

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

The Graduate Council met Tuesday, October 8, 2002, in the MSC Boardroom at 3:00 p.m. with Dean Mathew Kanjirathinkal presiding. Members present were: Mr. Spencer Anderson, Mr. Sankaranarayanan Appadurai, Dr. Judy Ford, Dr. Dale Funderburk, Dr. Dean Ginther, Dr. Ted Hansen, Dr. Helene Halvorson, Dr. Wayne Linek, Mr. Michael Miller, Dr. Robin Reid for Dr. Robert Baumgardner, Dr. Chester Robinson, Dr. R. N. Singh, Dr. Jon Travis, and Dr. Janet Walker. Members absent were Dr. Bobby Carmichael, Dr. Shawn Carraher and Dr. Dayle Yeager.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Dr. Kanjirathinkal provided a list of Council members for 2002-2003. New members were introduced. They are Mr. Michael Miller (Art), Dr. R. N. Singh (Sociology), Dr. Shawn Carraher (Marketing & Management), Dr. Janet Walker (Business Administration/MIS), and Dr. Helene Halvorson (Social Work). Student representatives for 2002-2003 are Mr. Sankaranarayanan Appadurai (Master's Student Representative) and Mr. Spencer Anderson (Doctoral Student Representative).

The Dean reminded the members of the importance of their work and the need to attend Council meetings. Members were asked to work with their department heads to make sure that they are not scheduled to teach classes in conflict with Council meetings.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Dr. R. N. Singh nominated Dr. Jon Travis as Vice-Chair. Dr. Travis was elected unanimously.

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

Dr. Kanjirathinkal discussed with the Council their roles and responsibilities as members of the Graduate Council. Members should be vigilant about the quality of graduate education at Texas A&M-Commerce. To do this, they should be aware of Southern Association guidelines, A&M-Commerce procedures and best practices at other institutions. Agenda items should be forwarded to the Graduate School. Dr. Kanjirathinkal will forward suggestions and concerns to the appropriate committee. Committees can consult with anyone concerning an issue. Once they have studied an issue, the committee will make a recommendation to the Graduate Council, and the Graduate Dean will make a recommendation to the President.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The Committee on Committees worked with Dr. Kanjirathinkal to form committees that keep the balance of membership among the colleges. Committee Chairs are Dr. Janet Walker (Administration), Dr. R. N. Singh (Curriculum) and Dr. Jon Travis (Graduate Faculty, Research & Instruction). A motion to approve the committee list was made by Dr. Hansen and seconded by Dr. Ginther. The committees were approved by unanimous vote of the Graduate Council.

CHARGES TO THE COMMITTEES

Dr. Kanjirathinkal discussed some of the issues that the committees will be addressing this academic year. Written charges will be given to the committee chairs. Beyond the formal charges, committees are free to examine any other graduate education issue deemed

appropriate. Dr. Kanjirathinkal requested input from the Graduate Council concerning other issues they felt should be addressed during the 2002-03 academic year. The initial charges to the committees were:

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION

Review and update remaining procedures:

A11.35	Admission to Graduate School
A11.36	Master's and Doctoral Assistantships
A11.37	International Graduate Students
A11.40	Academic Probation, Retention and Suspension from Graduate Programs

Formulate Procedures for:

- A. Graduate Student Orientation
- B. Graduate Student Advisement that includes training graduate advisors

COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM

Specific requirements for MA and MS (Address discrepancy in procedure and Catalog)

Curriculum Changes

Research tool courses: Consider adding qualitative methodology

COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE FACULTY, RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTION

Review Nominations for Graduate Faculty Status

The Committee usually reviews nominations for graduate faculty status, both Associate and Senior members, two times during the academic year – once in the fall and once in the spring. The fall nominations will be forwarded to the Committee as soon as they are received.

Graduate Faculty Review

Completed files on senior faculty members who are up for review will also be forwarded to the Committee by the beginning of the Spring Semester. Recommendations are due to the Council no later than April.

Additional issues mentioned were: the need for more Research Assistants (due to the increased emphasis on research) and the need for a student guidebook as well as an advisor guidebook that addresses graduate student concerns.

SACS RELATED CONCERNS

Dr. Kanjirathinkal discussed concerns about graduate education at A&M-Commerce expressed by the SACS Self Study. Many of these concerns are being addressed. Some require institutional commitment and substantial resources:

(1.) Admission Criteria

The new admissions procedure has greatly decentralized the admissions process. However we need a systematic regular review of admissions criteria to validate the criteria being used for admissions. The burden is upon

individual departments to gather data and justify the effectiveness of these criteria during such reviews.

(2.) Updating catalogs and other publications

This is being done and the new catalog contains updated information and other information recommended by the Self-Study Committee.

(3.) Graduate Program Review

In the past, programs have been reviewed in response to state or accrediting agencies. SACS requires a regular review. This can correspond with other required reviews. However, a systematic and structured review involving external reviewers is required. A draft of the *Program Review Proposal* is being reviewed by an ad hoc committee chaired by Dr. Jon Travis.

(4.) Relationship between curricular content and current practices

Each department should be able to demonstrate systematically the relationship between their curriculum content and current practices. This is something to keep in mind while revising curricula and processing curriculum changes.

(5.) Graduate student orientation and advising--departments must have written procedures

Most departments have responded to a request for written procedures. The Graduate School will have a draft of a graduate student handbook by the end of the semester.

(6.) Use of Noel-Levitz student satisfaction survey

Results of this survey have been sent to departments for their use in conjunction with advising students.

(7.) Additional librarian for the Metroplex

The need has been documented and the Provost Office has been requested to consider this need.

(8.) Increase support for external grant activities

The Self-Study Committee has observed that additional support is needed to promote faculty research. Jerry Pattengale's exit report has validated this concern. Follow-up measures will be proposed for appropriate actions by concerned offices.

(9.) Increase graduate assistantship funds

(10.) Strengthen remaining doctoral programs

Coordinating Board data show a decrease in faculty salaries supporting doctoral instruction over the past six years. These data seem to validate the concern that our remaining doctoral programs need support.

OTHER CONCERNS

Other concerns that were identified were:

- (1.) Heavy dependence on GA's to conduct classroom instruction**
Additional data are needed on this issue. There was concern that departments were not funded to hire needed faculty and that salaries for qualified adjuncts did not meet the market demand.

- (2.) Heavy dependence on temporary faculty without a terminal degree to conduct graduate classroom instruction**
Data show that 28 % of graduate courses offered fall 2001 were taught by faculty without a terminal degree. This is a cause for concern.

- (3.) No university-wide training of faculty who advise graduate students**
A faculty advisement guidebook and training program are needed. The Graduate School will work on these matters this semester.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Graduate Council members received information on *Faculty Approved to Teach Graduate Courses on an Individual Basis* for Spring, Summer and Fall 2002.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Louise Skinner
Secretary to the Graduate Council