

# Meeting of the Graduate Council

April 7, 2008

Minutes

## Present

*Councilors: Arts and Sciences*— Paul Best, Steve Burian, Ilene Crawford, Ken Florey, Ross Gingrich, Scott Graves, Jessica Kenty-Drane, Gerry Lesley, Dina Moore, Lori Verplaetse, Charles Wieder, Leon Yacher **Business**— **CILS**—Hak Joon Kim, Chang Suk Kim, Yan Quan Liu, Hrvoje Podnar **Education**- Robert Axtell, Ruth Eren, Joy Fopiano, Adam Goldberg, Joel Meisel, Deborah Newton, David Squires **HHS**— Mary Bellandese, James MacGregor, Mary Purdy, Barbara Worden.

*Guests/Observers:* Frank Sansone, Sandra Holley, Roseann Diana, Lisa Galvin, Susan Cusato

### 1. Call to Order

*Dr. Ken Florey*

Chairperson Ken Florey called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

### 2. Disposition of Minutes of October 1.

The minutes of March 3, 2008 were passed unanimously.

### 3. Announcements

#### *a. Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies*

*Dean Sandra Holley*

Dr. Holley reported that the Graduate Student Affairs Committee is the official group representing graduate students at SCSU and that they meet on the first Monday of each month following the Graduate Council. She indicated that the leadership of the group and the activities sponsored have been stellar this year. Dr. Holley introduced Alina Yekelchik, GSAC chairperson and graduate student in the Sociology department, who presented to the Council. Ms. Yekelchik indicated that the main initiative of GSAC for the past year has been general promotion of the Graduate School. With this in mind, GSAC presented two workshops entitled “So You Want To Go To Graduate School” which were well attended. Ms. Yekelchik indicated that she found involvement with GSAC to be personally satisfying both academically and professionally and thanked Dr. Holley for serving as a personal mentor as well as a mentor for GSAC.

Dr. Holley announced that there will be a Graduate School Open House on Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> from 3-7 pm in the Adanti Center Ballroom. She asked that faculty be at their stations at 2:50 pm. Dr. Holley asked that the names of all departmental representatives be sent to Associate Dean Diana immediately.

Dr. Holley announced that the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Graduate Research Symposium will be held on Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> from 1-4 pm in the Charles Garner Recital Hall, EN112, and urged all faculty and students to attend.

The Graduate Commencement will be on Thursday, May 24. The afternoon speaker is Connecticut State Supreme Court Justice Flemming Norcott and the evening speaker is

Dr. Jonathan Dauby, President of Manchester Community College. Dr. Holley indicated that to date over 600 applications had been received from students desiring to participate in the commencements.

Dr. Holley indicated that she had been informed that the Academic Standards Committee will be making a report to the Graduate Council later today with a recommendation regarding raising the minimum GPA from 2.5 to 3.0. She recognized the thorough deliberation that was given this topic by the committee and thanked them for their work. Apropos this issue, Dr. Holley clarified the matter of the Conditional Acceptance policy. In 1986 the Graduate Council unanimously approved the recommendation from the Academic Policy Committee “that under special circumstances a department could recommend conditional acceptance of students who do not meet the minimum Graduate School standards.” There was no stipulation of the number or percentage of students that could be admitted under the category of Conditional Acceptance. The Graduate School Dean at the time prepared a “Policy and Procedure” statement as a guide for departments and the policy was presented precisely as the Graduate Council had passed. The implementation procedure, however, inserted the statement that “No more than ten percent of the annual admissions to any graduate program may be in this category.” Dr. Holley indicated that it was her understanding that Dean Lane introduced this figure as a guide to departments in order to avoid excessive use of this category of admission. She also indicated that during her tenure as Graduate Dean there have been occasions when a few departments have exceeded the 10% figure but this has not been excessive. Dr. Holley recommended that the policy remain as currently stated with no specification of a number/percentage of total Conditional Acceptances annually. She indicated that should a pattern be observed in the future that there appears to be an excessive number of students admitted conditionally, the Council may wish to re-visit the policy.

Lastly, Dean Holley reported that the Online Admissions project was moving forward. There will be an all-day meeting this Friday to map the online application field to Banner. Dr. Holley thanked the Committee led by Assistant Dean Lisa Galvin for their focused work on this project.

