

Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Meeting  
Monday, September 22, 2008  
Education Room 152

DRAFT MINUTES

Attendees

Lee Duemer  
Zenaida Aguirre-Munoz  
Reese Todd  
Annette Smith  
Bret Hendricks – Visitor  
Tara Stevens  
Walter Smith – Visitor  
Sheryl Santos--Visitor  
Sally McMillan – Visitor  
Margaret A. Price  
William Lan – Visitor  
Gerry Parr  
Doug Simpson (ex officio)  
Dr. Cliff Fedler, Graduate School – Visitor

August 22 and August 27, 2008 Minutes

- Add Lee Duemer to list of attendees to August Minutes
- Peggie moved to accept Minutes; Lee seconded; Committee approved

Dean Santos Commented on Ideas related to the Results of A Grievance. She noted that:

- Written policy for certain curriculum matters (new seminar course topics) is needed
- Flexibility is needed in the policy but it needs to provide guidance for the faculty and administration
- The policy recommendations are up to the committee with approval of the pertinent people and group
- The recommendations should be taken to Graduate Faculty for discussion and approval
- The contested course cannot continue to offer until/if is approved
- It is critical that we have a collegial professional relationship in dealing with differences of opinion
- That Interim Provost Weiner will ask for updates on how grievance-related matters are progressing

Bret observed that:

- Prior discussion of the seminar had occurred at the GAAC with relevant recommendations to the department chairs.

The proposed course (EDCI 5386: Constructivist Inquiry Methodologies) was discussed. Among the comments that were made, are the following:

- Lee –that he would like to share the proposal with EPSY faculty and get feedback from them
- Tara—in the past, time has been available to talk with department colleagues
- Walter—there is no need to push for a vote on the proposal today
- Peggie– there is an updated syllabus that needs to be shared with the GAAC and others
- Sally–here is a chart (Appendix II) that shows where the proposed course fits on a scale of different kinds of research courses
- Peggie–the course goes through the entire research process so that students get an overview of the process and can engage in research projects afterwards
- Zenaida – is it tightly focused on constructive methodology?
- Sally –a constructivist view of the nature of knowledge
- Peggy –it is aimed at the teacher/teacher educator, classroom teacher
- Zenaida – is this an advanced course?
- Peggie – No, not when the whole realm of research courses is considered

Motion

- Lee moved that the proposal be tabled
- Gerry seconded the motion
- The motion was unanimously passed

Dr. Clifford Fedler's conversation about seminar and special topic courses involved interactions with a number of faculty. Comments made include the following:

- Fedler—What is a seminar course and what is a special topics course? One deals with a subject that is addressed on a regular basis and the other deals with topics that may change from term to term
- William—we have seminar courses that are used for both purposes
- Fedler –Special topics are often offered for 1 or 2 times; sometimes used to start a new program; many convert the special topics courses into a regular ones.
- Fedler—How many times can such be offered? In reality, one time, but this is not in writing; there is no formal policy. Three (3) seems to be the magic number.
- Fedler—the approval process for a new course in the Graduate School is the same all course proposals that come to it. First, it goes to sub-committee of the Graduate Academic Council—when everything looks okay it goes to the second level of examination: the Graduate Council. The process is very thorough. Before either body

examines the proposal, I check the proposal. I check for duplication and particular requirements before deciding to send it forward or to contact the sending department.

- Fedler—the college is a checkpoint for duplication and other questions before it is sent to the Graduate School. He suggested that seminar courses be changed to regular courses asap if they are to be offered regularly and that same numbered courses (e.g., EDCI 6306) may cause problems with interpreters of transcripts.
- William—said subtitles help avoid problems and clarify the precise content of seminar courses
- Fedler—if you add topics courses you can avoid problems
- Gerry – does the coordinating board have a regulation requiring that a course be offered every 3 years?
- Fedler – no
- Walter – what about working with schools when we don't have a course that matches school needs?
- Fedler – teach the course as a special topics course; the Graduate School cannot and does not want to police each program
- Sheryl – what criteria are used to judge course quality?
- Fedler – that falls in the purview of program; it needs to explain the value of a course and why it needs to be offered
- Gerry – what are the criteria for determining course duplication?
- Fedler—look at the topics for the existing and the proposed courses; if overlap is 50% or more it is questionable; fuzzy at times; what is so different about a course?
- Walter – should we be concerned with SCH, e.g., more enrollment, more resources?
- Fedler – the University and College should worry; departments should not
- Fedler – look at 5 year average data for SCH; not annual data
- Fedler – SCH is a factor in hiring; not the determining factor
- Gerry – is there a college creatively encouraging team teaching?
- Fedler – don't know if there is
- Sheryl – how do students fit into picture?
- Fedler – in short, meet the requirements of students. One thing – don't meet their interests just because they “want” a course? Program faculty determine if “wants” are appropriate
- Fedler – pass ideas by him if we have questions or concerns before sending a complete set of materials to the Graduate School.

### Old Business

- Secretary - Peggie Price was nominated by Gerry; Lee seconded the nomination. Passed unanimously
- Student Representative is Annette
- Website – Maintenance will be revisited
- Zenaida – list the website with faculty resources
- Bret – this is the second time we have asked for a course approval process
- Zenaida and Doug will draft a proposal regarding the approval process for new topics for seminars for critique and consideration by the GAAC