

Meeting of the Graduate Council October 3, 2005

Minutes

Present

Councilors: Arts and Sciences—Kristine Anthis, Polly Beals, Jon Bloch, Ken Florey, Ross Gingrich, Gerry Lesley, Patricia Olney, Ruben Pelayo, James Tait; **Business**—Durga Prasad; **CILS**—Hrvoje Podnar, Jane McGinn; **Education-**, Robert Axtell, Nancy Boyles, Kay Corbett, William Diffley, Joy Fopiano, Norris Haynes, Beth Taylor; **HHS**—Jean Breny Bontempi, Eileen Crutchlow, Roy Hunter, Edward Lynch, Mary Purdy, Al Siegel.

Guests/Observers: President Cheryl Norton, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Selase Williams, Dean Sandra Holley, Associate Dean Roseann Diana, Assistant Dean Lisa Galvin, Susan Killion, Patricia Major.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Gerald Lesley called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

2. Disposition of Minutes of May 2, 2005

A motion was made to approve the minutes of May 2, 2005. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Welcome and Introduction of Councilors

Gerry Lesley

4. Announcements

a. Office of the President

Cheryl Norton

President Cheryl Norton noted that SCSU is the flagship graduate program in the Connecticut State University (CSU) system. Southern graduates approximately as many graduate students as it does undergraduates. Southern is therefore truly the flagship of what CSU does. She said she appreciates everything the Graduate School and Graduate Council does in setting high standards, and seeking the best practices followed. She thanked the councilors for their work, energy, and for everything we will be doing to ensure that “as a flagship program we carry our flag very high.”

b. Office of the Provost

Selase W. Williams

Provost Selase Williams reiterated that Southern’s graduate program was the flagship program in the CSU system. He noted that workforce development was a critical issue because the economy was shifting from one that was knowledge based to one that was information based and that this shift required substantial retraining. He said he was pleased to be at an institution with such a strong graduate entity. Dr. Williams pointed out that we had both an economic and a programmatic challenge. Our programmatic challenge is to stay on the cutting edge and keep up with the needs of a changing workforce. Our financial challenge is that graduate students tend to be part time and our

State funding is based on the number of full time students. Southern has the largest percentage of graduate relative to undergraduate students of all of the CSU campuses. We therefore must look at innovative ways to look at this student population and still make it cost effective for the university. We must maintain our status as the flagship institution in the state.

c. Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

Sandra Holley

Dean Holley acknowledged the strong support that President Norton has given to Graduate Studies and thanked her for her advocacy of excellence in Graduate Education. She has assigned the Graduate Studies office to a new location on the first floor of Engleman Hall in the B wing. This is a major action that signifies the recognition of the key role of Graduate Studies for the University. We are most grateful to President Norton for her continuous endorsement and promotion of graduate education. Dean Holley also welcomed Provost and Academic Affairs Vice President Selase Williams to the Graduate Council. Dean Holley introduced the members of the administrative staff in the Graduate School office, Associate Dean, Roseann Diana and Ms. Lisa Galvin, Assistant to the Dean.

Since the last meeting of the Graduate Council in May 2005, there has been continuous activity in the School of Graduate Studies.

- The 7th Graduate Commencement was held in May. A total of 1,083 graduate degrees and diplomas were conferred. This is greater than the number of graduate degrees that were conferred last year.
- The School of Graduate Studies hosted the 7th Annual Orientation for New Graduate Students in August. There were over 250 persons in attendance.
- The fifth annual survey of SCSU graduates was conducted in May to degree recipients and degree candidates in 2005. The Noel Levitz Adult Student Priorities Survey was the instrument used in the survey. A report will be made to Graduate Council next month on the results of the survey.
- The Graduate Research Fellows Class of 2006 and the Graduate School Graduate Assistants for 2005-2006 were selected and both groups have begun monthly seminars with the Graduate Dean and their faculty research mentors.
- The third week fall semester enrollment statistics have been reported. Full-time graduate enrollment increased 9.2% from last fall. According to the statistics reported by the Office of Management & Institutional Research, we had a total of 1,083 full-time graduate students for this fall [compared to 992 last year]. Part-time enrollment declined by 3.7% resulting in a total of 2,766 part-time graduate students for the Fall semester.

- We will host two Graduate School Open Houses this academic year. The first will be held on Thursday, November 17, 2005 from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. The second will be held on Thursday, April 20, 2006. As always, we rely upon our faculty to implement the Open Houses. The Councilors were requested to inform their constituents about the Open Houses to insure that there will be representation from every graduate program.

During this academic year, the School of Graduate Studies will move forward in advancing its *Agenda for Excellence*. Some of the initiatives that will be pursued:

- Bring forward a revised *Thesis Guidelines* Document.
- Examine the policies and procedures of the Graduate Council.
- The Curriculum Committee was asked by Dean Holley to review the policies pertaining to graduate interdisciplinary programs and to recommend a revision of the policies to reflect “best practices” in graduate education.

Finally, Dean Holley stated that the success that has been achieved in graduate studies over the past seven years reflects the coordinated efforts of faculty, staff, and students in promoting excellence in graduate education. She stated that the work done by the Graduate Councilors in the standing committees is laudable. She thanked all for their support.

