



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

GRADUATE SCHOOL

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

March 5, 2009

Attending: Kurt Baker, Elizabeth Breshears (for Margaret Tynan), Randall Brown, David Colnic, Diana Demetrulias, Chet Jensen, Nathan Lovaas, Carolyn Martin, Peter Nelligan, Katherine Royer (for Bret Carroll), Andrew Wagner, Shawna Young

Excused: Dennis Sayers, Arnold Schmidt, Nancy Jean Smith (for Ramon Vega de Jesus)

Ex-Officio: Sari Miller-Antonio (for Carolyn Stefanco), Ken Potts (for Carl Whitman), Mark Thompson

Guests: Lisa Bernardo

Shawna Young called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

I. Approval of Agenda. The agenda was approved.

II. Approval of February 19, 2009 Minutes. The minutes were approved.

III. Information and Announcements

A. Questions about Reports (Young). There were no questions.

B. Graduate Council Nomination (Young). Per the Council's email discussion, Dawn Poole of Advanced Studies in Education has been nominated as the 09-10 Chair-elect of Graduate Council. The nomination has been submitted to the Committee on Committees.

C. Update on Petition/Appeal of University Requirements Policy (Young). The policy, as approved by the Council, passed Senate. Young shared some recommendations from a Senate member regarding the related form, which is not part of the policy and so can be edited independently. Based on these recommendations, the Council agreed to the following actions:

1. Change "CSU Stanislaus Program Requirement" to "Existing Program Requirement."
2. Change "Substitute course requested in fulfillment of requirement" to "Substitute CSU Stanislaus course requested..."
3. Review and further discuss the language in the "Instructor Verification" section. S. Young will research the existing language found in the Instructor Verification policy and provide it to the Council for consideration; it was suggested that, should that language prove too long to fit on the form, a citation be added leading to the policy itself, where the complete language can be found.

- D. Update on Academic Program Review (Demetrulias).** D. Demetrulias stated that she submitted to UEPC, based on the discussion at the last Council meeting, the Council's recommendations on the Academic Program Review process.

Further discussion followed on how the Council may address further the WASC recommendation that we consider ways to improve the APR process. Overall, it was determined that the Council needs to articulate to WASC specifically what quality contribution it makes during the process, both to the faculty members submitting the APR and to the Provost/UEPC in making APR decisions.

It was agreed that the Council would make a good faith effort to examine its role in the process, look for improvements, affirm what is being done well, and consider ways to respond to suggestions from WASC in the future.

- E. Update on Assessment Plan (Young).** The plan is currently being revised based on Council deliberation and will return to the Council for a final review before moving on to the Senate for consultation.

IV. Discussion

- A. WASC CPR Site Visit Team Report (Demetrulias) – Attachment #0809-20; see also WASC report at http://www.csustan.edu/WASC/Pages/documents/CPR_TeamReport_CSUStanislausFinal_111708.pdf.** D. Demetrulias reminded the Council that the University is currently in phase, the Educational Effectiveness Review, of the WASC reaccreditation process. The attachments to this item are recommendations for improvement from the WASC Site Team visit in October 2008.

The emphasis of the Educational Effectiveness Review phase of the process is on the quality of student learning and teaching; that is, not on resources, policies, or infrastructure (emphases in the earlier phase), but on quality, or how well we are meeting our goals as a university (institutional effectiveness).

The URL above leads to the complete WASC Capacity and Preparatory Review (CPR) recommendations. Attachment #0809-20 is a summary of those recommendations, with those items relevant to graduate education highlighted. The following topics were discussed:

Graduate Program APR (Academic Program Review). The Council has discussed this item at length in previous meetings (see III D above). In particular, the issues of external reviews as part of the APR process and the need for an assessment plan that encompasses the overall picture of graduate education were discussed.

Doctoral Infrastructure. The report raised the question of what processes, policies, and procedures will need to be in place at the university level to support doctoral programs, and what we are doing to ensure quality processes are in place. S. Young and D. Demetrulias will meet with the Director of our only current doctoral program, the Ed.D., along with the Dean and Department Chair associated with that program, to determine their perspectives of university-level policy and procedures. The question of forming a standing subcommittee dedicated to doctoral education was discussed. These issues will be discussed further in future meetings.

Library Resources. The report addressed the need to enhance support for graduate education and doctoral students.

