MINUTES  
Graduate Council  
November 20, 2014  

Present: Ex officio: M. Gallo (Chair)  
Voting Members: G. Anagnostopoulos, D. Carroll, P. Cosentino, J. Dshalalow,  
H. Edwards (for J. Strother), K. Hamed, P. Jennings, M. Kaya,  
A. Knight, J. Martinez-Diaz, G. Maul, E. Perlman, S. Rice,  
T. Richardson, Y. Sharaf-Eldeen, W. Shoaff, L. Steelman, A. Vamosi,  
B. Webster  

Guests: M. Baloga, H. Miller, C. Norris, C. Young  

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.  

1) MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2014 GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING  

Approved  

The minutes of the October 16, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Dr. Maul  
and a second by Dr. Sharaf-Eldeen with a vote of 17 in favor, including one abstention.  

2) DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Dr. Rosemary Layne  

Dr. Layne advised Council members of two follow-up items from the October meeting  
of Graduate Council.  
First, she reminded Council members of the Florida Tech curriculum approval process.  
Once Graduate Council approves a new program, the materials are reviewed by the Vice  
President for Academic Affairs and the Executive Vice President. Last month Graduate  
Council approved a requested name change to MS degree in Educational Technology. At this  
time, Dr. Koksal has the name change under consideration. Given the discussion and vote (4  
in favor, 10 abstentions), there might be a need for some curriculum changes.  
Second, at the October Graduate Council meeting, Dr. Layne distributed a Status  
Report on Graduate Students Taking Undergraduate Courses for Graduate Credit, which  
included a spreadsheet. At that time, Dr. Layne expressed concern that of the 70  
undergraduate courses on the spreadsheet, only 38 permission forms had been submitted to  
the Office of Graduate Programs. Dr. Layne thanked Council members who followed-up with  
their academic units to address the students in question. She directed attention to an updated  
spreadsheet and reported that nearly everyone has been resolved; however, there are still some  
outstanding concerns especially in one department in the College of Engineering. She stressed  
that at this late date in the term, the absence of this form presents a serious concern for these  
students in meeting course requirements for graduation.
3) COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS REPORT

Dr. Layne drew attention to the minutes of the Committee on Standards meeting held on November 13. She noted that the Committee on Standards is comprised of one representative from each college and that this committee engages in preliminary discussions to flush out policy related requests on the Graduate Council agenda. This meeting resulted in two recommendations from Committee on Standards, which will be presented at today’s Graduate Council meeting.

4) ADDING A NEW COURSE TO THE CURRICULUM – MAE 5491 Computational Materials Science and Engineering

Unanimously Approved

Request is made by the Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering to approve proposed new course MAE 5491 Computational Materials Science and Engineering. Dr. Gallo noted on the form, the “Term to be Added” was changed from Spring 2015 to Fall 2016 to be compliant with our new curricular change process.

On a motion by Dr. Sharaf-Eldeen and a second by Dr. Cosentino, the request made by the Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering to approve proposed new course MAE 5491 Computational Materials Science and Engineering was unanimously approved.

5) CHANGING CREDITS IN A COURSE – BIO 5040 Biology of Marine Mammals

Unanimously Approved

Request is made by the Department of Biological Sciences to change from 4 to 3 credits for course BIO 5040 Biology of Marine Mammals.

Dr. Gallo stated that because this course was being re-introduced as a 3-hour course, corresponding documents, including the appropriate form and a preliminary syllabus, were warranted. He noted several changes: (1) The “To be Included” entry on the form was changed to the 2016/2017 catalog and the “Effective in the Banner System” entry was changed to Fall 2016 to be compliant with our new curricular change process. (2) The “No” box was checked to reflect that there are no changes to course restrictions. (3) The sample syllabus on page 12 should reflect Fall 2016, although the course may be offered as a 4-credit course in Spring 2015 or as a 3-credit Special Topics course in Spring 2015.

Concerns were raised in discrepancies between the current syllabus and the previous syllabus (different course numbers and titles). This led some fellow Council members to think this request is more akin to requesting a new course rather than a change in course credits. Other concerns included the justification for the change in course credits from 4 to 3.

Dr. Carroll said that this course was inactive for some time due to the previous instructor retiring from the university. The Department of Biological Sciences has since hired
a new faculty member who has expressed interest in teaching the course. He stated that the old and new syllabus were attached to support the rationale for changing the course credits.

On a motion by Dr. Carroll and a second by Dr. Maul, the request made by the Department of Biological Sciences to change from 4 to 3 credits for course BIO 5040 Biology of Marine Mammals was unanimously approved.

6) **CHANGING RESTRICTIONS IN A COURSE – PSY 6570 Clinical Applications in Behavioral Healthcare**

**Unanimously Approved**

Request is made by the School of Psychology to add a prerequisite for course PSY 6570 Clinical Applications in Behavioral Healthcare.

On a motion by Dr. Maul and a second by Dr. Vamosi, the request made by the School of Psychology to add a prerequisite for course PSY 6570 Clinical Applications in Behavioral Healthcare was unanimously approved.

7) **CHANGING RESTRICTIONS IN A COURSE – BEH 6301 Applications of Behavior Analysis to College Instruction**

**Not Approved**

Request is made by the School of Behavior Analysis to change the grading status from S/U to A-F for course BEH 6301 Applications of Behavior Analysis to College Instruction.

