

**Graduate Academic Council
2000 – 2001**

Minutes of the Council meeting of March 23, 2001

(Approved by the Council at the subsequent meeting held on May 4, 2001)

In attendance: L. Mullin (Chair), R. Irving, M. Brown, J. Mumpower, G. Harper, D. Bernard, L. Trubitt, J. Bartow (staff)

Unable to attend: A. Fortune, N. Johnson, M. Gallant, D. Abdel-Hady, J. Monfasani

1. Minutes of the meeting of 3/9/01 were reviewed & unanimously approved without amendment
2. Report of the Dean of Graduate Studies – Jeryl Mumpower
 - a. The GSEU contract has been ratified by the union membership.
 - b. Graduate study applications for Fall 2001 are up slightly. Yield rates will be critical.
3. Report of the GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction – R. Irving

The Chair presented the written Committee Report (appended to the end of these minutes). The Council voted unanimously to accept the report and approve the recommendations therein.
4. Report of the GAC Committee on Admissions & Academic Standing – M. Brown

The Chair presented the written Committee Report (appended to the end of these minutes). The Council voted unanimously to accept the report and approve the recommendations therein.

In discussing the last item of the Committee's report, one having to do with a proposed digital dissertation, the Council resolved that:

 - a. The Dean of Graduate Studies is encouraged to actively explore issues pertaining to electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs), through administrative means and/or
 - b. Creation of an ad hoc campus-wide task force to examine the issue and report back to the Dean and the GAC.
5. The Council considered a matter of language and interpretation of graduate policy pertaining to official leave(s) of absence from doctoral study. The question had been put before the Council at the request of Professor Robert Sanders of the Communication Department (see message appended to the end of these minutes). The Council voted unanimously to:
 - a. refer the item to the GAC Committee on Educational Policy & Procedures for consideration and recommendation, and;
 - b. to allow the particular student in question the opportunity to request a leave of absence in the Spring 2001 term (only) without requiring further GAC review. That is, the student may request a leave from the faculty and administrators normally involved with the consideration of such requests.

6. The Council considered a Proposal to establish a Certificate program in Nonprofit Management and Leadership. Margery Saunders from the Center for Women in Government introduced to Proposal to the Council. The five-course interdisciplinary certificate program will require two core courses and three electives. After a period of healthy discussion, the Council voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Proposal to the Senate.

END OF 3/23/01 GAC MINUTES

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To: Graduate Academic Council

From: Richard Irving, Chair
GAC Committee on Curriculum & Instruction (CC&I)

Date: March 21, 2001

Subj: Report and Recommendations

The CAAS met on 3/9/01 and 3/16/01. In attendance at both meetings were: R. Irving (Chair), C. Ellis & J. Bartow (staff). K. Reinhold-Larsson was additionally present at the meeting on 3/16/01. Four items of business were considered and are reported below.

1. Two-year MS Accounting Program (considered 3/9/01)

Proposed is a change to replace MSI 511 (2 credits) with MSI 514 (3 credits) as was recently enacted for the MBA program. This change will result in an increase in the 2YR MS Accounting from 62 to 63 credits.

The Committee recommends approval by the GAC.

2. Graduate Instruction – Department of Health Policy, Management & Behavior (considered 3/9/01)

Sonja Hedlund, who does not possess a doctoral degree or the rank of Associate Professor, is proposed to co-teach HPM521 in the Spring 2001 term with Dr. Mary Applegate. This is a temporary situation prompted by a one-semester leave. Given the temporary nature of the request, the support of the Department Chair and the co-teaching nature of the proposal, the Committee recommends approval by the GAC.

3. M.S. Reading (considered 3/16/01)

The Reading Department and School of Education propose a restructuring of the classroom track of the MS Reading Program. The program will remain at 30 credits, with requirements split between an Educational Foundations Core (15 credits) and a Content & Pedagogy Core (15 credits). The new program structure and core requirements have been developed to be consistent with new State Education Department certification guidelines.

The Committee recommends approval by the GAC.

4. D.A. Humanistic Studies (considered 3/16/01 and previously)

A reduction from 63 to 60 credits is proposed for this program, with a required internship & seminar beefed up and incorporated into the basic program rather than being treated as an add-on. The Committee has concerns about incorporating this experience within the basic credit

requirements for the program and has additional questions regarding the seminar. It has tabled the item to seek additional input. No action by the GAC is recommended at this time.

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To: Graduate Academic Council

From: Maria Brown, Chair
GAC Committee on Admissions & Academic Standing (CAAS)

Date: March 21, 2001

Subj: Report and Recommendations

The CAAS met on 3/9/01. In attendance were: L. Gelzheiser, A. Boehm, R. Jacobs, D. Bernard, M. Brown (Chair) and J. Bartow (staff). Four items of business were considered and are reported below.