*b. Graduate Council*

*Dr. Ken Florey*

Dr. Florey reminded the Councilors that the approved minutes of the Graduate Council will be emailed to each member for distributions to their departments. He indicated that any discussions or concerns in the departments regarding graduate affairs should go to the departmental graduate councilor. The minutes of each meeting of the Graduate Council will also be posted on the Graduate Council website.

**4. ORI Updates by Dr. Frank Sansone  
Research Integrity Officer**

*Dr. Frank Sansone*

Dr. Sansone reviewed the divisions and responsibilities of the Research Protection Program (RPP). He also discussed the responsibilities of the IRB and the process through which proposals are reviewed. Dr. Sansone indicated that the responsibilities of

the Educational Resources Division included providing education in research protection and that personnel are available for presentation to classes as well as online tutorials. He indicated that SCSU currently uses an NIH tutorial but that the RPP is proposing the use of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. Other changes include the recommendation for a research menu page on the main page of the SCSU website.

## **5. Reports**

### *a. Academic Standards*

*Dr. Ross Gingrich*

Dr. Gingrich apologized that the ASC report for the review of Science Education and Environmental Education was not ready. He also indicated that the ASC would review Marriage and Family Therapy and Urban Studies for next month. In order to accomplish this he indicated an additional meeting of the ASC may be required.

### *b. Curriculum*

*Dr. Mary Purdy*

Dr. Mary Purdy reported that the Curriculum Committee had reviewed EDM 502 and EDM 510 and that the Committee recommended both courses be approved with minor revisions. These motions were passed unanimously by the Council.

### *c. Procedures*

*Dr. David Squires*

Dr. Squires, Chair of the Procedures Committee, announced that one application to the Graduate Faculty was reviewed, that of James Rauschenback. The motion to approve the nomination of Dr. Rauschenbak passed unanimously.

## **5. Old Business**

### *a. Rules of Order update*

*Dr. Ken Florey*

Dr. Florey reported that the Executive Committee and the Ad-Hoc By-Laws Committee of the Graduate Council met with the Faculty Senate subcommittee on March 24 to discuss their suggestions regarding nominations to the Graduate Faculty. Dr. Florey indicated that the Graduate Council was an autonomous body, but that we were always willing to listen to suggestions from our colleagues. As a result of the discussion with the Faculty Senate subcommittee, the Executive Committee and Ad-Hoc By-Laws Committee will meet regarding the matter of whether or not to include departments and programs in the nominations process for new Graduate Faculty.

## **6. New Business**

### *a. Graduate Program Review*

*Dr. Ross Gingrich*

Dr. Susan Cusato presented an overview of the MS programs in Environmental Education, Science Education and the 6<sup>th</sup> year certificate in ISIS. She indicated that two

thirds of their graduates teach in some capacity-- for example, in education or for the DEP. She reviewed the interdisciplinary learning outcomes and the program goals, core requirements, and assessment procedures. The student surveys have indicated satisfaction with the program but there were concerns that more courses and field experiences should be offered. The program strengths and weaknesses were reviewed as well as plan of action which included re-establishment of a global connection. The ASC indicated that a major program weakness was that Dr. Cusato receives no release time, and that the committee advocates she receive three credits of release time per semester for her important work. Because there was no written report from the ASC, a Council vote on the Five-Year Report of the department was tabled until the next meeting of the Council.

*b. GPA Policy*

*Dr. Ross Gingrich*

Dr. Gingrich announced that on March 31<sup>st</sup> the Academic Standards Committee passed the following proposal for consideration by the Graduate Council:

“The minimum undergraduate GPA required for admission to the Graduate School shall be 3.0.”

He indicated that the proposal was being made with the understanding that the current policy that does not restrict the number of conditional acceptances allowed by any department or program would be continued.

This proposal was presented to the Council and discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of this change. Significant concerns were presented by members of the Department of Special Education because of a mismatch between minimum state and SCSU expectations.

The ASC proposal to raise the minimum GPA was brought to a vote with 9 in favor, 13 opposed and 2 abstentions. A substitute motion:

“The minimum undergraduate GPA required for admission to the Graduate School shall be 2.7.”

was then brought to the floor and 16 votes were in favor, 3 were opposed and there were 6 abstentions.

## **7. Adjournment**

Chairperson Florey adjourned the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary H. Bellandese, Secretary