

GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
February 12, 2015
York Room

Attendees: Kathy Burke, Lew Chakrin, Brian Chinni (Chairman), Eric Daffron, Janet Furness, Julie Good, Tim Landers (Secretary), Steven Perry, Emma Rainforth, Thierry Rakotobe-Joel, Chris Romano, Sam Rosenberg, Rich Russo, Eddie Saiff, Liz Siecke and Ashwani Vasishth.

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

- Review and approval of 12/11/14 meeting minutes (T. Landers)
- Proposal for two new MSN concentrations (K. Burke)
- Analysis of NJ Graduate Grading Policies (L. Chakrin, T. Landers)
- GLEX and new MSW program (J. Furness)
- Independent Study and MAEL (B. Chinni)
- Other Business

1. After a review of the December 2014 minutes, E. Saiff moved that they be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by K. Burke and unanimously approved.

2. K. Burke presented plans to introduce two new MSN tracks at Ramapo: Nursing Administrator (NA) and Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). The passage of the Affordable Care Act is expected to create a shortage of primary care providers. To fill the need, it is estimated that nurse practitioner jobs will rise by 94% by 2025.

The FNP track includes 47 credits delivered in a cohort model with 720 clinical hours. Graduates will qualify to sit for the American Nurses Credentialing Centers (ANCC) Family Nurse Practitioner exam. Passage of this exam is necessary in the NJ.

The NA track consists of 34-35 credits and a 135 Hour Role Practicum. Graduates will qualify to sit –for the Advanced Nurse Administrator certification by the ANCC, although certification is not required in NJ.

Core courses will be required across all three programs beginning this fall with the clinical work commencing in 2016. Classes are hybrid based while clinical classes are site dependent. The course development is complete but some of the submissions occurred after ARC's October 15th deadline.

C. Romano noted that we have saturated the market for MSN applicants. Burke believes the market potential is huge and that RCNJ is well positioned with a strong reputation. The plan calls for annual enrollments of 20 students in each track with a 75% retention rate.

Burke has a pipeline of credentialed faculty who want to teach at Ramapo, some with active practices. Two full-time lines will be needed in year one and one addition line in years two and three. A brief discussion followed regarding whether the new lines were considered a policy change or an exception to the current teaching loads.

Several steps are required before the plan can proceed including approvals from the Graduate Council, ARC, Faculty Assembly and Board of Trustees. While state approval is not needed, it

will be presented as an information item on the NJ Presidents' Council agenda. Discussions with the Provost are ongoing.

B. Chinni moved that we approve the plan to add the NA & FNP tracks. The motion was seconded by S. Rosenberg and unanimously approved.

3. T. Landers presented the results of a review of the graduate grading policies at thirteen NJ colleges and universities. Six schools award no credit for grades below C while five schools permit credit for C- grades and two schools provide credit for D grades. 12/13 programs also require a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in order to graduate.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the merits of awarding credit for C- grades without altering the 3.0 GPA requirement. K. Burke and J. Faber noted that accreditation requirements might trump College policy. S. Perry questioned whether a change would lower standards across programs. L. Chakrin suggested that widening the range might mitigate the grading creep that often surfaces in graduate programs. C. Romano supported the wider distribution and the increased flexibility, provided that the 3.0 cumulative GPA requirement remains intact.

The motion to permit the awarding of credit for C- grades was seconded by R. Russo and approved with one member in opposition. The change will be effective in the fall of 2015.

4. J. Furness informed the Council that the MSW accreditation body does not permit the awarding of credit for prior learning experience (GLEX). The Graduate Manual includes a detail GLEX discussion but needs to be amended to accommodate the unique requirements of each program, e.g., "Program specific language may differ. Please review individual program requirements."

With the growth of our graduate programs and the need to consistently present program exceptions, the Council proposed adding a Graduate Section to the College Catalogue. C. Romano offered to draft new language for the catalogue. He reminded the Council that anything in the catalogue is considered policy and must be approved by the Provost's Council.

5. B. Chinni requested an exception to the Independent Study Policy (IS), which limits students to 4 credits. Due to a unique field study opportunity, an Educational Leadership student enrolled in EDLD 608, ahead of EDLN 606, both six-credit courses. In order for the student to graduate on time, Chinni proposed that an independent study assignment substitute for EDLD 606, which is not taught during the summer.

After a brief discussion, the Council agreed to modify the IS language for program differences, allowing graduate programs to offer one course or up to six credits of independent study work towards graduation requirements. The motion was put forth by S. Perry, seconded by S. Rosenberg, and unanimously approved.

6. R. Russo announced that the second graduate networking event will take place on March 23rd from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Minutes submitted by Tim Landers