

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

COMMISSION ON GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

Minutes

March 13, 1979 3:00 p.m.

President's Board Room, Burruss Hall

PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE:

A graduate student be allowed to change from the thesis to the non-thesis option (or vice versa) once during his/her program with the explicit approval of the department head, the major professor and any principal investigator who might be involved in a graduate research assistantship.

Change the ADD deadline to 5 class days into the quarter, and retain the drop deadline of 20 calendar days for 5000 or higher level courses.

Present: Drs. Bellas, Bingham, Bonomo, Fabrycky, Hoepner, Hinkelmann, Lewis, Mason, Rockey, Simpson, Stout, Watts, Wise, Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Cummins.

Absent: Drs. Oyler and Sporakowski.

The meeting was called to order by Dean Hoepner at 3:00 p.m.

1. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion passed.

2. Announcements

Dean Hoepner indicated that he had received a telephone call from the Office of Education informing him that the Department of Health, Education and Welfare had decided to grant, in part at least, our proposal for minority and women graduate fellowships. He reminded the Commission members that in November we submitted a request for \$225,000 to support fifteen graduate fellows at the post-Master's level in five departments. However, because of limited funding, the Office of Education has awarded grant to support two fellows each in three departments (Accounting, Agronomy and Chemical Engineering). He pointed out that while we received approximately 40% of what we had requested, our proposal apparently fared as well as any other institution and better than most. This grant reflects favorably on the quality of the faculty and the strengths of our graduate programs.

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of February 27, 1979. Motion passed.

4. Course Criteria Committee Report - Dr. Lewis

Dr. Lewis reported that the Plant Pathology and Physiology Department had made the requested changes on PLPP 5150 (Diseases of Field Crops, 3H, 3C, II) therefore, the Course Criteria Committee recommended approval. Motion was seconded and passed.

5. Degree Requirements, Standards, Criteria, and Academic Policies Committee Report - Dr. Mason

a. Faculty Senate Resolution on Faculty Involvement in Graduate Education:

Dr. Mason reported that he had met with the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Academic and Scholarly Matters. A revised draft of the resolution would be reviewed by the Faculty Senate at tonight's meeting (March 13, 1979). A final report should be ready for review by the Commission at our next meeting.

b. Proposal for Modification of the Non-Degree Graduate Student Admissions Category:

Dr. Mason reported on his conference with Dean Robert Smith of the College of Education. He learned that teachers taking courses on campus in the summer would most probably avail themselves of the Unclassified Professional Student status, and that there would be no effective mechanism for monitoring a one-third enrollment policy. Therefore, Dr. Mason suggested that the Commission consider using the Unclassified Professional Student status as a registration category, that these students be permitted to enroll in the college of their choice, and that the individual faculty members be allowed to reject anyone in this category from their courses if they do not meet the normal prerequisite requirements of his/her class. Dean Smith suggested that the College of Education be authorized to conduct an experiment regarding the feasibility and the viability of this category during the forthcoming calendar year and report to the Commission in September 1980. In addition, Dr. Mason suggested that all other colleges be permitted to use this category on an experimental basis, however, the testing would be the responsibility of the College of Education. Please see Appendix I.

After extensive discussion, and several suggestions, a motion was made and seconded to table further consideration on this proposal pending receipt by the Commission of a satisfactory monitoring and evaluation proposal from the College of Education. Motion passed.

✓ c. Thesis/Non-Thesis Option:

Dr. Mason reported that the recommendation of the committee would be that a student be allowed to change options once during the course of his/her program. Dr. Mason also addressed the issue of the non-thesis Master of Science degree. It was the sense of his committee that the Master of Science degree should be restricted to a research degree and that we implement a Master of "discipline" degree for the non-thesis option.

As a result of the above suggestions, a motion was made and seconded that a student be allowed to change from the thesis to the non-thesis option (or vice versa) once during his/her program with the explicit approval of the department head, the major professor and any principal investigator who might be involved in a graduate research assistantship. Motion passed.

A motion was made and seconded that the Commission seek the implementation of a non-thesis Master of "discipline" degree, rather than a Master of Science degree with a non-thesis option. The earliest date for implementation would be for students matriculating in the Fall Quarter, 1981. Motion passed. NOTE: Please see preconditions for implementation noted below.

As a result of the previous motion, a suggestion was made that prior to formal implementation, a communique be sent to all department heads soliciting their views on this proposed action; as well as including consideration of the Master of Arts. Furthermore, the Acting Dean of the Graduate School was asked to consult with the appropriate administrative officers and the State Council of Higher Education to ascertain if there are any problems with the Master of "discipline" degree and report back to the Commission to obtain final confirmation.

Dean Hoepner asked whether the Commission wished to develop a community of expectations for non-thesis degrees beyond the mere collection of courses (e.g., Project and Report, Major Paper, etc.). It was the sense of the Commission that this matter be left to the discretion of the individual departments.

6. Add/Drop Deadline ✓

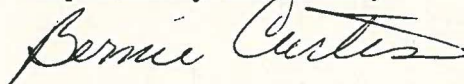
Dean Hoepner observed that the Commission had delayed action on this item in order to provide the Graduate Student Assembly an opportunity to review this item. In view of the fact that the Undergraduate Commission has deemed it appropriate to change the Drop/Add deadline to five and ten class days, respectively, the Graduate Student Assembly recommends that the drop/add deadline for 5000 or higher level courses remain at 8 class days (10 calendar days) for Adds; and 20 calendar days for Drops.

After considerable discussion, a motion was made and seconded to change the Add deadline to 5 class days into the quarter. Motion passed. In addition, a motion was made and seconded to retain the Drop deadline for 5000 or higher level courses at 20 calendar days into the quarter. Motion passed.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bernie Curtis
Acting Secretary

APPENDIX I

Proposal for Modification of the Non-Degree Graduate Student Admissions Category

New Category: Unclassified Professional Students

Requirements: Accredited Bachelor's degree plus appropriate professional experience.

All courses taken under this admission will be P/F. Courses taken may not be used toward a graduate degree regardless of the quality of performance. This admission is a restricted admission and permits students to enter only certain approved courses in the College recommending this admission. Open to all programs which care to use it. Individual faculty members will be allowed to reject anyone in this category from their courses if they do not meet the normal prerequisite requirements of his/her class. Should be monitored by the College of Education and evaluated after two years.