

approved 11-29-76

MINUTES

University Council Meeting
October 18, 1976 3:00 p.m.
Board Room, Burruss Hall

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Lavery at 3:04 p.m.

The following were present: Dr. Lavery, Dr. Krebs, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Hoepner for Dean Bull, Dr. Dean, Dean Nichols, Dean Havard, Dr. Moore for Dean Mitchell, Dr. Worner, Mr. Osborne for Dean Torgersen, Dean Ritchey for Dean Harper, Dean Talbot, Dean Lacy, Dean Van Dresser, Dean Fabrycky, Mr. Souter for Mr. Bechanan, Dr. Cooper, Dr. Crittenden, Dr. Niles for Dr. Larry Weber, Dr. Lovingood, Dr. McNitt, Dr. Hall, Dr. Siegel, Dr. Bird, Professor Gunsten, Dr. Wills, Mr. Gray Mr. Warlick, Mr. Martin, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Burleson.

The following were absent: Dean Burchard, Dr. Chiang, Dr. White, Dr. Warren Weber, Dr. Beyer, Dr. Litschert, Mr. Trevathan, Mr. Smallwood, Mr. Pearson.

1. Announcements

Dr. Lavery welcomed all old and new Council members and expressed his appreciation for the attendance at the called meeting on October 12. He assured Council that he would continue to seek its advice as new administrative organizations are contemplated and developed.

Dr. Lavery reported that he had an opportunity to appear before the Legislative sub-committee on Education to speak against the proposed legislation to make "student activity fees" optional. The legislation would require approval of a majority of the students voting; a minimum of 40 percent of the student body would have to participate in the vote. Dr. Lavery said that the Virginia Tech Student Center Fee was used to retire the bonded indebtedness of the Squires Student Center, provide for the maintenance and operation of that facility and to support approved student organizations. An optional fee system would seriously jeopardize these activities and programs.

Mr. Warlick reported that student leaders had an opportunity to testify before the sub-committee in support of the mandatory Student Center Fee. They urged the legislative representatives to adopt the Virginia Tech model of student involvement and student control under the auspices of the Student Budget Board.

Dr. Lavery and Dr. Dean both applauded the support of the student leaders in this important debate.

2. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as distributed.

Motion passed

3. Minutes of the University Council

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the University Council of September 20, 1976.

Motion passed

4. Minutes of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research

(a) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research of September 14, 1976.

Dr. Lavery asked that Item #3: Letter of Intent for the Master of Science in Geography be excepted so that the Council might hear from Dr. Charles Good.

Motion to approve the minutes passed with the above exception.

Dr. Lavery welcomed Dr. Good and invited him to address the University Council. Dr. Good noted that there was a tremendous interest in this graduate program and that it represented the first of its kind in the Commonwealth. He emphasized the need for a modest size high quality program. It was anticipated that 6 to 8 students would be enrolled the first year and 15 students would represent a steady-state in three years. Several questions were raised regarding course sequences and a few minor editorial changes were suggested for Dr. Good's consideration.

After Dr. Good was excused, a motion was offered and seconded to approve the Letter of Intent for the Master of Science in Geography.

Motion passed

(b) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research of September 28, 1976.

Motion passed

(c) Dr. Lavery informed Council that a revised draft of the Suggested Policies and Procedures Governing Graduate Student Appeals had been approved by the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research at its meeting of October 12, 1976. This document was available even though the minutes of said meeting were not.

Dr. Lavery welcomed Dean Gilmer, Chairman of the Commission's ad hoc Committee, to discuss the proposal with Council. Dean Gilmer reported that the Commission had attempted to address itself to the Council's earlier concerns and that while there were some differences of opinion the proposal had been approved by the Commission.

After Dean Gilmer was excused, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Policies and Procedures Governing Graduate Student Appeals.

Motion passed

Dr. Lavery requested that the policy statement be disseminated to the faculty. Please see attached Appendix I.

5. Minutes of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies

(a) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies of May 10, 1976.

Motion passed

(b) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies of May 24, 1976.

Dr. Hoepner requested that Item #6: "Grades of 'I' for off-campus courses..." be excepted. He explained that this was a matter for the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research, that the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research had previously tabled this item pending a review by the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and that the matter had not been considered by the former group. Dr. Lavery acknowledged Dr. Hoepner's request and asked that the matter be reviewed with Dr. Wilson and a report be prepared for the next meeting of the Council. With that understanding, the previous question to approve the Minutes of May 24, 1976 (item #6 excepted) was called for.

