

GRADUATE AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Friday, January 27, 2012

1:00 p.m. – Peters Hall C117

PRESENT: Dennis Grady (Chair), John Brummette, Holly Cline for Joan Dickinson, Sarah Strauss for Virginia Burggraf, Rana Duncan-Daston, Wendy Eckenrod-Green, Lori Elis, Ann Elliott, Sarah Hastings, Kathy Hoover, Kay Johnson, Jerry Kopf, Don Langrehr, Jennifer Mabry, Diane Millar, Douglas Mitchell, Kristan Morrison, Ed Swanson, Chris White, Paul Witkowsky. Staff: Nora Reilly, Sandy Steele, Jean Cox.

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:00 p.m.

2. MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November 4, 2011 meeting. Discussion followed. Ann Elliott suggested an amendment to page 3 of the minutes to correct or delete 3 statements attributed to her. The minutes were approved by consensus as amended.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

McConnell Library - Lisa Vassady attended the meeting to present library efforts to improve assistance to students and faculty. She used the APA website as an example of a site that provides extensive services. Requests for graduate research syllabi will be made as well as for other resource needs in terms of research services offered by the library. A further analysis of needs will continue through the Spring semester so that student modules can be made available for Fall semester. Faculty should contact Candace Small at cbsmall@radford.edu. Inquiries about research methods should be directed to Lisa Vassady at ljvassady@radford.edu.

Graduate Student Forum – Nora Reilly reported that the annual Graduate Student Forum will be held in Charlottesville this year. Four students will represent RU: Amy Furrow, Marjorie Higgins Young, Sharon Russell, and Sarah Heidel. Drs. Grady and Reilly will attend the forum and participate in the Virginia Alliance for Graduate Education, exploring ways to promote minority participation in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, math and the social sciences) and, eventually, the professoriate. Dr. Grady stated that funding for RU's participation in the Alliance is part of an NSF grant and commended Dr. Reilly for her efforts in coordinating RU's participation.

Additional Funding for Graduate Assistantships – Dr. Grady reported that additional funding for Graduate Assistantships is projected for the 2012-2013 budget. If approved, that will mean approximately \$1,000 more for individual assistantships. The Graduate College would like to continue to fund all tuition for GTF's and half tuition for GTA's. An exact figure per student will be determined when the budget is approved and more information is available.

4. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Graduate Faculty – Nine applications not requiring subcommittee review were presented. The applications were previously moved and seconded (see attached) and approved as presented. Four applications are pending sub-committee review in addition to others recently received. Efforts will be made to schedule a sub-committee meeting prior to the next GAC meeting on February 10th.

Academic Course and Program Review – There was no report. Nora Reilly stated that there are several proposals to be considered on Friday, February 3rd. That information will be posted to D2L for sub-committee review early next week.

Graduate Student Council (GSC) – E. Koehler Slagel was not present. Nora Reilly reported that the GSC doubled their membership during the fall festival behind Lucas Hall. Other activities are planned but information is not yet available.

5. NEW BUSINESS - None

6. OLD BUSINESS- Ad Hoc Committees:

A handout was distributed, “Ad Hoc GAC Committees – Fall 2011”. The handout (attached) outlined individual committee charges and membership. Dr. Grady received three ad hoc committee reports: Probation Rules; Comprehensive Exam Requirements and Rules; and Participation in Graduate Hooding and Commencement. He noted that a report from the Remote Participation in Academic Defenses ad hoc committee has not been received. Ad hoc committee chairs were asked to report. It was noted that the Comprehensive Exam Requirements and Rules ad hoc committee report included two motions with which the committee was not charged. Robert’s Rules specifically state that an ad hoc committee may only address its direct charges. One of these charges was delegated to the ad hoc Committee on Remote Participation and the other was a proposed change to a form. Dr. Grady state that a separate report from the Remote Participation in Academic Defenses ad hoc committee needs to be submitted.

Report from the Ad hoc Committee on Probation Rules – Wendy Eckenrod-Green presented the attached ad hoc committee report (Report #1).

Formal recommendation #1 was presented as follows:

1. *How* students are placed on probation: “The student’s academic standing will be evaluated after he or she has completed 33% or 9 credits in his or her program of study. If the student’s cumulative grade point average falls between a 2.00 and 3.00 in this evaluation, he or she will be placed on probation.”

