



Graduate Council Retreat

Meeting Minutes

5/22/09- Allegheny Room, Festival

Attendance-

Members present: Lynette Bible, Reid Linn, Kathy Thompson, Dabney Bankert, Patricia Brevard, Corinne Diop, Teresa Gonzalez, Ralph Grove, Patty Hale, Dan Halling, Sharon Maiewski (for Jim Hammond), Gregg Henriques, Hossain Heydari, Gary Kirk, Doris Martin, Jim McConnel, Lisa Moore, Nancy Nichols, Diane Wilcox (for Denise Perritt), Brianna Quinn, Steve Reich, Renee Staton, Kent Todd, Roshna Wunderlich

Members not in attendance: Paul Bierly, Laurie Cavey, Christine Harmes, Reba Leiding, Jeff Loveland, Sheena Rogers, Chuck Runyan, Sherry Serdikoff, Kristi Shackelford, Doug Skelley, Mary Jean Speare, Patti Warner, Pavel Zemliansky, Rhonda Zingraff

Reid presented accomplishments and highlights for the 2008-09 year:

2008-09 Accomplishments & Highlights in Graduate Education

Degree Programs/Certificates

- The D.M.A. program completed its second year. Funding approved for 3rd cohort (2009-10).
- The M.A. in Political Science with a concentration in European Union Policy Studies completed its second year in Florence, Italy.
- The Ph.D. in Strategic Leadership Studies, which had been approved by the Board of Visitors at the May 2008 meeting, was approved by SCHEV January 2009. The program should enroll the first students' fall 2009. Currently there is a third concentration (Higher Education) going through the approval process.
- Though the M.S. in ISAT was approved for a joint program with the University of Malta, there has been a delay in fully getting the program underway. The review of applications is under way.
- The M.P.A. offered via the university's Outreach Programs at the Roanoke Higher Education Center completed its first year.
- The M.B.A. and Info Sec M.B.A. programs were redesigned.
- M.Ed. program for K-8 Math Specialists was approved and will begin in 2010.
- New concentration for the M.P.A. in Public and Non-Profit Management was approved.
- New M.A.T. in Early Childhood Education approved at the university level which merges two programs: Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education.
- New Master's in Communication Studies was approved at the university level.

- The D.N.P. (Doctorate of Nursing Practice) is now again moving through the final stages of the university C&I approval process.
- New Assessment Specialist Certificate program was approved.

Recruitment, Applications and Enrollment

- \$37,000 was secured from the Provost and applied toward marketing and recruitment.
- The annual JMU Graduate and Professional School Information Fair was held at JMU’s Festival Conference and Student Center, fall 2008.
- Staff of TGS collaborated with recruiting staff from all Virginia universities (who host graduate information fairs) to maximize the attendance of recruiters through an organized schedule for all fairs.
- Graduate Fairs attended by TGS staff during fall 2008 for the purpose of recruitment included events held at: George Washington University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Norfolk State University, University of Virginia and Virginia Tech. Graduate faculty across the university, sometimes accompanied by graduate students from their programs, attended additional professional conferences and other graduate fairs to recruit students receiving support from TGS.
- TGS continued its collaboration with the Admissions Office to recruit international students to JMU graduate programs.
- Graduate School applications received through April 30, 2009 (for 2009-10) totaled **1947** – compared to **1832** in 2008, **1702** in 2007 and **1553** in 2006 for the same period. Applications should exceed 2,000 for the year (processed by TGS) resulting in an increase of 50% over 2003-04.
- TGS online applications process completed the first year.
- Fall 2008 census data yielded a degree-seeking graduate student enrollment of 1,241 (down 25 from 2007 when the enrollment was 1266). Adding non-degree seeking students taking graduate classes increased the total graduate enrollment for fall 2008 to 1,538 (an increase of 34 over fall 2007 when total graduate enrollment was 1,504 – an increase of 2%).