Motion passed

6. Minutes of the Commission on Student Affairs

(a) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Student Affairs of September 9, 1976.

Motion passed

(b) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Student Affairs of September 23, 1976.

Motion passed

(c) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission on Student Affairs of October 7, 1976.

Motion passed

With no further business pending, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul H. Hoepner
Acting Secretary

APPENDIX I

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING GRADUATE STUDENT APPEALS

Graduate education is a complex activity involving a higher order of student-faculty relationship than is ordinarily found at the undergraduate level. The teacher/student relationship of the undergraduate years is replaced by an evolving partnership of apprentice and mentor, and the development of research sophistication is frequently fostered by intimately shared experiences.

It follows that the evaluation of the graduate student's progress is, and must be, dependent in large part upon the judgment of his major professor, augmented by the collective judgment of the members of his assigned committee. To be sure, the University, through the agency of the Graduate School, can define minimal entrance standards and can prescribe general rules governing eligibility for continuation. But the crucial agency in student evaluation is the department in which the student's work is centered, and the crucial evaluator must be his faculty advisor.

It is important, therefore, that each graduate student be fully informed, not only of the University's expectations but of the department's expectations as well. It is incumbent upon each department to prepare, in outline form, a statement for each of its graduate degrees. Such a statement should cover such items as course requirements, the nature and timing of oral and written examinations and the nature of the evaluation that will be given to the thesis. A copy of each departmental statement should be on file in the office of the Graduate School and should be made available to each student at the time of matriculation.

It can safely be assumed that most disputes over evidence of unsatisfactory progress will be informally discussed and reconciled at the departmental level. Indeed, most discussions of this kind will commonly occur among the student, his major professor, and the other members of his advisory committee. Nonetheless, there will from time to time arise serious questions regarding both the status of a graduate student (whether in a given course or as a candidate for the degree) and the basis of the evaluation that has placed his status in jeopardy. On these occasions it is important that the University provide full opportunity for the student's grievance to be reviewed in a judicious manner.

I. The Departmental Appeal¹

Whenever a graduate student believes that his work has been improperly evaluated, or believes he has been treated unfairly, he is expected to take up his questions directly with the faculty member involved. This may be his committee chairman, the faculty member for whom he is working as an assistant, or an instructor responsible for a course in which he is enrolled.

¹Departmental or its equivalent.

If, after earnest inquiry, the matter remains unreconciled, the graduate student will be expected to appeal the question to the head of his department.² The department head, in consultation with the academic dean, shall take all reasonable and proper actions to resolve the question at the departmental level.³ The student shall be informed in writing of the results no later than one month after his appeal to the department head.

II. The University Appeals Procedure

Should the aggrieved student believe that his rights were abridged at the departmental level, he may as a last resort file a request for review with the Dean of the Graduate School. In his statement to the Dean, the aggrieved student must clearly state the substance of the appeal. The Dean of the Graduate School shall take all reasonable and proper actions to resolve the question; if not so resolved, he will refer it to the Graduate Appeals Committee for their review. As a standing committee of the Commission on Graduate Studies and Research, this committee will consist of three faculty members and one student. For each appeal the Dean shall appoint to the committee one additional faculty member knowledgeable in the academic area of the appeal.

The review by the Graduate Appeals Committee will have available to it the entire record of the student's work in the University, as well as (a) the department's statement concerning its degree expectations, (b) a summary of the department's action on the appeal, and (c) copies of the student's statement to the Dean of the Graduate School recording his view of alleged irregularities (i.e., the basis for his University appeal).

The Graduate Appeals Committee may hold a formal hearing on grievance appeals referred to it by the Dean of the Graduate School. The hearing will be conducted with the following procedural safeguards:

- (1) All parties to the dispute will be notified of the time and place of the hearing at least 48 hours in advance;
- (2) The aggrieved student will be permitted, if he chooses, to invite a member of the faculty or student body to represent him in the hearing;
- (3) All parties in the dispute will be given full opportunity to testify and to present such evidence or witnesses as seem relevant;
- (4) All matters upon which the finding will be based must be introduced into evidence at the hearing.

The Committee will file its recommendation with the Dean of the Graduate School who will convey the Committee's recommendation and the final disposition of the matter to all concerned parties.

²If the department head is himself a party to the grievance, the dean of the academic college will assume this responsibility.

³The Faculty Handbook states "The assigning of grades is the responsibility of the individual instructor in every case. The basis on which grades are assigned rests on his judgement alone...".