Graduate Council Minutes

September 15, 2006

Present:

Dr. Robert Hunger, Vice-Chair  
Dr. Brad Kard, Group I  
Dr. Leon Spicer, Group I  
Dr. Bill Decker, Group II  
Dr. Allen Scott, Group II  
Dr. Dale Alspach, Group III  
Dr. Ziad El Rassi, Group III  
Dr. Byoungho Jin, Group IV  
Dr. Lin Liu, Group IV  
Dr. Lowell Caneday, Group V  
Dr. Diane Montgomery, Group V  
Dr. Alexander Rouch, Group VI  
Mr. Philip Verghese, GPSGA  

Graduate College:  
   Dr. Mark Payton, Associate Dean  
   Dr. Craig Satterfield, Senior Director  

Guests:  
   Dr. Carol Moder, Dr. Susan Garzon, Dr. Jim Hromas, Ms. Donna Birchler  

Approval of April 25, 2006 Minutes

Following a motion (Caneday) and a second (El Rassi), minutes from the May 15, 2006 meeting of the Council were approved.

Graduate & Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) Report

Philip Verghese reported that the graduate student welcome reception was well attended. He also reported that the officers of GPSGA strongly support the idea that research courses, currently graded using “R” grades with the option to assign a letter grade in real time (not commonly done) or to change to letter grades in the graduating semester (most commonly done), should instead be graded “S/U” and not count toward the graduation or overall GPA. This proposal, along with the appeals process, will go before the General Assembly on September 20.

New Business

Graduate Assistant Stipend Range

It has come to the Graduate College’s attention that some graduate student stipends are very low, in some cases below minimum wage. There is a feeling that there should be a minimum
stipend range for graduate teaching and research assistants, especially in light of the considerable tuition and health insurance benefit package that is associated with such positions. A request by the Graduate College has been made for a report from HR for all graduate assistant stipends. Once these data are collected and reviewed then it will be brought before Graduate Council again for further discussion.

**Program Request for Certificate in International Studies**

This program has hitherto been associated with present degree program, but the present proposal would allow the program to stand alone. There is a sizeable demand for this program in Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

Lowell moved to approve, seconded by Spicer. Motion carried

**Program request for Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages**

Teachers have asked for the certificate program that would give them training to make them more competitive.

Rouch moved to approve, seconded by Scott. Motion carried.

**Catalog wording for Graduate credit for asterisked courses**

Payton presented a proposal for new wording for pages 187 and 236 in the catalog.

“Some 3000 and 4000 level courses are approved for both undergraduate and graduate credit; these courses are noted with an asterisk(*) in the Catalog. Enrollment in such a course by a graduate student usually implies the course is being taken for graduate credit; extra course work is required to earn graduate credit.”

“Courses numbered 3000 and 4000 may be taken for graduate credit if the course number is labeled with an asterisk. Extra work is required to receive graduate credit in a 3000 or 4000 level course.”

Allen moved to approve second paragraph only, seconded by Alspach. Motion carried. The Council wanted to have clearer verbiage in the first proposed paragraph about the restrictions for undergraduate students. The first paragraph was tabled and will be presented at the next meeting.

**‘I’ Grade Update**

Payton gave an update of the proposed changes to the I grade process that is currently being discussed in the Academic Policies and Standards Committee of University Faculty Council and Instruction Council. The proposal suggests that faculty, when granting incomplete grades, also give a default grade based on the student receiving no credit for the incomplete work. The I grade then will automatically be changed to the default grade after one year if
the student doesn’t complete the class. No motion to support this policy was made so no action was taken by Council.

Old Business

Policy for Appeals of Graduate Issues

The officers of GPSGA are in favor of this proposal, and the General Assembly will vote on it next week. Also, the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies is in favor of policy. After more discussion, Council recommended we should wait on GPSGA’s recommendation.

Guidelines for Split Votes for Graduate Committees

Payton presented a proposal that a negative result of a committee decision arise only when more than one member of the committee votes negatively. Many members of the Council expressed concern about that one negative vote being the advisor and the student passing. Payton agreed to rework the proposal and present it at the next Council meeting.

Appointment of Academic Program Committees

Group II and Group V needs to appoint members for this committee.

Future Items:

Payton mentioned the following items that will be presented to Council at future dates:

Nested degrees (masters within doctorates)

Cross listing 4000/5000 courses

Alspach said that his members of the Math faculty were against cross listing courses. It was noted that if all courses were cross listed, then no 4000 level courses would be on the plan of study. Hunger noted that Council had been reluctant to do this in the past.

Mechanism to drop students from programs

Council agreed that such a mechanism is needed.

Defining roles of graduate student advisory committees

Payton offered a couple of ideas about how we can make the advisory committees more effective. One suggestion was requiring committees to meet on a regular basis. This was met with some opposition due to the work burden this created for the faculty and the inability to properly police the regulation.
The next meeting will be October 20, 2006.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.