

**Graduate Programs Council Meeting
Minutes
February 15, 2012**

Present: Shri Rao, Jody Eberly, Susan Hydro, Jean Slobodzian, Mark Woodford, Marcia Blicharz, Todd McCrary

Excused: Stephanie Valentino, Jacqueline Norris, Cheryl Varghese, Jessica Solano, Nita Ball

Minutes from the meeting on February 1 were approved.

Testimony from graduate coordinators:

GPC had invited graduate coordinators for their input on the recent charge from Steering which required GPC to identify ways to involve graduate students in governance. A number of issues/themes were raised as a part of this discussion:

- Some of the coordinators wanted to know how graduate students are currently involved in governance. Susan responded by stating that currently she sends out requests for graduate volunteers for different college committees and councils via the graduate student list serv. If any of the seats are not filled up, they are filled up by Student Government Association.
- The possibility of a graduate student association and potential modes of function were considered. Shri Rao stated that GPC had been considering the possibility of an online graduate community. The discussion focused on whether the online community would need graduate students to serve as officers, and if so who would be recruited. Should it be a current or past graduate student? GPC members felt that it should be a current graduate student.
- Could it include undergraduate students taking graduate courses? GPC members felt that perhaps the information on the openings should be sent to graduate coordinators who could then make recommendations
- Would participation be facilitated by changing the time that GPC met? It was felt that this might not be an option, since most of the graduate students come in the evening and the council meetings cannot be held in the evening
- Who raised this concern? Is it a concern for graduate students? Susan stated that it came as a result of the recent governance document and she provided the background on the charge. She stated that Graduate Studies had conducted some focus groups last year and the students expressed that they were interested in creating a graduate student association.
- What are some impediments for instituting a graduate student association? Currently, graduate students don't pay a student activity fee and this prevents

graduate students from setting up an organization on campus. Frequent turnover of graduate students is another challenge especially in 5 year programs where students are there just for 3 semesters. Many graduate students are professionals who work in the field. Administrative and teaching responsibilities might prevent participation in an association.

The discussion then focused on identifying some solutions:

- An online community might provide a more viable forum for participation
- Part of the responsibilities of a graduate assistant could be to serve as a part of this community. The job description of a graduate student could include being involved in governance. It should be a part of the contract for a GA. Susan mentioned that this would have to be approved by academic affairs
- Senior undergraduate students in the 5 year program could serve in governance roles
- Coordinators could suggest the names of graduate students who could participate in governance
- GPC members agreed that it was important to poll the graduate student community and get their input. Members discussed potential questions for the survey. Shri Rao offered to type the survey and send it to the list for input

Report on preliminary survey data on the graduate non enrollment policy

GPC members also discussed the preliminary data from the survey sent out to graduate students on the graduate non enrollment policy. Shri Rao shared the data collected on the graduate non enrollment policy in her graduate class. Data indicates that a large majority of the students appear to agree with the policy. Amongst, those who disagreed, there appears to a misunderstanding that a graduate student would have to reapply or be charged fees to be reinstated. GPC members felt that perhaps for the surveys that are administered in the other graduate classes, instructors should indicate that there is no additional fee.

Meeting with Ceil O Callaghan, Assistant Vice President, Student Affairs

GPC had invited Ceil O' Callaghan to share her thoughts on the student activity fee. Ceil expressed that graduate students are paying a lot and an additional fee should not be levied. She indicated that the opportunity to set up a graduate student association is ripe now and there is currently no policy on graduate organizations. She also mentioned that there is nothing to say that the student activity fee should only be used for

undergraduates. One suggestion that she made is the possibility of using a small part of graduate tuition for supporting the graduate organization. She mentioned that many student organizations form without a funding source. In addition, she stated that the graduate students pay a student center fee that could be used to schedule a space on campus. She suggested that Ceil and Susan could co-advise the graduate student organization. She identify that there may be a challenge in setting up the technology piece for the online community. She recommended that GPC speak with Matt Winkel and identify the best way to do this and be manageable especially with changing staff. Susan asked if the approval of the online organization would need to go to through the undergraduate channel and Ceil mentioned she didn't know how it could.

Announcements by Graduate Studies

- Susan Hydro mentioned that Graduate Studies is piloting an online application review process with Counselor education. Once the initial glitches are solved, it will be available before the October 1st deadline for other programs.
- April 2nd is Graduate Student Appreciation week Graduate Studies is planning an event for Tuesday, April 3rd. It would be between 4-6pm and students would be given tips on resume, career changes and so forth
- The meeting concluded with GPC members identifying the next step that needs to be taken in order to address the two recent charges.

Submitted respectfully,

Shri Rao