

**2013-14 FACULTY SENATE**  
**GRADUATE STUDIES POLICIES COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**17 September 2013**  
*Approved 15 Oct 2013*

Members Present: Barakatt, Blanton, Hamilton (Chair), Heather, Hembree, Kaplan, Reddick, Wassmer

Members Absent: Cowan, May, Miller, Sprott, Steinwert

Guests: Chevelle Newsome

**1. Call to order:** Called to order at approximately 8:30 a.m.

**2. Minutes of 3 September 2013:** Approved.

**3. Election of Vice-Chair:**

Chris Miller is unable to fulfill the duties of the office this academic year. Ann Blanton was elected to be the Vice-Chair of GSPC for the 2013-14 Academic Year.

**4. Information Items:**

**a. Report from Chair:**

Graduate Coordinators Meeting

- i. Graduate coordinators are not happy with B grade policy – some have historically accepted C grades.
- ii. There was a discussion at the Grad Coordinator's meeting of how departments grade – what departments will accept in the core curriculum and, separately, in the elective courses.
- iii. Core classes frequently lead into comprehensive exams.
- iv. Grad classes are harder and require more work in line with the credit hours.
- v. The B grade policy was adopted 2 years ago but had not been necessarily known or utilized until recently.
- vi. GSPC member Hembree noted that a Form B asking for an exception is not that hard to file.
- vii. GSPC discussion ended with consensus on not wishing to change the standard as it is not to any program's benefit to reverse the policy at this time.

**b. Report from Chair Continued:**

Credential Part of the Grad Credit Hour Policy

- i. This part of the policy needs work which will be aided by Pia Wong at the Oct. 1 meeting.
- ii. The undergrad part of this policy has been sent to Senate. GSPC will use it as an aid and document for comparison.
- iii. GSPC will be looking for any missing categories.
- iv. Chair Hamilton will resend policy to GSPC members.
- v. Different types of credentials offered by Sac State:
  1. PPS – People Personnel Services credential
  2. Teaching credentials – unit load can be upwards of 20. Looks absurd in comparison to other programs.

**c. Report from Chair Continued:**

IPP Update

- i. IPP and program review taken together as one entity is being proposed.
- ii. Task force being considered to see if those things can be put together.
- iii. Some sort of assessment of grad programs is necessary.
- iv. There is a need to discuss assessment of grad programs in the GSPC forum as it is not as burdensome as program review or self-study.
- v. A survey is being developed by the Office of Academic Program Assessment that will begin collecting data as well.
- vi. OAPA is posting 2 workshops to aid in this program assessment.

**d. Report from Graduate Dean:**

Nothing to report at this time.

**e. Question to the Graduate Dean from GSPC member Hamilton**

Policy question

- i. Former student was academically disqualified (for the second time?)
- ii. Student asked to be readmitted in order to enter another program but was denied.
- iii. Policy says he has to be readmitted to the program from which he was dismissed in order to apply to another program, because...
- iv. Title V requires a student be in good academic standing to apply to the university and a student academically disqualified cannot be in good academic standing.
- v. Perhaps the wording should be “Application to be Re-accepted to the University” rather than to the particular program from

which a student was dismissed? Or is it putting the student back into good academic standing?

- vi. Dean Newsome clarified that a student is readmitted to the university by the program from which s/he was dismissed. The student may continue in the program from which s/he was dismissed, if the faculty allows it, or in another program, but the student is still on academic probation and needs to apply for academic renewal every semester that their GPA is below what's required.

**f. Update and Discussion: GVAR**

- i. Statewide Senate report from 2002 reviews what other campuses are doing at the present time: Course; Exam; or both course and exam.
- ii. Exams presently seem to consist of reading and answering questions on what was read.
- iii. The GVAR was intended to prove that students can write at an upper division level, in part in preparation for applied doctorates.
- iv. A task force was formed here at Sac State to assess graduate writing. The result was the WPG that students must pass, or that they must have a minimum GPA of 3.5, or that they receive a 4.5 or above on the GRE, etc. Final GVAR assessment is the culminating experience.
- v. The argument is that a writing intensive course in grad school is remediation. Students should come into grad school with writing skills in place. Culminating experience as final assessment is not a good tool. They need writing skills in place FOR the culminating experience.
- vi. GSPC discussed the possibility that students taking the GVAR also be required to write a short passage, correct errors in a passage, write an essay, read and answer questions about an essay.
- vii. And separately, GSPC discussed that writing for your discipline is a separate requirement, and that's what should be taught in each program.
- viii. Should there be a university-wide requirement of what should be scored minimally on GRE? GSPC discussed that there would be pushback from many programs.
- ix. The WPG is an unsuccessful tool as the standard for pass seems too low.

- x. Perhaps every department should have a GWI (graduate writing intensive course) and the GVAR is met through the culminating experience.
- xi. Either hold students to meeting requirements for writing by having a WPG or a GWI in the programs or the CCE class for writing is going to be overwhelmed with a lot of people. It was also noted that the CCE is an additional cost to the students.
- xii. Perhaps the solution is asking programs to develop a class that handles this. One way of grading the extra writing is having the students in a GWI class edit each other's work. Then practice comes from both sides of the writing issue, writing and editing.
- xiii. The placement issue is then left to the programs in terms of how they remediate or address writing issues.
- xiv. The WPG is expensive (\$25) and not adequate for the needs of graduate student placement for writing expertise/remediation.
- xv. GSPC proposed a needs analysis and speculated that what would come out of it is students needing and getting writing mechanics, a writing grammar class. Potentially a low unit class, low cost, partially on-line, using TAs.
- xvi. It was agreed in the committee that remediation is needed for students the summer before they begin grad school.

**g. Other Business:** There was no other business.

**5. Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15

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Tracy Hamilton, Chair, GSPC