are determined by the student with the help and approval of an assigned advisor. The revised MS in General Educational Studies would require 15 credits in foundational coursework plus a specialty concentration consisting of 15 to 21 additional credits. These 15 to 21 credits are to be taken as part of an MS in General Education Studies or can be taken separately as individual Certificates of Study.

As a result of the Committee’s discussion and questions, some language was suggested to help clarify the proposal. Professor Applebee agreed to incorporate the Committee’s suggestions and return the proposal for further review and action.

Opening Discussion to Rename “Office of Graduate Studies” to The Graduate School at the University at Albany

“The graduate school ideally stands at the very center of a research university. It is where everything comes together. Graduate students imbibe the scholarly and research strategies employed by faculty while they also develop their abilities as mentors of undergraduates; . . . the graduate school should become the intellectual center of the university.” (Woodrow Wilson Foundation, “The Responsive Ph.D.,” 6)

Our History

Prior to the appointment of the current Dean, the University at Albany exercised a “weak graduate dean” model, a descriptor that also fairly applies to a “weak” approach to graduate education generally. Graduate student support had remained flat or decreased slightly, there was little visible campus-wide presence of graduate education outside each individual program or College, and the Office of Graduate Studies had no autonomous organizational or budget structure prior to academic year 2006-07.

Nevertheless, the Office of Graduate Studies maintains key functions:

- quality control in the areas of program and curricular policy, providing services to faculty and academic programs;

- shepherding student academic grievances and helping resolve when possible all kinds of problems for students;
- liaison with and staffing of the Senate's Graduate Academic Council;
- regular oversight and regulation of students' compliance with graduate registration policies;
- thesis and dissertation submission requirements; and
- student recruitment and retention efforts, particularly of students from underrepresented groups;
- coordination with Graduate Admissions to manage both the admission of graduate students and degree clearance for those same students at the conclusion of their programs of study.

In January, 2005, the University appointed a member of the teaching faculty as half-time Interim Dean (and permanent full-time Dean during July, 2006). The Graduate Dean role brought the first infusion of new resources into Graduate Studies in recent memory and the current Dean has focused efforts during 2006-07 on increasing doctoral stipends, supporting graduate student recruitment, and responding to the needs of graduate programs, graduate students, and graduate excellence at the University at Albany.

Merits of a Graduate School

During 2005-06, the Office of Graduate Studies first proposed the formation of a Graduate School as part of our Compact Plan. (The proposal was finally removed from consideration because we were not asking for additional funding.)

We now bring to the table for governance discussion the merits of such a proposal.

1. The University at Albany is the only one of the 4 SUNY research universities that does not have a Graduate School. Among the larger list of 26 peer and aspirational peer institutions to which we have compared our campus in the past, 16 have a Graduate School and an additional 4 have adopted a Graduate Division.
2. Currently every tenure-track and tenured teaching faculty member at the University at Albany automatically becomes a member of the Graduate Faculty and would, under a new structure, become a member of the Graduate School.
3. The timing is right; since we are involved in a Presidential Search, it matters that graduate education achieve full visibility on campus.
4. We aspire to do the following under the rubric of the Graduate School:
 - a. increase the visibility of graduate education at the University at Albany;
 - b. create an enhanced platform for the Graduate Dean to advocate for increased funding for graduate education;
 - c. establish a more visible public presence for the support services we deliver to faculty, prospective and current students, and future alumni;
 - e. enable longer-range viability for graduate education and advancement efforts by providing graduate alumni "dual citizenship" with their program of study and with The Graduate School;
 - f. serve as an integrative hub to foster cross-School/College interactions between faculty and students.

Financial Implications

The proposal to rename "Graduate Studies" as "The Graduate School" has no financial implications other than those that the existing "Graduate Studies" unit already has, but it may provide development opportunities down the road. While most graduate alumni who wish to donate will do so directly within their Schools and Colleges, by not having a functioning Graduate School we have foreclosed the possibility that the Graduate School itself—and individuals within it—might make the significant difference in a student's career and lead that graduate alum to want to contribute to the University. A Graduate School gives such students another way to direct their giving, and a Dean of a Graduate School lends stature to development claims about graduate education at Albany.