1. Petition of Lisa DePaulo, doctoral degree candidate, Educational Administration

Ms. DePaulo seeks waiver of doctoral continuous registration requirement in the Spring 2000 term. Ms. DePaulo successfully defended her dissertation on 12/20/99. However, she did not submit final copies of her dissertation to the Graduate Office until April 2000. Her advisor certifies that she was done with all needed modifications by the end of January 2000. The final submittal of the dissertation was delayed due to personal circumstances and because she was under the impression that she need not register since she was done at the start of the term. A letter was sent to her in August 2000 from the Interim Director of Graduate Admissions (actually, his secretary) "certifying to the Registrar and the faculty that you have completed all requirements [and that the] diploma will be mailed to you..."

Although the circumstances of delayed dissertation submittal did not convince the Committee that a waiver was warranted, the erroneous letter was compelling. It is felt that the mistake of the letter is something the University should live with, not argue about, especially in light of the background.

The Committee unanimously recommends approval of the petition for waiver of the registration requirement in Spring 2000 and that Ms. DePaulo's doctoral degree may be formally awarded.

2. Petition from the Department of Public Administration & Policy on behalf of Victor Bobnick

While an undergraduate student in Regents College, Mr. Bobnick enrolled at UAlbany in RPOS498, an independent study course. He actually fulfilled the requirements for this course by sitting in and participating fully in RPAD504. Now a student in the University's MPA program, it is proposed that he be allowed credit toward MPA requirements for the completion of RPOS498.

The Committee determines that while study in certain courses as an undergraduate may serve as the basis for a waiver of graduate program course requirements it should not serve as the basis for the waiver of required graduate credits for a degree. It is unanimously recommended that the waiver of RPAD504 be approved by the faculty, but the petition for credits toward the MPA be denied by the Council.

3. Petition of Maureen Hand, M.A. Program in English

Ms. Hand seeks an extension to the masters degree statute of limitations. She studied in the M.A. English program in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and took one additional course in 1992. She submits that she had completed or nearly completed all program requirements, save the passing of a departmental exam. She has been teaching high school English since her departure from the

University. The Department supports her request and is willing to work with her to verify the fulfillment of program requirements, including the completion of a departmental exam to be administered.

The Committee recommends to the Council by unanimous vote that an extension be granted through the Spring term 2002.

4. Petition of Emmanuel Savopoulos, doctoral student in English

Mr. Savopoulos seeks a waiver of the policies pertaining to the submission of doctoral dissertations. Specifically, he seeks to develop his work as a multi-media project that "examines the intersection between literacy and multiple intelligences through the composition of sound, image and text." He seeks authorization to submit his dissertation as a multimedia CD.

The Committee determined that a more extensive understanding of the proposed work is needed along with detailed comment by the program faculty. The item was tabled by the Committee. No action by the Council is recommended at this time.

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John,

This is to follow up on our conversation about the Leave of Absence policy. I'd like the following text to be submitted to GAC. If it can go forward as a copy of this email message, fine; if it should be addressed to the Chair of GAC and submitted as a formal memo, please advise me of the specifics. Naturally, I'd like to get this onto the Council's agenda this spring.

Bob

In advising a D.A. student who was told he has exceeded the maximum number of leaves of absence allowable under university policy, and cannot continue as a matriculated student, I find that the catalog text on leaves of absence does not directly support the way it has been administratively interpreted. I want to contest the way it has been interpreted, and propose an alternative.

The policy has been administratively interpreted as being that there is a cap of four semesters on the amount of time a student can take a leave of absence from graduate study. But when I consulted the policy, it does not specify such a cap. The policy is as follows:

A doctoral student may be granted an official leave of absence from his/her graduate program for an appropriate academic or personal reason. A leave of absence must be approved by the student's department, school, or college and by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Normally, a leave of absence will be granted for a period up to one year; under compelling justification, a leave may be extended for another year.

My understanding when I read the policy is that while it does specify the maximum duration of "a" (singular) leave of absence, it does not specify that a student can have no more than one leave. In fact, I've

found that the student in question has had three separate, non-consecutive leaves.

In my view, the spirit of the policy is that there be review and oversight of any and all leaves of absence. Assuming that for each discreet leave of absence, there is a discreet personal reason, then the policy specifies the maximum length of a leave for that reason. It specifies in addition a review process on three levels for such requests, presumably to be sure they are not frivolous, and that the number and duration will not have an adverse effect on the quality of the student's preparation for the degree. But also to be sure that all actions on such requests are principled rather than arbitrary.

The need for oversight regarding the number and duration of leaves is obvious and interpreted in that way, the policy seems entirely sound - it affords discretion to a student's program for acting on such requests, and leaves the specific reasons and needs to be review on a case by case basis.

On the other hand, to interpret the policy as also putting a fixed cap on the cumulative amount of time a student can have leaves of absence -- regardless of the reasons and needs for them -- denies the department discretion and voids a consideration of specialcircumstances in individual cases.

I therefore request action by the GAC on the matter of how the current leave policy should be interpreted, and to create new catalog language to clarify the matter. In this regard, I urge the Council to adopt an interpretation that conforms as closely as possible with the current text, which as I say, indicates that there will be oversight, but does not indicate that there will be a fixed limit on the cumulative duration of leaves of absence.