

Graduate Council
February 10, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Dean Perry called meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Present: : Mary Ellen Allison, Cynthia Brennan, Kathleen Burke, Lew Chakrin, Brian Chinni (Recorder), Angela Cristini, Eric Daffron, Julian Gomez, Julie Norflus-Goode (guest presenter/new GC member); Bernard Langer, Hassan Nejad, Anthony Padavano, Steve Perry, Emma Rainforth, Christopher Romano, Sam Rosenberg, Anita Stellenwerf, and Ashwani Vasishth

Dean Perry opened meeting at 10:02 a.m., introduced the meeting agenda and related topics, and distributed copies of a document inclusive of four (4) items from the RCNJ Graduate Education Standards and Procedures Manual for individual and collective review. The meeting topics included:

- Graduate Education Standards and Procedures final edits – decision to establish a sub-committee to complete the Manual inclusive of: Cynthia Brennan, Brian Chinni, Eric Daffron, and Emma Rainforth. The sub-committee will meet subsequent to 2/10/11 meeting, complete revisions and submit to the Council for review and final approval; and
 - A collective examination and revision of specific excerpts from the RCNJ Graduate Education Standards and Procedures Manual (all GC members).
1. Anita raised concerns regarding the thesis extension. Discussion ensued. Steve explained that it was the Provost's desires to reduce the term of the extension to two semester. Anita asked if there could be extensions per Director's approval under extenuating circumstances. Steve said he believed this to be acceptable, however, it is not in the Council's best interest to present exceptions in the Manual.
 2. Hassan presented his concerns regarding GLEX policy, specifically regarding the timing of the decision to approve an individual student's prior learning/life experiences for graduate credit. Kathy explained that the decision cannot be made at the time of application and, rather, must be determined upon the successful completion of two courses. She further explained that if approval was given at time of application, it is possible that the student could receive credit for such, not perform well in his/her graduate coursework and exit the program. Chris further explained that he believes this issue is currently on the Deans Council's agenda to discuss; therefore, he recommended that we wait until the Dean Council reports on the results of its discussion. Steve further suggested that the Graduate Council reserve consideration until the newly established Manual sub-committee meets to address. Some further discussion ensued. Chris offered some additional explanation. Steve synthesized and closed by stating the PLEX and GLEX will be reviewed in Deans Council and decisions will be influenced by

such. Also, please submit any additional feedback re: Manual to Steve/Eric for Committee consideration.

3. Steve Perry introduced next agenda item - Provost Barnett's concerns:
 - ***Class Scheduling.*** Kathy asked if we were going to establish a team to discuss; she further explained the concern of tuition reimbursement timing for nurses and teachers. Kathy and Angela volunteered to participate on a committee to examine the issue and how to best address. Sam noted that the College is liable for contractual obligation to adjuncts – specifically regarding timing of notification of cancellation of class. Should the adjunct not be notified in a timely manner, he/she can demand payment equivalent to 0.5 credits. Furthermore, this is in violation of contract. Angela expressed concern over the policy; if she had upheld such, most all of the MSET classes would have been cancelled. Rather, all but one class ran as scheduled. This is due to late registrations. Steve requested that the sub-committee, inclusive of Angela, Sam, Kathy and Art Chill, meet to address this issue.
 - ***Graduate Education Vision and Mission Statement.*** Steve suggested that we establish a sub-committee; all agreed. The sub-committee will include: Hassan, Anthony, Chris and Julie (Sam nominated); all agreed. Steve appointed Hassan as the Chair. Steve explained that the Provost would like to implement the Vision/Mission Statement by end of spring 2011 semester. Eric expressed the need to consider other important factors beyond the mission statement, including: the overall nature of our student and its impact recruitment, enrollment, etc. As a result, Steve suggested that Eric join the sub-committee. Eric and all agreed. Eric explained how we are categorized by Carnegie as a graduate granting institution, however, by the State as an undergraduate, liberal arts college. Therefore, we need to petition for Exceeds Mission each time we propose a new graduate program offering. Anthony further expressed that his MALS program would eventually want to provide a doctoral program; Kathy, Angela and Brian supported this desire.
 - Kathy requested reschedule of the RN/MSN discussion to the 3/10/11 meeting; all agreed.
 - Steve introduced Julie Norflus-Goode to the Council. Sam offered an introduction and related context. Sam expressed that Julie did a fantastic job creating the proposal. Eric, too, was very supportive. Julie presented the proposal of Master of Arts in Special Education Program to the Council. Steve asked if the Council had any questions. Hassan requested that perhaps Julie could walk us through the overview of program – statement of need, curriculum and related coursework, etc. Julie offered a rationale and explanation of program. She explained that the program was specifically designed for certified and practicing teachers. Upon successful completion, the graduate earns both a MA in SE and NJ State certification. Julie emphasized that the philosophical foundation of each

course is that of experiential learning; this was essential, specifically given the fact that these students are not required to student teach. She further explained that a competing institution does not require experiential learning – and – the students are “angry.” Steve opened for comments. Anthony commended the overall quality of document in alignment to need. He expressed, given that three of our six graduate programs are aligned to education, there might be possibilities for joint masters degrees - allowing graduates to earn multiple MA’s. Kathy followed by questioning if this might also be a way of addressing the earlier desire to establish/offer doctoral programs. Julie offered some perspective as to how this might work. She explained that the program can be “tweaked” for an individual that does not hold certification – but – wants to teach. The graduate can earn two State certifications, i.e., Elementary and Special Education Certification.

Kathy questioned – who are our major competitors? Julie explained that most all surrounding institutions offer similar programs. However, the distinct difference is that of the quality of coursework and related experiences.

A discussion ensued regarding enrollment projections. Sam provided the consultant’s perspective and expressed that Chris did a fantastic job in preparation for the External Review. Chris offered some explanation - we built a 15 and 20-student cohort with growth rate at 40% for 4 years (maxed out at 35/50 students in two models). Anita suggested that we have a combination of BS/MA degree. Can we do this? Julie explained that we are going to put this into place to make into a 5-year program. Chris explained that if we can develop a 5-year program in SE, we would be well served. Sam explained that we have discussed this is currently under discussion for future implementation. We currently have 1200 email addresses in an alumni database; 1% is break even. Sam highlighted the importance of experiential as a distinction. Anita questioned how the program allows for experiential learning? Julie explained project-based learning. Steve expressed concern regarding the 5-year BA/MA program model, given that many of our students have difficulty graduating in four years. Sam agreed and expressed that this is why we need to sit down and do some brainstorming. Hassan requested that Julie elaborate on the resources required for the initial implementation of the program and whether the program required any new faculty lines? Sam explained that this is not necessary; Julie contributes to the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Julian Gomez offered a suggestion for admission requirements; require the CV.

- Kathy expressed the importance of establishing a close relationship with local school districts to ensure success of program. Julie agreed

- Emma offered comment that she noticed each are four-credit courses; full time status is nine credits and, therefore, securing loans may not be possible. Angela explained that one can get a loan at six credits. A brief discussion ensued.

The next Graduate Council meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2011.

Steve Perry motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Dr. Brian P. Chinni