

University Council for Graduate Studies and Research

Minutes 7 May 1998

Present: Linda Bennett, Richard Janikowski, Gene Plunka, Peter Bridson, John Schifani, Tom Buggiey, Ronnie Priest, Michael Daley, Gladius Lewis, Dan Lattimore, David Appleby, Kenneth Kreitner, David Kemme, David Wark, Linda Brinkley, Dianne Horgan

Absent: Fritz Claydon, Ravi Nath, Dan Sherrill, Ann Wilks-Penrod

Guests: Jan Brownlee, David Tucker, Ernest Rakow, Barbara Ellen Smith, Phyllis Betts

Dianne Horgan called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM.

I. Dan Lattimore moved to approve minutes of the April 1998 meeting; David Wark seconded it. The motion was carried by voice vote.

II.A. MA in Women and Race Studies: Barbara Ellen Smith presented a brief overview of this proposed new MA program, stressing that it is interdisciplinary and draws on faculty and courses offered in several colleges. The curriculum is based on 32 current course offerings dealing with women and race plus three new core courses and existing methods courses. There was a great deal of discussion about the name of the program. Two points were raised: a) the emphasis, at least in the current course offerings, seems to be placed more on women than on race; and b), by linking race studies with women's studies, there is a danger of excluding broader aspects of race studies in the future. It was eventually agreed that the name was not properly descriptive of the program. Dr. Horgan raised the question of whether the Council had had enough time to consider this proposal. Richard Janikowski moved that the Council vote on the proposal, given the necessity to send it to the TBR this summer; Linda Bennett seconded the motion; it was carried by voice vote. Dr. Janikowski moved to approve the proposed program with the name changed to "Women's Studies." Ronnie Priest seconded the motion. Dr. Horgan called for discussion, at which time it was brought out that there will be an interdisciplinary curriculum committee that will function as a department to assure continuity and conformity to standards. Dr. Bennett mentioned that there will be a director of interdisciplinary programs in her office to coordinate all such programs in the College of Arts & Sciences. Dr. Janikowski called for the question, which was seconded by Michael Daley. The motion to approve the proposed program with the name changed to "Women's Studies" was carried by voice vote.

II.B. Certificate in College Teaching: Dianne Horgan presented the proposal for this new program, as Bruce Speck could not attend the meeting. The Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) will provide specific training for Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). Each department will continue to offer its professional development course, but

the course content will be provided by the Center. There will be four three-hour seminars for a total of twelve hours, which will not be counted toward a degree. It was noted that a number of departments already have such courses and suggested that perhaps department offerings could be substituted toward the certificate. Dr. Horgan said this was permissible if the content was similar to that offered by the CAE. It was also suggested that a GTA's teaching could be monitored in order to count that teaching experience toward the certificate. It was noted that this program would be very helpful to small departments whose faculty now have to double up in order to monitor GTAs. Richard Janikowski moved to approve the program, provided that the description is edited to include a statement that the 12 hours will not count toward the GTA's degree and another statement that their teaching will be monitored. Michael Daley seconded the motion. It was carried by voice vote.

II.C. Permanent Meeting Times: Dr. Horgan announced that, in light of the poll taken at the last meeting, the full Council will meet at 2 pm on the first Friday of each month beginning in September. The college directors' meeting will be arranged later. Linda Bennett moved to accept this new meeting time; the motion was seconded by Dan Lattimore and carried by voice vote.

III.A. Dr. Horgan introduced Jan Brownlee, who joined our staff on 27 April 1998. She has worked for several years in the Registrar's office and so is very familiar with the SIS+ system and university regulations. She will be doing Focus reports as necessary, as well as working on other projects for the Graduate School. Her office is Adm. 311 (entered through 309) and her phone is 678-4370.

III.B. TCGS meeting: Dr. Horgan will e-mail a report of this meeting to council members.

III.C. Task Forces: The task force on graduate faculty will report its findings in September, as will the one on forms. The task force on graduate school policies is still working.

III.D. New Dates for Curricular Revisions: Mrs. Hurley announced that, in view of the Council meetings being moved up to the first week of the month, she will have to have curricular revisions and catalog changes by **13 November 1998**. The cover sheet and course revision forms can be filled out on-line, but then must be printed out and submitted in hard copy along with a disk. The special topics form is designed to be e-mailed to Dan Poje, who will forward it for the requisite signatures. Mrs. Hurley reiterated that the Graduate School must have a syllabus for each special topics course before it can be approved. The syllabus can be sent as an attachment to the e-mail or separately as a hard copy.

III.E. Application: Dr. Horgan announced that the domestic application is now available on-line. It can be accessed through the Graduate School's homepage, Enrollment Services is still working on the international application form, which includes two other forms.

III.F. Admissions and Recruitment Materials: GS staff will be working with the graduate coordinators to get use of the Self-Managed Application kits regularized over the summer. The goal is to reduce the print run of the Graduate Bulletin and use those funds to create more eye-catching recruitment materials that will provide a unified image for the Graduate School. Dr. Brinkley asked the Council members to collect samples of current recruitment brochures, etc. from their colleges and bring them to the September meeting, so that we can have an idea of what is available.

III.G. Handouts: Dr. Horgan drew members' attention to two reprints. The first is from the TCGS Communicator and documents the national drop in graduate admissions and degrees. The second, from the Southern Regional Education Board, sets forth guidelines for electronic classes.

IV.A. Quality issues – ways to ensure appropriate mentoring: Dr. Brinkley led a discussion on this issue brought about by recent similar problems in three different colleges. She opened by remarking that it is both a right and a responsibility of faculty members to render a dispassionate judgement on student's work. Faculty must stand by their decisions, bearing in mind that these are not political but academic decisions. Comprehensive examinations are not graded and so are not appealable, nor can they be changed after the form is turned in to the graduate school. Students may retake the exam, however. A second failure results in termination, which is appealable. The appeals process is formalized and must be followed in all cases. The applicable sections in the Graduate Catalog will be revised to state the non-appealability of the comprehensive exam explicitly. She reminded the Council that quality control is the faculty's responsibility and when they fail in this, the University's reputation and the value of its degrees are lessened. She encouraged the college representatives to discuss this problem with their faculty, pointing out that the student must both produce an approved dissertation and pass the dissertation defense in order to receive a degree. The same committee members must approve both the dissertation and the defense. She asked for college and department procedures to make sure that expectations are clearly laid out. We need explicit statements of the rights and responsibilities of both students and faculty/mentors. GS staff will work on a draft to present to the Council in the Fall. Dr. Horgan remarked that the Graduate School will be checking (and departments should as well) to make sure that all of the necessary forms are signed by the same people; committee changes should be made only for good reasons and a written explanation filed with the Graduate School.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nancy Hurley.