

Graduate Council Minutes

8/28/12

208 Thurmond Hall

Members Present: Stevie Chepko (chair, COE), Don Rogers (VPA), Brent Cagle (A&S), Melissa Carsten (CBA), Gary Alderman (A&S), Ronnie Faulkner (Dacus), Spiro Shetuni (Dacus), Jennifer Jordan (COE)

Guests: Jack DeRochi (Dean), Gina Jones (Registrar), Andrew Vorder Bruegge (VPA), Margaret Williamson (GSO)

- I. The minutes from the March 30, 2012 meeting were approved. Jack told the group that minutes from both the Graduate Council and the Graduate Faculty Assembly would be posted shortly after each meeting with the fact that they are drafts clearly designated. The word draft will be dropped after the minutes are officially approved at each bodies' next meeting.

- II. Dr. DeRochi reported that in his new role as Dean of the Graduate School he is trying to build a solid foundation for graduate studies, and working to improve services to graduate students and faculty. He indicated that the GSO is using a new, attractive email template. When students apply, they now receive an immediate email thanking them for their interest and indicating what documents we still need. Admitted students are also immediately notified via email. An email also went out last week welcoming all new graduate students to Winthrop.

He told the group that a reception/campus tour event was held August 16 for all new graduate students. There was a good turn-out with lively discussion. A survey is being sent via email to those who attended to determine how the occasion could be improved. A reception in the galleries is planned for later in the semester for all graduate students.

Staff changes were noted. Katie Dykhuis provides services to prospective students, as well as doing marketing and recruiting. Natalie Jeter is the admission specialist. Margaret Williamson will be moving to University College the end of September. Jack will be able to hire someone, but will take time to develop an appropriate job description. Two graduate students are now working in the office to help with walk-ins, telephone calls and other duties.

Petitions are now being handled in Records/Registration, as are academic dismissal letters. Letters to those who are placed on probation will continue to come from the GSO.

Jack explained the new workflow system that was developed by Kamal Rai in IT in consultation with GSO staff. As of January 1, the admission process will be totally electronic.

Jack is working with Development to create an advisory board for the GSO. This body will assist with fund-raising for graduate studies. He also announced that VP Boyd has given the GSO \$10,000 in travel funds to distribute to graduate students for professional development.

A steering committee is going to be named to develop principles that identify Winthrop's approach to providing assistantships and scholarships. Everyone agreed that the amount of scholarship dollars each area has to award should be provided early in the year so the funds can be used for recruitment.

III. Old Business

- a. Chair Chepko asked for a volunteer to serve as Vice-Chair of the Council. Dr. Jennifer Jordan said she would be glad to serve and was elected by acclamation.
- b. Stevie has started a spreadsheet to keep track of what policies are being petitioned.

IV. New Business

- a. Stevie indicated that she would like the Council to review all policies and procedures for graduate students. She explained that though Winthrop has many for undergraduates, few are written for graduate education. Four particular areas for discussion are petitions' procedures, guidelines for theses, readmission and dismissal policies, and faculty payment for advising thesis or research projects.
 - i. Gary Alderman and Brent Cagle will review petition procedures.
 - ii. Stevie Chepko and Melissa Carsten will look into thesis/research projects and payment to faculty for these.
 - iii. Jennifer Jordan and Jack DeRochi will review the current practice of allowing graduate students to return from academic dismissal in good standing and with academic forgiveness.

V. The meeting was adjourned.

The next Graduate Council meeting will be September 14 in 208 Thurmond.