Discussion followed and the following revision was made as a friendly amendment:

1. *How* students are placed on probation: "If at any point after a student has completed 9 credit hours in his or her program of study and the student's cumulative grade point average is at least 2.00 but less than 3.0, he or she will be placed on probation."

Discussion followed about the process for making these changes. Douglas Mitchell reminded the assembly that all motions needed to be taken back to the different programs to review before a final vote. It was agreed that advance notice needs to be given to programs before policy changes may be brought to a vote. Ed Swanson suggested sending out notification in advance by email for future motions. Paul Witkowsky suggested the motions be tabled first, removed from the table at the next meeting and amended as necessary after programs had the opportunity to discuss them, presented as a motion, and then voted upon. Dean Grady agreed that this was procedurally appropriate and proceeded as such.

A request was made that the minutes from the Graduate Affairs Council meetings be completed in a timelier manner and sent out for review earlier. The Dean agreed.

ACTION: Wendy Eckenrod-Green accepted friendly amendments to recommendation number one as presented. A motion was made to table the amended recommendation. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

Formal recommendation #2 was presented as follows:

2. *How* students return to good standing (i.e., get off probation): "To return to good standing, a student must earn a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 within the first 6 graduate credit hours attempted after being placed on probation."

Discussion followed and the following revision was made as a friendly amendment:

2. *How* students return to good standing (i.e., get off probation): "To return to good standing, a student must have earned a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 within the first 9 graduate credit hours attempted after being placed on probation."

ACTION: Wendy Eckenrod-Green accepted the friendly amendment to recommendation number two as presented. A motion was made to table the amended recommendation. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

Formal recommendation #3 was presented as follows:

3. Probation and incomplete grades: “A student that is placed on probation may not have any incomplete grades outstanding within the first 9 graduate credit hours attempted after being placed on probation.”

Discussion followed and recommendation #3 was withdrawn to be taken back to the ad hoc committee for further consideration.

Report from the Ad hoc Committee on Comprehensive Exam Requirements and Rules – Kristan Morrison presented the attached ad hoc committee report (Report #2).

Resolution (a) was presented as follows:

- a. Standards and criteria for all degree requirements, including comprehensive exams (if applicable) should be established by faculty/departments and that these degree requirements should be consistent with their discipline standards and/or accrediting requirements.

Discussion followed and the following revision included a friendly (grammatical) amendment:

- a. Standards and criteria for all degree requirements, including comprehensive exams (if applicable), should be established by faculty/departments and these degree requirements should be consistent with their discipline standards and/or accrediting requirements.

ACTION: Kristan Morrison accepted the friendly amendment to resolution (a) as presented. A motion was made to table the amended resolution. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

Resolution (b) was presented as follows:

- b. A candidate who fails the examination (if one is required) may request re-examination no earlier than 10 business days after the previous attempt. A new examination form must be requested. A student who fails to pass the examination or thesis defense on the second attempt will be dropped from the degree program.

Discussion followed and the following revision included a friendly amendment:

- b. A candidate who fails the examination (if one is required) may request one additional re-examination. A new examination form must be requested. A student who fails to pass the examination or thesis defense on the second attempt will be dropped from the degree program.

ACTION: Kristan Morrison accepted a friendly amendment to resolution (b) as presented. A motion was made to table the amended resolution. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

Resolution (c) was presented as follows:

- c. If a comprehensive exam is required, it should be explicitly noted in the program section of the catalog. Program coordinators should provide specific procedural details in writing to students.

Discussion followed and the following revision was made as a friendly amendment:

- c. If a comprehensive exam is required, it should be explicitly noted in the program section of the catalog and on the program of study. Program coordinators should provide specific procedural details in writing to students.

ACTION: Kristan Morrison accepted a friendly amendment to resolution (c) as presented. A motion was made to table the amended resolution. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

Resolution (d) was presented, ruled out of order, and withdrawn by Kristan Morrison as attached.

Resolution (e) was presented (as attached), ruled out of order, and withdrawn by Kristan Morrison.

Dr. Grady apprised Council member of the time and asked for a motion to extend the meeting, or table the remaining agenda until the next meeting.

ACTION: A motion was made to extend the meeting, seconded, and approved by consensus.

Participation in Graduate Hooding and Commencement - Kristan Morrison presented the attached ad hoc committee report (Report #3).

The following resolution was presented:

Students can participate in commencement and hooding if they have no more than 6 credit hours remaining and can complete all program requirements during the immediately subsequent summer sessions (Maymester, Summer I, II, or III). Individual programs may have more stringent requirements, as specified in the program sections of the Graduate Catalog.

