

**GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING**  
**April 9th, 2015**  
**York Room**

**Attendees:** Kathy Burke, Lew Chakrin, Brian Chinni (Chairman), Eric Daffron, Anthony Dovi, Michele Dunn, Janet Furness, Tim Landers (Secretary), Steven Perry, Emma Rainforth, Chris Romano, Sam Rosenberg, Rich Russo, Eddie Saiff, and Ashwani Vasishth.

Chairman Chinni opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m. and introduced the following agenda:

- Approval of the February 12<sup>th</sup> minutes (Tim Landers)
- Graduate Teaching Load (Sam Rosenberg)
- Transfer Credits & Graduate Networking Event (Rich Russo)
- Out-of-State Tuition & Enrollment Management Update (Chris Romano)

1. Approval of the February 12<sup>th</sup> minutes: E. Daffron asked that the second to last paragraph on page one be amended to state that the policy change or exception referred to graduate teaching loads. E. Saiff moved that they be approved as amended. The motion was seconded by S. Rosenberg and unanimously approved.

2. S. Rosenberg led a discussion regarding graduate faculty teaching loads, currently limited to two courses. The genesis of the discussion is a requirement by the Council of Social Work Education stating that 51% of the faculty load must be dedicated to the SW graduate program. Rosenberg learned recently that he could not meet accreditation standards by allocating fractions of faculty time as he had expected. Meeting this requirement will require MSW faculty to teach three graduate courses.

In recalling discussions dating back to 2009 & 2010, the Council agreed that faculty would teach no more than two graduate courses as part of their teaching load. T. Landers relayed comments from L. Chakrin who recalled that the policy included an exception to the two-course limit with the approval of the Dean and Provost. E. Daffron confirmed the passage of the agreement at Provost's Council but he could not find specific policy language relating to exceptions policy. At the time of the initial graduate program discussions, President Mercer used the opportunity to reiterate his guiding principal that Ramapo is primarily an undergraduate College.

K. Burke explained that with her proposed program expansions she too would face a similar challenge in meeting the nursing certification requirements. In some instances, certification requirements dictate whether her faculty must teach exclusively in either graduate or undergraduate programs.

S. Perry said it was time to revisit the original policy since it was devised well before some of these programs were in existence. However, he was concerned with protecting UG faculty lines while allowing for graduate program growth. Dean Chakrin said the first

order of business when designing the MBA program was the inclusion of a methodology to prevent a drain on UG resources. The MBA model explicitly increases the number of teaching lines as the program grows however, faculty are not hired to teach exclusively in the MBA program; instead, the pro rata teaching costs are paid by the MBA program. When the Council developed the current policy it did not anticipate the changes that are part of the new strategic plan and must now be taken into consideration.

E. Rainforth said the issue would not be popular with the Faculty Assembly and would once again raise the issue of having a two-tier faculty structure. She reminded the Council of the discussion surrounding the FA's 2009 approval of the current teaching loads. Giving the Deans the authority to undue that understanding sends us down a slippery slope. E. Rainforth recommended that we seek an interim solution for programs already underway and simultaneously raise the issue with the FA.

E. Daffron outlined that procedurally the Graduate Council must ask the Provost to include the teaching load limit as an agenda item for an upcoming Deans Council meeting. The Deans Council would then formulate and recommend a policy change to the Provost's Council. A 30-day comment period would precede a vote by the Provost's Council.

As a member of the Provost's Council and FA President, E. Rainforth has a single vote; she indicated her desire to seek input from the FA on this issue before casting a vote.

Sam Rosenberg moved that the Council recommend to the Provost that the graduate teaching policy be placed as an agenda item on the Deans Council. The motion was seconded by C. Romano and unanimously approved.

3. R. Russo noted that twenty-three of his MSET students are utilizing independent study (IS) as a way to make up for the difference between Ramapo's four credit course and the three credit courses taken elsewhere. MSET is a 34 credit program so, students approved for the two course or eight credit transfer limit may meet the course requirement but fall short of the credit requirement. The IS volume is taxing to the faculty and of nominal financial consequence. E. Saiff noted that there is no college wide IS compensation standard and it's often left to the peculiarities of each program budget.

C. Romano said it is important to align the transfer credit policy with a residency policy. Following on Romano's comments, M. Dunn suggested switching the focus from number of classes or total credits to percent completed at Ramapo College, which would accommodate differences in program designs and provide flexibility. In addition to the residency requirement, programs and students still need to meet NJ's minimum thirty-credit requirement as well as any individual program's accreditation requirements.

The discussion included a number of related topics and alternatives including credit equivalency, recognizing less than the full amount of earned credit, and adding elective options as an alternative to IS.

C. Romano moved that the Council explore changes to the graduate manual wording on transfer credits and include a residency policy. The motion was seconded by R. Russo and unanimously approved.

4. R. Russo reported on the Graduate Mixer and the challenges of creating a graduate culture. J. Good's program once again provided nearly all of the students in attendance. On two different occasions now we've had little success in attracting students who were not already on campus.

C. Roman turned the Council's focus to the possible creation of a graduate orientation day that would include individual program breakout sessions, a combined session with the Bursar, Registrar and Financial Aid Officer, and conclude with a social event. By standardizing the onboarding process, Romano believes we can reduce payment delays and dropped classes.

Most everyone agreed that a graduate culture was beneficial to the College but cautioned that it had to develop naturally. J. Furness said it was naturally engrained in the MSW program due to the interdisciplinary requirement and the development of their private practice networks. K. Burke said much of her program orientation is completed online.

5. C. Romano reported on the Cabinet's vote to eliminate the out-of-state tuition penalty for graduate programs. The policy is expected to be approved at the June Board of Trustees meeting.

6. C. Romano reported that first-time graduate applicants are running 87% ahead of a year-ago with MSW more than two times ahead of its goal. MALS has been suspended and is no longer accepting applications. Romano relayed our consultant's conclusion that little interest exists for traditional liberal studies programs and reviewed their recommendation to replace MALS with a Master's in Organizational Leadership.

The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 11:32 pm.

Minutes submitted by Tim Landers.