Enrollment Through the Years

<u>Year</u>	<u>Degree-Seeking</u>	<u>Non-Degree Seeking</u>	<u>Total Graduate Enrollment</u>
2002-2003	813	324	1137
2003-2004	809	403	1212
2004-2005	972	182	1154
2005-2006	1067	253	1320
2006-2007	1138	242	1380
2007-2008	1266	238	1504
2008-2009	1241	297	1538

Note. All data reflect fall census date figures for the academic year.

Graduation Trends

The number of graduate degrees conferred has continued to rise over the years with the sharpest rise occurring since 2001-2002. The figures below represent the number of graduate degrees conferred since 1992-93. The graduation rate has seen a 97.7% increase (or 295 degrees/year) since 2001-02, a key point in the history of TGS at JMU. The degrees conferred for undergraduates at JMU over the same years show a 10.9% increase. By the end of the 2008 summer session, 11,283 graduate degrees will have been awarded.

Graduate Degrees Conferred 1992-93 – 2007-08

1992-93	295	2001-02	301
1993-94	332	2002-03	312
1994-95	342	2003-04	307
1995-96	364	2004-05	449
1996-97	375	2005-06	526
1997-98	344	2006-07	559
1998-99	341	2007-08	639
1999-00	390	2008-09	over 650*
2000-01	325		

* Projected graduates for academic year.

Graduate Student Life

- The 5th Annual Graduate Student Picnic was held fall 2008 at the Festival. The picnic is designed to foster a sense of community for JMU graduate students and was noted quite positively by students during the 2008 review of TGS.
- The second New Graduate Student Orientation was held August 2008 for well over 100 new students.
- The fourth TA/GA Workshop on Teaching was offered in partnership with the Center for Faculty Innovation. The workshop was attended by more than 60 GAs/TAs. All who expressed an interest in attending were invited to each of the faculty workshops sponsored throughout the year by the Center for Faculty Innovation.
- Through continuous monitoring of underloads by graduate assistants and 35 out-of-state waivers granted by the university, many students (not on assistantships) received tuition support.
- Graduate Student Association was established and approved by the university as a student organization. GSA provided all student marshals for Graduate Commencement.
- First university Graduate Student Commencement held on May 8, 2009.
- New flag designed for TGS.

Notable Presentations and Professional Development Projects Sponsored by TGS

- The 4th Annual Virginia Council of Graduate Schools Graduate Student Research Forum was held. Six graduate students from JMU presented their research. The Forum is intended to promote graduate education in Virginia; the target audience consists of members of the General Assembly, administrators from colleges and universities, and representatives from the media.
- Carol Barry, from the Ph.D. program in Assessment and Measurement, presented as part of a student panel discussion on *Graduate Program Quality – Mentorship and Advising of Graduate Students* (facilitated by Reid Linn, JMU and Ann McNabb, VT) at the 2009 Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Annual Meeting, Norfolk, Virginia.
- Reid Linn, Michael Walsh, Frank Doherty, Al Menard, and Peter De Michele led a training session on *The JMU Student* for classified staff as part of the Office of Human Resources Training Program. Marked the first time this university sponsored workshop included graduate students and graduate student life.
- A grant proposal to continue support for the Region 5 Special Education Training and Technical Assistance Center was funded by the Virginia Department of Education for \$1,539,056.

- TGS paid \$4,750 for 10 graduate faculty to attend a three-day grant-writing workshop in May 2008 and \$4,550 for 10 faculty to attend the workshop in May 2009. TGS IDC account provided the funding.

Graduate Commencement

Reid opened discussion for any feedback regarding graduate commencement. In general, support for the graduate ceremony was overwhelming and the majority of comments were very positive. Additionally, the following suggestions/comments were made:

- Have a “social time” thirty minutes prior to the start of commencement for faculty, students and families, with graduates in their seats by 7:00 p.m. Processional music could be played as the platform party (only) processes.
- Include a speaker 8-10 minutes only.
- Announce the graduate program’s name and coordinator as they lead their students onto the stage.
- Some expressed concern over the perceived “assembly line” feeling of hooding two students at a time on the stage, but coordinators from COE noted that hooding one at a time at the college ceremony last year took too long.
- Dim/soften the lights to give a more ceremonial feel.
- Hood doctoral students again at the undergraduate ceremony—to give presence, value and inspiration.
- Graduate students should at least be mentioned at the main ceremony, including how many graduated, when it took place, etc.
- Improve seating assignments---make it clearer on the cards and seats.
- Provide a “black box” on the stage for those who are hooding to stand on (Virginia Tech did this)
- Consider not having a formal recessional. When the ceremony was over, students wanted to find their families instead of recessing. The platform party could leave first and then the students would be free to disperse.
- Corinne Diop mentioned the consideration of recognizing the MFAs with the doctoral programs. Reid said that this was approved on May 4: 1) all terminal degree recipients will be recognized similarly and 2) a note will be placed in the graduate commencement program defining the terminal degree.

Coordinators were invited to email TGS with any other suggestions or recommendations.

Online Application Process

The first year of the new online application process has been completed. Many council members found this process to be easier in terms of handling and tracking applications.

Several council members offered the following suggestions, comments or concerns over the course of the discussion:

- The new application process is generally considered convenient and easy. Any issues that arise over incomplete folders are always handled quickly by TGS staff.
- There is a concern with faculty members putting the K-drive folders on flash drives and then having a folder “disappear.”
- One member suggested that only the coordinator should have access to the K-drive and then copy the folder onto a departmental drive marked confidential. The K-drive could be set up to view folders, but they individuals would be unable to delete or move the folders on the K drive.
- There was a suggestion that TGS send an e-mail to let coordinators know that an application is complete and ready to be reviewed, but other coordinators were not interested in this option and wanted to opt out.
- Many of the members had a concern with the recommendation forms. Some were not able to see the forms, and some recommenders were writing only several sentences on the form rather than adding a full recommendation letter.
- A suggestion was made to make the approval process electronic (Admission Approval Form). TGS is still working on how to handle the signatures.

Lynette Bible announced that TGS will eventually be eliminating all paper documents. Everything will go through the program, “Nolij,” which will interface with PeopleSoft. All of an applicant’s information (including e-mails and phone contact logs) will be accessible online. More information on this new program will be provided soon.

Kathy Thompson distributed a copy of the Strategic Leadership reference form along with a copy of the current TGS reference form for comparison. The Council was asked to compare the two and offer comments. In the end, some asked Reid to revise the form to make it more generic and suitable for master's level programs while others stated they would rather not use a reference form at all. Coordinators who do not wish to use a set reference form were to notify Sherry Will.

Graduate Program Applications/Enrollment

Randy Brevard distributed the 2008-2009 Graduate Application/Enrollment Report and clarified some of the terms and numbers used in the report. A "new student" is any student who is starting a *new* program at JMU, even if they completed a prior degree at JMU. The numbers on the report represent the applications received for summer 08, fall 08 and spring 09. As of May 22, the total number of graduate credit hours for summer 09 was 4,800 compared to 4,590 last year. Although 620 applicants have accepted our offers for fall 2009, 213 applicants are still active admits.

A few of the members asked how a student is classified as full-time or part-time. Randy clarified that a student could be full-time student one semester part-time the next. Randy encouraged council members to contact him with other specific questions or concerns.

Using Waitlists

Reid presented council members with a sample waitlist letter (see attached). In the past, some programs have informed students about admission decisions before officially informing TGS, creating communication difficulties with applicants and sometime parents. There have been a few instances where TGS has had no record of a student's acceptance or denial. To prevent this, coordinators will soon have three options on the admission approval form -- acceptance, denial or waitlist. If the waitlist option is circled, TGS will send out a waitlist letter for that program, letting students know where they are in the process. Reid encouraged council members to contact him with any editing or word changes to the sample letter.

Graduate Program Coordinator Position Description

Nancy Nichols, on behalf of the subcommittee established to review coordinator positions and responsibilities, presented council members with a draft list of coordinator responsibilities. The intent is to develop a formal list of responsibilities and a general position description so that current and new coordinators will be able to easily understand the role they have undertaken. Nancy indicated that she will be sending out a survey to determine typical teaching loads, extra compensation, reassigned time, stipends, support and the number of hours per week spent in coordinating a graduate program. Nancy encouraged council members to email her if they wanted an electronic copy of the draft; further suggestions or editing will be completed in the fall.