Discussion followed and the following revision included friendly amendments:

Students may participate in Spring commencement and hooding if they have no more than 6 credit hours or two courses remaining and can complete all program requirements (including the thesis proposal defense form, if applicable) during the immediately subsequent summer sessions (Maymester, Summer I, II, or III). Individual programs may have more stringent requirements, as specified in the program sections of the Graduate Catalog.

ACTION: Kristan Morrison accepted the friendly amendments as presented. A motion was made to table the amended resolution. The motion to table was seconded and approved by consensus.

7. OTHER - None

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:11 p.m.

Atta. (5)

January 27, 2012
Graduate Faculty Application Status
 (Approved Since Last Graduate Affairs Council Meeting)

Full Graduate Faculty Status - 5 year term

Name		Dept	Limitation(s)
French	Sandra	Communication	
Evans	Deneen	Social Work	
Wang	Shuhong	Management	
Fetter	Gary	Management	

Associate Graduate Faculty Status - 3 year term

* Designates Applications Recommended by the Graduate Faculty Sub-Committee

Name		Dept	Limitation(s)
Minarik	Darren	STEL - Special Education	Added EDSP 504 and 676
Brewster	Tom	STEL - Education	EDUC 615
Bizzell	Brad	STEL - Educational Leadership	EDEL 621
Brown	Gregory	STEL - Educational Leadership	EDEL 690
Seibert	Alan	STEL - Educational Leadership	EDEL 630 and 617

Ad Hoc GAC Committees Fall 2011

Probation Rules: Responsible for delivering a report that provides a resolution and recommendations on the following:

- Should there be a credit hour minimum threshold before probation policies would be triggered?
- Once on probation, how does a student return to good standing?
- How should the grade of Incomplete be addressed within the Probation process?

A summary of the discussion of the previous ad hoc committee is attached in an Excel file along with a detailed Word document of policies from other universities.

- Committee members:
 - o Jerry Kopf
 - o Ed Swanson
 - o Wendy Eckenrod-Green
 - o Ed LeShock
 - o John Brummette
 - o Diane Millar
 - o Don Langrehr

Remote participation in academic defenses: Responsible for delivering a report that provides a resolution and recommendations on the following question, "What should the regulations be for comprehensive exam, capstone projects, theses, and dissertation defenses where off-site participation may be required or desired for various types of curriculum delivery approaches?"

- Completely on-line delivery
- Hybrid delivery
- Traditional delivery

A summary of the discussion of previous ad hoc committee is attached along with a Word document with examples of remote participation policies.

- Committee members:
 - o Jerry Kopf
 - o Joan Dickenson
 - o Ginger Burggraf
 - o Kay Johnson
 - o Kathy Hoover
 - o Lori Elis

Comprehensive exam requirements and rules: Responsible for delivering a report that provides a resolution and recommendations on the following:

- What should be the Graduate College standard for determining if a comprehensive examination is required by a program for graduation?

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- How many times may a student attempt to pass a comprehensive exam?
 - If more than once, what time period should be observed between attempts to pass the comprehensive exam?
 - How should a program make their students and the Graduate College aware of their comprehensive examination rules and procedures?

Some of the comments in the summary of the discussion on remote participation in academic defenses pertain to this. An Excel spreadsheet that summarizes our comprehensive exam policies for those programs that provided handbooks is attached.

- Committee members:
 - o Jerry Kopf
 - o Ann Elliot
 - o Doug Mitchell
 - o Kristan Morrison
 - o Sarah Hastings
 - o Bill Flora
 - o Joan Dickenson

Participation in Graduate Hooding and Commencement: Responsible for delivering a report that provides a resolution and recommendations on the following:

- At what point in a master's student's progress through a degree program of study is that student eligible to participate in the Graduate Hooding and Commencement ceremony?

A summary of the discussion of the previous ad hoc committee is attached.

- Committee members:
 - o Ann Elliot
 - o Jerry Kopf
 - o Paul Witkowsky
 - o Chris White
 - o Kristan Morrison
 - o Rana Duncan-Daston

REPORT #1

January 26, 2012

Dear Dr. Dennis Grady,

We, the Probation Policy AD Hoc Committee, are submitting our formal recommendations to the Graduate Affairs Council. Members of the committee include Edward Swanson, Wendy Eckenrod-Green, John Brummette, Diane Millar, and Donald Langrehr. Wendy Eckenrod-Green was elected chair of the Ad Hoc committee and John Brummette volunteered to be the recorder of the minutes.

