

**Graduate Academic Council
2006 – 2007**

Minutes of the Council meeting of November 30, 2006
Approved by the Council on March 5, 2007

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

Guest: Gary Yukl, School of Business

Unable to attend: J. Bartow (staff), L.-A. McNutt. & T. Wagtowicz

1. Minutes of the GAC meeting of 10/19/06 were not available for consideration.
2. Dean's Report – M. Pryse did not give a report but rather deferred to Professor Yukl and the agenda item dealing with admission suspension to the Ph.D. Organizational Studies program.
3. Ph.D. Organizational Studies Admission Suspension

Professor Yukl proposed that admissions be suspended to the Ph.D. Organizational Studies program until a thorough evaluation of the program can be conducted. He stated that the current School of Business Dean is against the program and funding the program further. Perhaps when a new School of Business Dean arrives, the decision may be made to once again replace the funding. However, the arrival of that new Dean is likely to take time due to the death of President Hall. A decision to suspend admission to the program would prevent extending the program by adding new students. A reorganization of the program in the School of Business seems necessary and that should be accomplished under a new Dean's direction.

Marjorie Pryse also provided some background information. The Ph.D. Organizational Studies program is interdisciplinary and draws from Rockefeller College, the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business. All concerned were contacted. No response was received from Rockefeller College. In this nation there appears to be only one other program like this, at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, although a number of doctoral programs in Management have Org Studies concentrations, and Organizational Studies seems to be offered at on-line universities as a free-standing degree. Therefore, there is no peer measurement for the program. The AACSB accrediting agency also raised questions about the program that resulted in a request for a University program review. Dean Pryse stated that the present School of Business Dean Leonard felt that the College of Computing and Information Science, particularly Information Science, could be a better avenue for a broader range of Business faculty to work with doctoral students.

Joy Newman expressed concern about the lateness of a decision to suspend admissions at this point in the application process. She stressed that at the least present applicants should be counseled and communicated with about the program's status. Applicants should be pointed to other options such as Information Science or Industrial/Organizational Psychology. She did not wish to have the applicant left without a graduate option.

A motion to suspend admission to the Organizational Studies Ph.D. program was offered by Anita Pomerantz and seconded by Shadi Saleh. The council voted to approve the proposal and bring it forward to the full Senate by a vote of 7-0-3.

< Shadi Saleh left the meeting. >

4. Chair's Report – Sally Friedman – None given as Chair Friedman wished to defer her comments and instead present a Graduate Ombuds update.
5. Educational Policy & Procedures Committee Report – L. Kranich

Larry Kranich summarized the CEP&P report concerning “a proposal before the GAC to require a minimum TOEFL score of 600 for all international graduate students who receive funding”. The report is attached. According to the Committee's findings both Buffalo and Binghamton have a 550 TOEFL minimum. This information helped form the basis of the report's recommendation number 1 to have a minimum TOEFL score of 550 be required of all international applicants with an exception given to those having two semesters of U.S. study or prior education conducted in English.

Dean Pryse expressed concern that some miscommunication of her charge to the Committee had occurred and that minutes from the prior GAC meeting introducing and discussing this TOEFL topic would be helpful. She stated that recommendation number 1 may seem worthy of moving forward as a proposal and that a minimum 550 TOEFL score may indeed be a good measurement of future success. Referring to recommendation 2, Dean Pryse asked that the Committee give more explanation to what was meant or what would be involved should a Department desire to grant an exception to the required minimum. Dean Pryse commented that recommendation 4 addressing faculty use of the Disability Resources Center and recommendation 5 requesting the Writing Center to clarify its services seemed to inappropriately direct the services of other University units.

A motion was made by Professor Kranich and seconded by Jacqueline Hayes to suspend acceptance of the CEP&P recommendations until the GAC has minutes from the last meeting to help clarify the question and charge placed before the CEP&P subcommittee. All were in favor (9-0-0).

6. Graduate Ombuds Update – S. Friedman

Chair Sally Friedman reported the good news that three ombudspersons were in position to serve in the Ombuds Office. However, there was still the need to create an Ombuds Committee to provide counsel to the ombudspersons. In accordance with Senate Bill No. 0405-13 that established the Ombuds Office, the GAC is to appoint two faculty members to this Ombuds Committee. Two graduate students are to be appointed by the Graduate Student Organization. Professor Friedman considers the Ombuds Office to be important and wishes the administrative needs of the Office to be placed on the GAC agenda for its next meeting.

END OF GAC MINUTES OF 11/30/06

Graduate Academic Council, Committee on Educational Policy and Procedures (CEP&P)
Minutes from meeting 11/15/06

Committee Members

Present: Laurence Kranich (Chair), Louise-Anne McNutt, Mary Casserly, Mitchell Earleywine

Absent: Thomas Wagtowicz, James Raynolds

Guests: Brian Goodale (Graduate Admissions), Thecla Philip (International Education), Linda Leary (Intensive English Language Program)

CEP&P met to discuss a proposal before the GAC to require a minimum TOEFL score of 600 for all international graduate students who receive funding.

L. Kranich described the issue as follows: Some of the University's support units – in particular, the Writing Center and Disabled Student Services – are providing services beyond the scope of their intended

purposes for international students who lack sufficient English language skills. International graduate students can be divided into 3 categories: (1) those who are funded and have immediate instructional responsibilities; (2) those who are funded but do not have immediate instructional responsibilities; and (3) those who do not receive funding. Students with immediate instructional responsibilities currently are required to obtain a minimum TOEFL score of 600 (paper-based). For the other two categories the *recommended* minimum is 550. The proposal before the committee is to extend the minimum TOEFL requirement of 600 to category (2) students.

There was discussion of the programmatic impact of enforcing a 600 TOEFL minimum for category (2) students. The committee also discussed whether this would be the most practical and effective way to address the problem, or whether the service units affected could clarify their missions and adopt policies to prevent misuse. T. Philip and L. Leary described some of the Intensive English Language Program services available on campus. L. McNutt described how the School of Public Health evaluates its students' English language skills.

On a related issue, B. Goodale described the Graduate Admissions Office's need for a *required* minimum for all international students (including category (3)). The Office must attest to the English language proficiency of all international students admitted to the University. Therefore, it would like CEP&P to recommend that a minimum TOEFL score of 550 be required of all international graduate students, with the possible caveat that the requirement could be waived under certain circumstances. Examples of such circumstances might be if a faculty member were to personally assess a student's language skills, if the student is from a country with English as an official language, etc. CEP&P agreed to recommend this policy to GAC but to maintain the 600 minimum for those students with immediate instructional responsibilities.

CEP&P discussed further the use of support services and noted that it is not appropriate for faculty to use the services of the Disability Resources Center for international students unless those students have a disability. It also agreed that the issue of the amount and type of service the Writing Center should offer international students should be determined by the Center in conjunction with the Office of International Education.

Proposal:

The CEP&P recommends:

1. That a minimum TOEFL score of 550 be required of all international applicants with the exception of those who have completed two semesters of study at a U.S. college or university, or present evidence that their undergraduate and/or prior graduate education was conducted in English.
2. That an exception to this requirement be granted in the event a Department wishes to 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.
3. That the current minimum required TOEFL score of 600 be maintained for those international students with immediate instructional responsibilities and that the requirement should not be extended to all international students receiving funding.
4. That it is inappropriate for faculty to use the services of the Disability Resources Center for international students unless those students have a disability and are eligible for such services under the guidelines stipulated by the Office of Disabled Student Services.
5. That the Writing Center, in consultation with the Office of International Education, should clarify which services it provides to international students and which it does not and should adopt policies to ensure that its services are used only for the intended purposes.