

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 1, 2009, 1:00-2:30 PM, HAB 703

Attending: Laurel Garrick Duhaney (Dean), Barbara Chorzempa, Karen Bell (Interim Presiding Officer), Liz Hester, Tabitha Holmes, Dan Kempton , Ying Lin (minutes), Gweneth Lloyd, Jan McLaurin, Bernadette Morris, Rosemary Millham for Judith Rance-Roney, Narcyz Roztock, Anat Shifan, Vika Shock

1. Approval of Minutes with corrections (unanimous)
2. Announcements
 - A. Karen reminded the group that the Graduate faculty meeting will be held on May 8, from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM in CSB 110. The central theme of this meeting is to continue the discussions on general Graduate School Admissions Policy. Graduate Council members are encouraged to attend the meeting and bring ideas from departmental discussions.
 - B. Laurel provided an update on the campus' Middle States Accreditation Self-Study process: Dr. Robert Schneider, a Vice President at the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and the college's liaison visited our campus on April 27, 2009. He met with various college constituencies (e.g., President Poskanzer, Middle States Steering Committee members, members of the working groups, members of the College-wide Assessment Advisory Committee, members of the College Council, and representative administrators, faculty, and students). The meetings were very productive.
3. Old Business
 - A. Continued discussion of guidelines for approving online courses
 - Discussion on the updated online course approval forms will be deferred to next semester.
 - Bernadette commented that there is a need to designate a place (e.g., website link) for faculty members to find correct and relevant information regarding course approval forms and procedures. The associate deans, Laurel, and Bernadette will meet and discuss this issue.
 - The Graduate Office has modified existing course approval forms and the updated forms will be available on the Graduate school's website.
 - Judy suggested identifying the types of training that faculty need to teach online courses.

- With regard to verification of students taking distance education courses, Rosemary shared an effective practice used by the Colorado State University. The exam is administered at an off-campus location and is proctored by an independent person. A notarized document signed by both the proctor and the student is required by the university.
- B. Continued discussion of frequently asked questions
 - Vika commented that the current frequently asked questions document is based on feedback from many applicants, and is not necessarily program-specific.
 - Karen suggested that the individual department or program's frequently asked questions' webpage should be linked to the Graduate School's webpage.
 - Clarification on "How do I register for a course?"
 - It may not be necessary for students to register for courses in person. They can fill out the graduate student registration form and mail or fax it to the Office of Records & Registration.
 - To address the issue of being blocked from taking courses after registering for six credits without submitting the immunization documents, one suggestion is to include this information in the welcome package, such as creating a checklist in the acceptance letter. Bernadette will collaborate with the Graduate school staff members to create such a checklist. Other effective ways may need to be explored.
 - The term "regionally accredited university" needs to be clarified.
 - Modifications on the answer to "I am a graduate student at another institution and am interested in transferring to SUNY New Paltz as a graduate student. What should I do?"
 - Change "6-9 credits" to "6-9 Graduate credits"
 - Add "with the permission of the program" to the end.
 - Modification on the answer to "What is considered an official transcript"
 - Should add "with stamp or signature of the registrar."
 - More about transcript:
 - Laurel suggested that in Phase II, it would be possible to ask for only outside transcripts for New Paltz graduates given that the New Paltz transcripts are already in place in our own system.
 - The graduate coordinators can now review the application files and transcripts online. In the future these documents would be made downloadable in pdf formats from the Graduate School's website.
 - Additional questions and/or statements to be added to the document:

- The Graduate School and university mission, housing, transportation, financial support and so on.
 - C. Orientation issues:
 - Laurel suggested that an Online Orientation option should be explored. This will need input from all faculty, staff, and students. More details will be discussed in the future.
3. New Business
- A. Graduate School's General Admissions Policy
 - This issue will be further discussed at the Annual Graduate Faculty Meeting on May 8th.
 - Karen suggested that the education programs might address marginal applicants' credentials by requiring an on-site writing sample besides other application documents.
 - B. Graduate programs in secondary education and nursing
 - Laurel noted that, effective summer 2009, admissions to these programs have been suspended: Master of Science in Education and Master of Arts in Teaching programs in Chemistry, Earth Science, French, Mathematics, and Spanish. The faculty affiliated with these programs have been granted the opportunity to revise them and put them forward for approval.
 - Karen noted that it is unfortunate that the education programs which are being suspended are those in which teachers are needed most nationwide.
 - C. Research and Creative Project Awards
 - Anat asked if the money left over from the Research and Creative Award could be awarded to graduate students for their volunteering and service in Graduate organizations. Laurel stated that this money is no longer available as it was returned to the general funds.
 - D. Report of the Presiding Officer of the Graduate Council to the Academic Senate
 - Karen will forward the Graduate Council members this report and it will be posted to the Graduate school website as well.

Meeting adjourned 2:35.

Submitted by Ying Lin