Preparing Future Faculty – An Introduction to the Professoriate

Reid facilitated a brief discussion about the possibility of developing a professional development series for graduate students preparing to become faculty. While the intent is to better prepare such graduate students for positions in higher education, the goal is not to prepare them for the status quo but rather to prepare them to "transform graduate education" as faculty and academic leaders of tomorrow. Reid noted that Virginia Tech does an excellent job of preparing their students for panels and presentations as well as giving them an idea of what life is like for a professor. The series would include lectures from faculty across campus. The discussion will be continued in the fall.

Other

Out-of-State Tuition Waivers

Steve Reich raised the issue of assistantships and waiver of out-of-state tuition for students. Many of his students are out of state and cannot accept his offer due to the lack of support via assistantships or waivers of out-of-state tuition. Reid and Randy explained the Virginia Code related to out-of-state waivers and discussed, in general, the differences in state funding for graduate students at JMU as compared to students at other schools such as VCU, VT, UVA, GMU, ODU and W&M. What follows is a summary and illustration of the out-of-state waiver regulations.

The regulation states that state institutions may choose to waive the out-of-state (OS) portion of tuition for up to 50% of OS students on assistantships where the compensation is at least \$4000.

As an example, here are the JMU figures for 2007-08 (the most recently fully completed academic year).

- 161 OS students on assistantships
- 150 OS students on assistantships receiving at least \$4000
- 75 OS students receiving \$4K equals 50% of the OS students
- 35 OS students issued OS waivers by JMU (47% of total that could be waived)

Reid pointed out that JMU's state-level support (\$390,000/year) has not changed in 30 years or more while the support received by the other schools noted above dwarf the amount JMU receives. Those schools received additional large appropriations by former governor Mark Warner as he left office to fuel additional research efforts across higher education in Virginia. The difference totals millions of dollars for each of these schools compared to JMU. An additional compounding factor is the difference in size of JMU's Foundation when compared to the foundations of the other institutions. Simply put, the playing fields are not equal.

Until around 2003, JMU issued no waivers. The logic is that the institution is willing to give up OS tuition revenue for some students by counting students as in-state leaving more money in the operating budget for tuition support for additional GAs. The university, consequently, seeks to recruit more graduate students by spreading the operating budget further (i.e., support more students with the money in the GA tuition support part of TGS budget). The notion is by bringing in more students, the university will make up the tuition loss which occurs due to waivers. Offering 40 more waivers than we do currently would cost the university \$421,200 on top of our \$11 million budget reduction. To date, Administration and Finance has been willing to increase the number of waivers to the current 35 but not go beyond that given the economic climate in Virginia.

Graduate Assistantship Fair

Related to the issue of increasing the number of assistantship for a program, a suggestion was made to have a Graduate Assistantship Fair where admitted students could meet with unit representatives to find out more about assistantships that are offered across the university that are not program specific or are located in non-academic unit offices.

Reminder: Summer applications for graduation are due June 5. There is a new online form for students to use that allows the student to type in their information, rather than having to write it in by hand. Once their information is filled in, they will print out the form and obtain the required signatures and return it to TGS. Coordinators are reminded to encourage their students to go online to complete this form.

ELECTRONIC APPROVALS

Program Approvals

Number proposed: 2
Number approved: 2
Yes votes: 19 No votes: 0

Course Approvals

Number proposed: 1
Number approved: 1
Yes votes: 19 No votes: 0

Faculty/Instructor Approvals

Number proposed: 3
Number approved: 3
Yes votes: 19 No votes: 0

Program Requests:

Infosec MBA- Program Change
MAT in Special Education- Program Change

Course Requests:

Education

Elementary Education- ELED 622

Faculty Requests:

Communication Studies

Tony Whitfield- Graduate Faculty

English

Dawn Goode- Graduate Instructor

History

Nkhet Varlik- Graduate Instructor