

2014-15 FACULTY SENATE
GRADUATES STUDIES POLICIES COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MAY 5, 2015

Approved May 11, 2015

Members Present: Adan, Cowan, Heather, Kaplan, Miller, Newsome, Palaspas, Reddick, Wassmer

Members Absent: Hamilton (sabbatical), Hembree, May, Sprott

1. Call to order: Called to order at approximately 8:35 a.m.

2. Minutes of 4-7-15 and 4-21-15: Approved.

3. Information Items

a. Report from Chair

The revision of the Graduate Learning Goals/Objectives policy will have its second reading at the Senate's meeting on May 7th. Heather will ask Senate Executive Committee to move this item up on the agenda at its meeting on May 5th.

CPC Chair Fell has asked for GSPC input on how to include language about concentrations in graduate programs in the revised policy on undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Members felt that the section headings CPC had added to the policy are really useful since they help graduate coordinators quickly find policy relevant to their programs. Members also noted that the language on concentrations needed a couple of minor revisions to apply to graduate programs. Thus, they suggested repeating the paragraph on concentrations, with revisions, in the section on graduate degree programs.

b. Report from Graduate Dean

Graduate Coordinators have been asked to identify representatives from each department for the Graduate Student Advisory Council.

A survey has been sent out to faculty involved in graduate education to get input about strategic planning.

A link was sent to graduate coordinators about guidelines for financial aid recipients announced by the US Department of Education Office of Finance. The guidelines focus on advising students on debt management.

c. Report from Statewide Senate

Statewide Senate meets next week. The Academic Affairs Committee has been charged with defining graduate units as a percentage of the total units. Newsome noted that this request had come from University Presidents' discussion of proposed changes to Title V and concern from some campuses about the effect of those changes on graduate programs.

4. Discussion Items

a. New Business: Fall Forums

Heather reported that rooms would need to be reserved for the Fall forums and solicited input on the number and format of sessions. Members decided to hold a single summit on September 30th, with October 7th as an alternate date. The format of the summit will include an initial welcome, followed by three concurrent, recurring, one-hour sessions which will focus on (1) core competencies and writing, (2) assessment and program review, and (3) resources and strategic planning. Heather will investigate the possibility of ending the summit with a reception. Cowan and Reddick agreed to help Heather with planning over the summer.

b. Old Business: GVAR

Heather and Cowan reported on their experiences using the draft GVAR rubric. Cowan used the rubric with timed writing and found it to be “limited” for this type of writing. Heather used the rubric with two assignments: a research proposal from a graduate writing intensive class; and a lesson plan with rationale from another class. Heather found that the descriptors for the 4 band sometimes did not apply to these assignments; however, the 2 and 3 bands, in which the majority of scores fell, were generally easy to use and allowed for differentiation between students. Kaplan noted that the rubric may need to be made more general to allow for the demands for different genres and disciplines.

Members reviewed their discussions of the GVAR this year to identify areas where there was broad consensus which can lead to input from the campus and the development of policy language in the Fall:

- Writing should be assessed as an entrance requirement.
- GVAR certification should occur early in the program (e.g. before advancement to candidacy or after a certain number of units)
- Programs should certify GVAR in a way that meets guidelines provided by policy (e.g. the need to identify acceptable genres, and to create processes to ensure multiple readers and resolution of differences).
- Each program may need to review and revise its curriculum to ensure it adequately prepares students for writing in their programs and that genres chosen for GVAR certification connect to the writing expected later in the program.
- Graduate students need support for writing (e.g. workshops on the process of thesis writing); programs might require a student to seek support that addresses needs identified by faculty in the program.
- Programs will need to determine how the general GVAR rubric will be interpreted to reflect expectations for the genre(s) their students will produce to satisfy the GVAR.

c. Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Julian Heather, Chair, GSPC