The formal recommendations are as follows:

- 1 *How* students are placed on probation: “The student’s academic standing will be evaluated after he or she has completed 33% or 9 credits in his or her program of study. If the student’s cumulative grade point average falls between a 2.00 and 3.00 in this evaluation, he or she will be placed on probation.”
- 2 *How* students return to good standing (i.e., get off probation): “To return to good standing, a student must earn a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 within the first 6 graduate credit hours attempted after being placed on probation.”
- 3 Probation and incomplete grades: “A student that is placed on probation may not have any incomplete grades outstanding within the first 6 graduate credit hours attempted after being placed on probation.”

We look forward to Graduate Affairs Council members’ discussion. If any changes need to be made, the Ad Hoc committee will meet and make recommendations to the Graduate Affairs Council. Thank you for your time and considerations.

Best,

Dr. Wendy Eckenrod-Green
Department of Counselor Education

REPORT #2

Ad hoc committee report – Comprehensive Exam

Committee members:

Ann Elliott, Jerry Kopf, Sarah Hastings, Joan Dickinson, Bill Flora, Doug Mitchell, Kristan Morrison

Meeting dates:

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 9 am to 10 am, Lucas Hall conference room
And

Monday, November 21. 9 am to 11 am. Peters A041

At both meetings, we had a quorum present (only Doug and Bill absent from both meetings. Their feedback was garnered via email).

Selection of chair and recorder:

Chair: Kristan Morrison

Recorder: Sarah Hastings

Our charges:

What should be the Graduate College standard for determining if a comprehensive examination is required by a program for graduation? (*implicit in this, we believed, is a discussion of procedural issues, which includes what forms students are required to fill out, including the comps committee convening form*)

How many times may a student attempt to pass a comprehensive exam?

If more than once, what time period should be observed between attempts to pass the comprehensive exam?

How should a program make their students and the Graduate College aware of their comprehensive examination rules and procedures?

(we were also sent a document in our charging email that outlined remote participation/defense info and so we assumed an additional charge that we were to make final decisions on rules for those. We phrased a question as: If a program chooses to use a remote option for comps participation, what should be the minimum requirements for doing so?)

Our process:

We reviewed data gathered about our peer institutions. There seemed to be no one particular direction that an overabundance of peers followed. Thus we felt comfortable in following what we thought best for our programs, which was to allow as much democratic/internal control to the programs as possible. We wanted to stay consistent with the Graduate Catalog setting minimums, but allowing each program to stay true to its discipline's standards, so long as that program clearly articulated its rules to students and the Graduate College.

In our first meeting, the following was discussed:

Committee members discussed current practices related to comprehensive exams and the impact of the adoption of uniform requirements on individual programs. Dr. Kopf noted that neither SACS nor the international accrediting body for MBA programs (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) requires a comprehensive exam. He noted that given that discipline-specific accreditation agencies impose other assessments on programs, is it necessary or desirable to add another layer of assessment?

The committee discussed the range of experiences programs currently require in their program of studies, including, but not limited to, internships, theses,

particular courses, or capstone experiences. The committee discussed that for many of these, the term “exam” is not applicable. Further, the term “comprehensive” is inaccurate for some. Committee members unanimously agreed that standards and criteria for all degree requirements, including comprehensive exams should be established by faculty and are consistent with their discipline standards and/or accrediting requirements.

The committee reviewed the current catalog wording related to comprehensive exams, and proposed certain changes to the Graduate Catalog. *Within that discussion, we encountered wording about the comprehensive exam convening form. As we felt that what we were recommending had bearing on this form, we decided to offer up a motion to remove that form from use. This motion is embedded in our catalog revisions, and can be treated separately from our ad hoc committee resolutions.*

At our second meeting, we tackled the remaining questions as well as what we assumed to be an implied question about distance comps:

Question: How many times may a student attempt to pass a comprehensive exam? Ann Elliott reviewed data collected from psychology department faculty. She noted there are problems with current catalog wording in that there may be different reasons for failure including anxiety vs. a student’s lack of knowledge. She noted faculty are not available during the summer to schedule retakes and that students may have significant hardships associated with postponing retakes to the following semester, including lease renewal.