4. Reports

a. Academic Standards

Ken Florey

Dr. Ken Florey, Chair of the Academic Standards Committee (ASC), announced that his committee had reviewed the interim report of the Research, Statistics and Measurement program, that would be presented today, and that at the next meeting the committee would be reviewing the Art Education and Urban Studies programs. Dr. Florey said he would arrange to have duplicate copies of the reports available in the Graduate office for ASC members who could not make the meeting. He announced that there would be a brief orientation for new members at the end of this meeting and said he would provide all necessary forms for those who could not find them on line. In addition to program reviews, Dr. Florey said that the ASC also would be working on a way to determine when the last year begins for a program that has not obtained continuing approval after two years. Dr. Florey reminded the Council that a program that is lacking a technical qualification or is missing something significant at the time of its five-year-program review, is given conditional approval and expected to show progress toward fixing the problem within a year, when an interim-report must be presented. If the program is still found deficient, it is taken out of the Graduate Catalog but permitted to continue accepting students for another year. During that final year, a revised program must be submitted to the Curriculum committee and approved before it can appear in the catalog again. If it is not approved, the program is cancelled. His committee will have to determine when that final year begins. Dr. Florey defended the role of the ASC, noting

that it has helped departments leverage needed resources from the administration. Its recommendations can help reinforce the need for obtaining new faculty lines, for example. Finally, Dr. Florey noted that it was important to apply the standards consistently to maintain the integrity of the evaluation process.

b. Procedures

Jane McGinn

Dr. Jane McGinn, Chair of the Procedures Committee, announced the committee had approved five out of eight nominations to the Graduate Faculty. The approved nominees were: Dr. T.J. Hinrichs from History, Dr. Jule McCombes-Tolis from Special Education and Reading, Dr. James Tait from Environmental Science, Dr. Jessie Whitehead, from Art, and Dr. Klaus Peters from Computer Science. Their nominations were approved unanimously by the Council.

c. Curriculum

Mary Purdy

Dr. Mary Purdy, Chair of the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), announced that her committee had reviewed three new course proposals and one new program; The GCC recommended that the CHE 560: Advanced Environmental Chemistry be approved as written and ILS: 694: Storytelling and Character Development be approved with minor revisions. ILS 656: Information Architecture was tabled until they can obtain additional information. The motion to approve these recommendations passed unanimously. The Committee also recommended that the Program Revision for the Chemistry Department be approved as written. The revision consisted of expanding the core required courses from four to six and one of the additional two was the above approved CHE 560: Advanced Environmental Chemistry. This motion also passed unanimously. Dr. Purdy noted that one of the Curriculum Committee's goals would be to develop the guidelines for interdisciplinary programs, and particularly to specify the difference between what is required for designating a course as an IDS course in the catalog as opposed to a cross-listed course.

5. Old Business

a. Curriculum 2004-2005 annual report

Mary Purdy

Dr. Purdy noted that at the May meeting she had presented the annual report for the Curriculum Committee orally but did not have the written report. She handed all Councilors copies of the written report. The Committee approved 29 course proposals, two program revisions and one new program in the 2004-2005 academic year. The motion to approve the report passed unanimously.

b. Rules of Order revision

Gerry Lesley

Dr. Gerry Lesley, Chair of the Graduate Council, noted that he met with the Rules Committee of Faculty Senate regarding the revisions to the Graduate Council Rules of Order that had been discussed and forwarded in May. Dr. Lesley observed that the

Faculty Senate objected to the exclusion clause in the rules for becoming a new graduate faculty member within the Rules of Order and this item required further clarification. In a preliminary vote, the Procedures Committee voted to remove the exclusion clause as it is redundant in light of other revisions previously made to these rules. The revised version will be presented to the entire Council at next meeting.

6. New Business

a. Academic Standards- Research, Statistics and Measurement Review

Dr. William Diffley delivered a PowerPoint presentation covering all of the standards on which the Research, Statistics and Measurement program was evaluated by the Academic Standards Committee. Among the many strengths of the program were that the most recent cohort of graduate students has a 3.7 grade point average and that many students published in professional publications and obtained employment as professors and other high-level professionals. The program fulfills all of the viability criteria except that of having three qualified, tenure-track faculty teaching in the program on a regular rotation. Dr. Diffley argued that they have an adjunct professor who plays an important role in every student's program and noted that they do not have enough courses to justify a faculty line for a full time faculty member.

Ken Florey, Chairman of the ASC, said his committee was impressed with the quality of the Research, Statistics and Measurement Program but the standards must be applied consistently and therefore the committee could only recommend conditional approval based on the lack of three full time faculty members. He observed that Dr. Diffley was directing 13 of the 15 theses in the department and said that seemed excessive. Dr. Florey suggested that there were several ways to solve the problem, many of them not requiring a new faculty line, but that it was up to the department to decide how to meet the standard. Former Graduate Council Chairperson, Susan Killion, from Nursing, agreed that there were alternate ways to address the standard regarding faculty.

Dr. Diffley asked if the committee could please defer the vote on the ASC's recommendation, as he believed he could find a way to resolve the problems before the next meeting. Jon Bloch from Sociology voiced support for the ASC's recommendation to give the RSM program "conditional approval." He noted that three is a minimum for protecting the integrity of any organization. He was strongly in favor of using the ASC guidelines to protect faculty lines. Dr. Florey reiterated that there were many good reasons for requiring a minimum of three full time faculty members. First, it was important that a student not be taking most of their coursework with only one professor. Second, a program was very vulnerable if it relied on one person because it could falter when this person went on sabbatical or took ill. A motion to defer the vote on the recommendation from the ASC until the November meeting passed with 16 councilors voting in favor, 5 against.

b. Standing Committee Assignments/Duties

Gerry Lesley

Dr. Lesley announced that all Councilors should have received their subcommittee assignments. He said he tried to break it up in an equitable fashion, and also assigned some Councilors different committees from those they had been on previously so they could get a feel for the entire scope of what the Graduate Council does. He made these changes mostly with the Curriculum and Procedures committees because they meet at the same time. Dr. Lesley requested that any Councilors who did not receive their letter regarding the committee assignments inform him so that an official letter recognizing their contributions to the Graduate Council could be forwarded for their records.

7. Adjournment

Chairperson Lesley adjourned the meeting at 2:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Olney, Secretary