

**Graduate Academic Council  
2002 – 2003**

Minutes of the Council meeting of December 6, 2002  
Approved by the Council on February 28, 2003

In attendance: M. Gallant, C. Smith, L. Cohen, M. Casserly, S. Maloney, H. Charalambous, B. Spanier,  
C. Bischoff, E. Block, K. Trent, K. Sarfoh, L. Raffalovich, L. Trubitt, C. MacDonald  
(Chair), J. Bartow (staff)

Unable to attend: G. Singh, J. Rudolph, R. Irving, J. Mumpower, M. Genkin

1. Dean's Report – J. Bartow for J. Mumpower

Information copies of three draft memos were distributed and briefly discussed:

- GSEU supplemental GA/TA awards
- Blended assistantship/fellowship model
- Tuition scholarship processing on Peoplesoft

2. Chair's Report – C. MacDonald

- Commencement this coming Sunday, 12/8/02
- A Faculty Forum was held 11/25/02 dealing with governance by-law changes. A related powerpoint document may be viewed on the Senate website. Members are encouraged to review such and send comments to Carolyn MacDonald.
- Creation and cross-listing of Nanosciences courses yet to be completed.

3. Motion on Courses from New Programs

A motion was made, seconded and passed:

New course proposals submitted for recently approved programs shall be individually reviewed by the curriculum committee, particularly in regard to overlap with existing course offerings.

4. Committee on Curriculum & Instruction Report – L. Raffalovich

The Committee has considered another request from Languages, Literatures and Cultures to drop the GRE as an application requirement, this time for Spanish programs. This was almost identical to a request previously approved for French Studies programs. The Committee recommends approval by the Council. The Council acted to accept the report and approve this item, with all voting in favor except one abstention.

5. Committee on Admissions & Academic Standing – H. Charalambous (report appended to the end of these minutes)

The report, with one action item therein, was briefly introduced by Prof. Charalambous. The Council voted unanimously to accept the report and approve the item as recommended.

6. Committee on Educational Policy & Procedures – It was noted that an item pertaining to student ID#s may be coming from the UAC for committee review.

The meeting was adjourned with a request that Spring 2003 schedules be sent to Jon Bartow

END OF 12/6/02 GAC MINUTES

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To: Graduate Academic Council

From: Hara Charalambous, Chair  
GAC Committee on Admissions & Academic Standing (CAAS)

Date: December 4, 2002

Subj: Report and Recommendations

The CAAS met on 12/4/02. In attendance were: A. Boehm, C. Wagner, D. Peterson, K. Trent, H. Charalambous (Chair), J. Rudolph, J. Bartow (staff), M. Brown & S. Maloney. Members unable to attend were: L. Trubitt & M. Genkin. One item of old business was considered and acted upon. It is recommended to the Council for action:

1. A student has petitioned the Council for the acceptance of doctoral advanced standing credits for work completed at St. John's University Law School in which grades below B were earned. The Committee initially discussed the subject petition on 10/23/02 and asked for additional documentation and clarification pertaining to the merits of this case. A request was made to the Law School regarding grading policies and a response received from its Registrar.

The subject petition made reference to grading at the Law School circa 1978 – 1981, at which time no required grading normalization, or “curving,” was mandated, contrary to current practice. It was documented that the petitioner’s class rank then, 92/313 with GPA of 79.7 (C+), would have equated approximately to a GPA of 3.2 if subject to current grade normalization practices. On these grounds, the petitioner sought exception to UAlbany policy that only courses with earned grades of B or better be eligible for the award of transfer/advanced standing credits.

The petition was advanced from our School of Criminal Justice with the advisor noting the “classes are relevant to our curriculum...to merit consideration for transfer credit.” Yet, “unless the GAC relaxes the ‘B or better rule’....we presently are not in a position to recognize credit for these classes.”

The Committee considered the updated information in front of it as complete. While recognizing the argument that the subject rank would approximate to a 3.2 using current standards, it is not the rank that limits transfer eligibility. Rather, it is the grades earned in specific courses. The Committee was further cognizant of the supporting argument made by the Law School’s Associate Dean that “law school grading is different from other graduate schools, and A’s are still rare here.”

All this information considered, the Committee determined that the grades earned in specific law school courses were accurate. They were not persuaded that differences in grading standards were so compelling as to warrant a transfer policy exception. The motion to approve the exception failed by a vote of 0 in favor, 7 opposed and 1 abstention (member of the Criminal Justice faculty). It is therefore recommended that the Council deny the petitioner’s request.