Online/Mediated Instruction. The WASC report recommends developing infrastructure "in anticipation of the future development of on-line programs."

It was noted that the Council will need to address the issues in the CPR report and the WASC standards for the Educational Effectiveness Review under the umbrella of graduate education: what are we (as

representatives of graduate education on our campus) doing, where are we going, and how are we getting there?

- B. Graduate Culture – Commencement Feedback from Council’s Colleagues (Young).** At the 2/19/09 meeting, the Council was charged with taking the idea of a hooding or other way of honoring graduate students at commencement (or in a separate ceremony) back to their departments to gather feedback. K. Royer (for B. Carroll) stated that the History department faculty, when polled, believed that the current commencement ceremony is already very long, and a separate ceremony might not be well attended by either students or faculty. R. Brown stated that the feeling of the MBA program faculty was that, since they already hold a party with food and gifts to honor MBA graduates, another event would be redundant. C. Martin stated that the nursing faculty supports the idea of adding a brief recognition of graduate students into the existing ceremony, stating that it might make the general public and graduating seniors more aware of the graduate programs on campus, raising the profile of graduate education in the community and at the University. E. Breshears (for M. Tynan) stated that the Social Work program holds its own hooding ceremony, which is fully coordinated by the students themselves. The students see it as a venue for them to thank their families and celebrate their accomplishments with each other, and it tends to be a very personal, student-focused event.

A number of suggestions were discussed, including the idea of totally restructuring the commencement ceremony so that everybody gathers for introductory remarks and the keynote address, then breaks up into individual colleges or departments for smaller, more personal ceremonies at various locations across campus; and the idea of instituting a totally separate commencement ceremony for graduate students.

The need to ask the students what they want was emphasized; it was agreed that no further action should be taken until there is a clear idea of where the students stand and what they would like to do to celebrate their own accomplishments.

It was agreed that ASI might not be the best avenue for reaching graduate students, since it’s a mostly undergraduate-focused group. Instead, it was agreed that the Council members would go back to their departments with the charge of polling graduate students, asking students to express their level of interest in the following 4 options:

1. Restructure the current commencement ceremony to add a hooding component or some other form of recognition for graduate students;
2. Offer a separate hooding ceremony for all graduate students in addition to the current commencement ceremony, where there would be no change;
3. Hold a completely separate commencement ceremony for graduate students, so they would not participate in the current ceremony at all;
4. Make no change to the current structure at this time; revisit when doctoral hooding becomes a consideration for the Commencement Committee.

Council members will survey the graduate students in their respective programs and report back at the next meeting.

- C. Graduate Education Strategic Plan (Young) –Attachment #0809-21.** The Council reviewed the University Strategic Plan and determined that graduate education does not have as clear a presence in this document as might be ideal. Discussion centered on the need to determine and articulate the Council’s identity and role within the University as a whole, and the goals and mission of graduate education on campus. It was generally agreed that the Graduate Council is committed to 1) strong individual programs, and 2) unifying to support those programs. It was noted that perhaps the “fuzzy” identity we seem to have as an entity might in fact be our strength: the uniqueness and individuality of each of our programs. “We” as

representatives of graduate education hold it as our mission to advocate for graduate students and graduate study on a largely undergraduate-centered campus. We serve to emphasize and remind the campus community of the importance and value of graduate education.

The issue of a centralized vs. decentralized model of graduate education was discussed, with the general consensus that while a decentralized model seems to work due to the uniqueness of our programs, there is a need for one academic leader to represent graduate education. Currently there is no such person dedicated entirely to graduate-level education, and the Council generally agreed that strong leadership in the academic arena would be beneficial in supporting the overall mission of the Council.

It was agreed that members should review the charge of the Graduate Council as articulated in the Constitution as a starting point in determining a clear mission and identity, and the discussion would continue at a future meeting.

- D. Policy on Graduate Academic Advising (Young) – Attachment #0809-14 previously distributed.** Deferred.
- E. Graduate Assessment – Alumni Survey (Colnic, Young) – Attachment #0809-12 previously distributed.** Deferred.
- F. CGS/Peterson’s Award for Innovation in Promoting an Inclusive Graduate Community (Demetriulias).** Deferred.
- G. GA/TA Fundraising (Young).** Deferred.

Shawna Young adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.
Respectfully submitted by Alyssa Mazzina