

**Graduate Academic Council
2005 – 2006**

Minutes of the Council meeting of December 12, 2005
Approved by the Council on February 2, 2006

In attendance: D. Byrd, E. Redkey, F. Bolton (staff), J. Bartow (staff), L. Kranich, M. Pryse, M. Rodriguez (Chair), S. Chinnam, S. Friedman & S. Levine

Guests: R. Geer, R. Matyi & B. Thiel, College of NanoScale Science & Engineering (CNSE)
R. Bangert-Drowns & I. Kecskes, School of Education

GAC members unable to attend: G.Burke, L.-A. McNutt, O. Ongiti, S. Dutta & S. Maloney

1. CNSE Curriculum Change Proposal

A Senate bill to approve the proposed program revisions in the CNSE MS and PhD programs was returned to the GAC by the Senate Executive Committee with a request that the GAC consider the “appreciable impact on other units of the University.”

Jon Bartow commented on the unusual nature of this particular proposal as it relates to approval procedures and how this might have been interpreted by the Senate Exec. Committee. He suggested, in any event, the substantive request by that group is for the GAC to examine the “impact” of the proposal on other units/programs.

Prof. Geer from CNSE provided comments to the GAC about perceived impact. He described the proposed curricular changes as program revisions resulting in a split or spin-off. He indicated that the scope of the proposed programs incorporates core area revisions but not expansion. As regards engineering, since there are no engineering programs at the University he suggested there should be no concerns of impact in that regard.

Prof. Levine inquired about any “appreciable impact” and Prof. Rodriguez inquired about course overlaps (with those offered by other units) as well as student attractiveness toward the programs.

Prof. Geer indicated there would be no change in the nanoscience courses, simply a reorganization of such. New nanoengineering courses would be into an area not currently addressed at the University.

Prof. Rodriguez inquired as to other units being aware of the proposed CNSE programmatic changes. Prof. Byrd commented that the “impact” issues were very thoroughly examined when the programs were initially reviewed through governance a few years ago.

Prof. Geer again stressed that the changes in the Nanoscience area involve course content reorganization into modular format to accommodate differing student backgrounds. There is no expansion of the programmatic “boundaries.”

Dean Pryse noted that there is already considerable CNSE collaboration with faculty from other units/programs and suggested that jointly appointed faculty may have been involved in the re-crafting of the programs as proposed.

Prof. Rodriguez inquired about the new courses in the engineering area. Prof. Geer noted that aside from the re-structured core requirements, the new courses are either upper level or in the engineering area.

Dean Pryse suggested it might be helpful for the GAC to re-affirm its view of the proposal as being one of program revision rather than discontinuation and replacement of existing programs (as suggested by the Exec. Committee). Council members around the table concurred with this statement. Prof. Geer stated that some of the new 600-level courses are reflective of the expertise of new faculty and are advanced nano courses for advanced students.

Professors Geer, Matyi and Thiel were thanked for their comments and departed the meeting.

Prof. Byrd suggested that to learn of any perceived problems with the new courses it would be necessary to hear from other units. Ms. Redkey indicated her take on the Exec. Committee action was to encourage the GAC to vet the courses and/or curricular proposals with other units.

Prof. Kranich commented that he felt the College had the right to define their courses. Yet, he noted that the revised program core requirements exclude the option for completion of courses from other units in lieu of CNSE core courses.

Prof. Friedman suggested other units should be afforded the courtesy of learning of the proposed changes before the matter comes before the Senate.

There was discussion about where comments from other units should be considered, Senate or GAC, as well as who should solicit such comments, the GAC or the CNSE.

Prof. Byrd indicated he would like to hear from Chemistry and Physics.

A motion was made by Prof. Kranich and seconded by Prof. Byrd, to table the matter while input as regards any perceived impact on units/programs in the College of Arts & Sciences is solicited via the Arts & Sciences Dean, with the request for CAS response to be "near the start of the Spring 2006 term." The Council voted unanimously (8-0-0) to approve this motion.

2. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Graduate Certificate Program Proposal

Prof. Istvan Kecskes from the School of Education's Department of Educational Theory & Practice (ETAP) introduced the program proposal that had previously been distributed to Council members. He explained the existing TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) programs in the ETAP Department, one to train NYS teachers and one to train individuals to teach English in foreign language settings. The Grad Certificate program is proposed to provide training to non-educators to gain English language instruction skills for use abroad. After receiving responses to a few questions, the Council voted unanimously (8-0-0) to approve the EFL Grad Certificate Program Proposal and sponsor its introduction as a Senate bill for consideration.

3. Dean's Report – M. Pryse: None

4. Chair's Report - M. Rodriguez: Prof. Rodriguez noted that the Senate Executive Committee has discussed the increase in graduate certificate programs.

END OF GAC 12/12/05 MINUTES