The committee agreed that limiting retakes to the following semester was impractical in many situations, and proposed changing the requirement to waiting 2 weeks or 10 business days. After discussion, the committee decided on the following wording: “A candidate who fails the examination (if one is required) may request re-examination no earlier than 10 days after the previous attempt. A new examination form must be requested. A student who fails to pass the examination or thesis defense on the second attempt will be dropped from the degree program.”

Question: How should a program make their students and the Graduate College aware of their comprehensive examination rules and procedures? The committee decided to adjust the language to the following: “If a comprehensive exam is required, it should be explicitly noted in the program section of the catalog. Program coordinators should provide specific procedural details in writing to students.”

The following is based on what we thought was an implied question to our committee. We concluded that Sandy Steele sent us info about remote defenses in our original charging email because we were meant to discuss this question even though it did not appear on our list of questions.

Question: If a program chooses to use a remote option for comps participation, what should be the minimum requirements for doing so? The committee agreed the decision whether to employ distance technology should remain with program faculty. The following wording was recommended to be added to the catalog: “If programs require a comprehensive exam, the program faculty must administer the exam either a) in person (preferred), b) with a program-approved proctor, or c) through audio and visual communication/monitoring in order to validate identity and ensure test security.”

At the end of this second meeting, Kristan Morrison, chair, placed recommendations from this committee into column format and distributed to all members for feedback. Feedback was requested by Tuesday November 29th. The email communication that followed (which included absent members Doug and Bill) basically involved just some tweaking of wording to our resolutions and recommendations.

Our resolutions:

- a. **Standards and criteria for all degree requirements, including comprehensive exams (if applicable) should be established by faculty/departments and these degree requirements should be consistent with their discipline standards and/or accrediting requirements.**
- b. **A candidate who fails the examination (if one is required) may request one additional re-examination. A new examination form must be requested. A student who fails to pass the examination or thesis defense on the second attempt will be dropped from the degree program.**
- c. **If a comprehensive exam is required, it should be explicitly noted in the program section of the catalog and on the program of study. Program coordinators should provide specific procedural details in writing to students.**
- d. **If a program requires a comprehensive exam which is not administered in person, the program must implement methods to validate students' identity and ensure test security. *(as stated earlier, we assumed that we were charged with this question based on the original email and its attachments sent to us by Sandy Steele on Nov. 11, 2011)***
- e. **The comprehensive exam convening form be deleted from use. *(this is actually to be a separate motion from the committee recommendations, but is included here as it is related to the overall issue).***

REPORT #3

Ad hoc committee report – Participation in Commencement and Hooding

Committee members:

Ann Elliott, Jerry Kopf, Paul Witkowski, Chris White, Kristan Morrison, Rana Duncan-Daston

Meeting date:

Friday December 2, 2011. 10 am to 12:30 pm. Peters A041
All members were present

Selection of chair and recorder:

Chair: Kristan Morrison
Recorder: Paul Witkowski

Our charges:

Discuss at what point in a master's student's progress through a degree program of study is that student eligible to participate in the Graduate Hooding and Commencement ceremony?

Our process:

We reviewed the document Sandy Steele sent us which was a recap of the previous discussion on this issue (that had followed a GAC meeting, but did not have sufficient representation from all colleges).

We reviewed data gathered about our peer institutions. There seemed to be no one particular direction that an overabundance of peers followed. Thus we felt comfortable in following what we thought best for our programs, which was to allow as much democratic/internal control to the programs as possible. We wanted to stay consistent with the Graduate Catalog setting minimums, but allowing each program "to be more stringent," so long as that program clearly articulated its rules to students and the Graduate College.

After much discussion (which essentially repeated the points in the document "ad hoc committee meeting on participation in ceremony" -from the post GAC meeting discussion), we seemed to be at an impasse (some programs strongly wanted students to be able to participate in graduation with requirements outstanding, others strongly did not want students to be able to participate), a compromise solution was reached in which programs are given the power to decide for their own students. The remainder of the meeting was spent working out specific wording for a catalog revision.

There was also some discussion of possibly having a summer hooding ceremony, but that idea did not seem popular to a majority present (various objections were raised – mostly it did not seem to most folks that faculty would want to participate in a late July/early August event).

Our resolution:

Students can participate in Spring commencement and hooding if they have no more than 6 credit hours or two courses remaining and can complete all program requirements (including the thesis proposal defense form if applicable) during the immediately subsequent summer sessions (Maymester, Summer I, II, or III). Individual programs may have more stringent requirements, as specified in the program sections of the Graduate Catalog.