Dr. Gallo stated that the course was initially “built” based on an S/U grading scheme. However, the submitted Spring 2013 syllabus reflected an A–F grading scheme even though grades of A–F could not be assigned. He also pointed out that by definition per GP 2.2.2, the requested change in grading scheme also changes the course from “nonformal” to “formal.” On the form, the “To be Included” entry was changed to the 2016/2017 catalog and the “Effective in the Banner System” entry was changed to Fall 2016 to be compliant with our new curricular change process.

Dr. Martinez-Diaz explained that the original intention was to offer the course on a trial basis to see if it could become a part of the ABA program. It was originally offered under an S/U (informal) grading scheme. Since then, there has been amazing growth in the field and the course has become part of the regular program; however, the grading scheme never got changed to A–F. Dr. Martinez-Diaz would like to make it a formal course in the PhD program. The course covers basics of instructional design and college instruction based on learning principles and is targeted to students in the PhD program or Masters students who want to teach at the college or university level.

Concerns were raised about the rigor of the course material. Dr. Martinez-Diaz said that he would be glad to work with the course instructor to address those concerns.
On a motion by Dr. Jennings and a second by Dr. Shoaff, the request made by the School of Behavior Analysis to change the grading status from S/U to A-F for course BEH 6301 *Applications of Behavior Analysis to College Instruction* was not approved with a vote of four in favor and eight opposed, including five abstentions.

8) **GRADUATE POLICY REVISIONS—Graduate Policy 2.6.4 Dissertation Preparation and Defense and Graduate Policy 1.6.3 Oral Examinations**

**Committee on Standards Recommendation Approved**

The Faculty Senate recommends that Graduate Council reassess Graduate Policy 2.6.4 *Dissertation Preparation and Defense* and Graduate Policy 1.6.3 *Oral Examinations*.

Dr. Gallo said that this request was reviewed and discussed by the Committee on Standards during its meeting last week. A copy of the minutes of this meeting were provided in a separate package for review. This agenda item had reached unanimous approval and created a recommendation by the Committee on Standards, which means this is presented to Council as a motion and second.

The Committee on Standard’s unanimous recommendation was to NOT change policy as requested by the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Jennings summarized the discussion at the Standards meeting. He noted that the Committee concurred that although the defense should be closed, this does not preclude other time outside of the two hours, such as the holding of a public seminar separately (or connective to) the announced defense. Dr. Layne clarified that (as stated in current policy) the “defense” is whatever time period is announced by the Office of Graduate Programs. She emphasized that this request impacts more than just one part of graduate policy. Dr. Perlman noted that for the Department of Physics & Space Sciences, it is not uncommon to have open sections of a defense and that department is not supportive of the current policy. Dr. Carroll suggested holding a seminar prior to the defense as is done in the Biology Department. It was noted that Dean Rassoul, College of Science, desired all parts of a defense to be closed. Dr. Kaya felt a closed defense protects property intellectual rights. Dr. Edwards expressed that open defenses are a learning experience, that it’s complicated but worth looking at. Concerns were also expressed that the published defense time creates confusion and missed opportunities to attend a defense and that not having an open defense hinders students from being prepared for their own exams. Dr. Jennings added that Committee on Standards concurred that it is best that graduate policy remains as is, giving colleges and departments latitude to define their own parameters. Dr. Gallo reminded Council members that if this motion fails, Committee on Standards may revisit this request.

The Committee on Standard’s unanimous recommendation to NOT change policy as requested by the Faculty Senate was approved with a vote of 10 in favor and seven opposed.

9) **GRADUATE POLICY REVISION—Graduate Policy 4.2 Graduate Council**
Committee on Standards Recommendation Approved

Request is made by Dr. Monica Baloga, Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness, to add additional wording to Graduate Policy 4.2 Graduate Council to further define important elements that must be included in each graduate program consistent with SACS-COC Comprehensive Standards 3.6.1 and 3.6.2.

The Committee on Standards unanimous recommendation was to revise the recommend wording proposed by Dr. Baloga to read as follows:

The Council has the authority to approve graduate curricula. As part of this authority Council reviews and approves corresponding coursework to ensure that such coursework is at a level of rigor beyond that of Baccalaureate programs. Concomitant to this approval is a review of course syllabi to ensure that curricula contain courses that include opportunities for students to review the literature within the targeted discipline and engage in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.

Dr. Jennings provided a recap of the Committee on Standards meeting. Graduate Council already has the authority to approve graduate curriculum and this action does not take away the authority or responsibility of the academic departments nor does it change what we are doing when we look at course syllabi as part of the curriculum review process. Dr. Baloga added that this request is for Graduate Council to look at existing material and is not asking for Graduate Council follow-up once the material is approved.

The Committee on Standards’ unanimous recommendation to revise the recommend wording proposed by Dr. Baloga was approved with a vote of 15 in favor and two opposed.

10) FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

Dr. Gallo provided an opportunity for Council members to engage in further discussion about the new procedures for curricular changes, which were presented as an informational item at last month’s meeting. No further discussion resulted.

11) ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Gallo announced that the next Graduate Council meeting is January 22, 2015 and the submission deadline for materials is January 8, 2015.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

Rosemary G. Layne, Ed.D.
Director of Graduate Programs