

Graduate Administrators' Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, April 23, 2015
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 am to 10:30 am

Attendees Robert Wojtowicz, Chair, Richard Benjamin, David Selover, Bryan Porter, David Earnest, Kevin DePevBill Heffelfinger, Ali Ardan, Gail Dickinson, Tim Grothaus, Shirshak Dhali, Ravi Mukkamala, Brian Payne, and Missy Barber

Guest Speaker: Corey van Vlymen

Approval of Minutes for Thursday, April 9, 2015

Minutes approved as submitted.

Announcements

Graduate Research Achievement Day

- o Oral Presentations

Students are the best marketers of their research. They should be encouraged to invite people to attend.

The opportunity to present is more valuable to the student than a poster presentation.

It is important to find a way to incorporate students that are distance learners.

Dr. Wojtowicz thanked those who volunteered to be facilitators.

- o Poster Presentations

The cost of printing a poster should not be a barrier to a student's decision to participate. Dr. Wojtowicz is going to see if we can get a line item in Academic Affairs to be used to assist students with the expense of poster printing.

Orientation for New GPDs – Thursday, May 14, 2015 in the President's Dining Room in Webb Center. Dr. Wojtowicz advised Council that this is going to be an orientation and luncheon for new or transitioning GPDs. The training will be approximately 2 hours in the morning. All GPDs and Associate Deans will be invited to attend the luncheon.

Advanced Degree Luncheon Wednesday, May 6, 2015 in the Hampton/Newport News Room in Webb Center. Dr. Wojtowicz asked Council to make sure to share the invitation to the event with faculty who teach or advise graduate students that may not be GPDs.

Meredith and Alumni Scholarships – Dr. Wojtowicz shared

Graduate Assistantships vs. Adjunct Faculty –Corey van Vlymen

Mr. van Vlymen raised the issue of colleges hiring students as adjunct faculty during the summer. He asked that colleges not continue the practice because it causes several issues.

- o There are issues with SACS, as the requirements for graduate assistants to teach are lower than the standards for adjuncts.
- o There are issues for international students and their VISA status. Those students are not legally allowed to work as adjunct faculty.
- o Switching students from GA to Adjunct status causes delays in their assistantship payments

Mr. van Vlymen recommends that if there is a situation with a student who needs funding but assistantship funds are not available, that the associate dean contact Jim Duffy to see if there are any funds that may be converted rather than converting the student.

Minimum Stipend Levels

Dr. Wojtowicz suggested clarification of catalog language regarding assistantship funding. He would like it to be clearer that the minimum stipend is \$3200 per semester. Dr. Wojtowicz will check the federal guidelines as well. There was discussion about “partial” assistantships within the colleges. Verification of the federal guidelines should help clarify what can be done.

Normal Courseload and Graduate Assistantship Policy

This policy was rejected by Faculty Senate. There are concerns with some of the language regarding part-time and quarter-time status in the Normal Courseload Policy. The Graduate Assistantship policy is complicated, but it is what the University Auditor

If all goes well, then the proposal will go to SCHEV in January and the change will be effective in March 2016.

Dr. Grothaus suggested another mantra, "Pursuing Excellence in Graduate Education." Council liked the suggestion, citing that it seems less political.