**Minutes:**

**Graduate Programs Council**

**October 21, 2015**

**1:30 – 2:50 p.m.**

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**In Attendance**: A. Amtzis, S.Z. Carroll, M. Hall, C. Kartoz, L. Ortiz-Vilarelle, C. Rajam

**Not in Attendance**: G. Seaton, E. Ball, E Teixera

**Excused:** D. Hallback, S. Hydro**,** J. Schwarz

Minutes prepared by Stuart Carroll

**Preliminary Announcements**:

 1) It was announced that the GPC would have to revisit the comprehensive examination policy in light of The College’s new appeals policy.

 2) Minutes from 10.04.15 (submitted by Alan Amtzis) were accepted.

**Agenda Items**:

 3) The group looked at Wordle graphic representations of word frequency in the foundational documents (e.g. The School of Education’s Conceptual Framework) of different graduate programs. The goal was to find common themes that characterize graduate education at TCNJ. Details of the discussion included:

Chandru Rajam reported on a conversation he had had with Dean Kenner of the School of Nursing, Health, and Exercise Science in which she pointed out that accreditation documents were backward- rather than forward-looking and wondered if we there were documents reflecting our aspirations that could be analyzed.

It was noted that it was difficult to reduce big ideas to single words and that some of the Wordles were uninformative and even non-representative. It was suggested that we might learn more by asking graduate coordinators to express their views on the themes characterizing their programs.

Matt Hall offered to create a mega-Wordle with all of the documents to see what themes would emerge.

The group was reminded that the end product of this process should be a list of characteristics that make our graduate programs special so that we could advocate for them both locally and with an international audience whom we might attract with on-line offerings. It was noted that almost all of the graduate programs have research requirements and some kind of culminating experience (though Matt Hall noted that there was a big difference between a performance task and a comprehensive examination).

Alan noted that RTC students were expected to become reflective practitioners and school leaders and Lisa noted that English Masters students had a strong focus and were expected to produce knowledge and professional products. They became experts who shared their expertise. It was agreed that all Masters programs should “cultivate and support self-driven students in pursuing their own interests.”

It was agreed that for the next meeting everyone would bring forward- looking documents to share and discuss.

Meeting adjourned