

**Graduate Council Minutes
Mississippi State University**

Number: 5

Date: January 17, 2003

Present: L. Barrow, P. Bonfanti, J. Boyle, R. Burrell, D. Hare, G. Dunaway, R. Harkess (for S. Byrd), C. Herring (for E. Milam), T. Hosie, W. Person, G. Rent, P. Ryan (for L. Reinschmiedt), T. Schultz, B. Spencer, C. Wang, M. Williams, D. Welch, D. Wise, D. Wolfe

Absent: S. Bullington, F. Coleman, J. Pote, R. Shivaji, C. Sides

1. Dr. John Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. in the Fourth Floor Faculty/Graduate Study Area in Mitchell Memorial Library. Dr. Boyle thanked Dean Coleman for providing refreshments for the Council.
2. Dr. Dwayne Wise made a motion to accept the minutes as presented for the January 17, 2003 meeting. Dr. Larry Barrow seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted.
3. There was no report from the University Committee on Courses and Curricula.
4. Dr. William Person presented the report from the Office of Graduate Studies, which included the following:
 - a. The Office of Graduate Studies will submit a grant proposal to the National Institutes of Health. It is a program that focuses on initiatives for minority student development with two components, one for a summer research program for undergraduate students in selected science areas (i.e., biological science, chemistry, molecular biology and biochemistry). Six research assistantship positions would also be funded, two from each area. There is a February 1 deadline for submission.
 - b. The Office of Graduate Studies will host a Graduate Coordinators Meeting, February 12, 2003, Simrall Auditorium, 3:00 p.m. Stephen Cottrell, from International Services Office, will make a short presentation pertaining to SEVIS. Susan Hall, from Mitchell Memorial Library, will share information concerning the electronic submission process for theses/dissertations.
 - c. There are approximately 300 (faculty, staff, and students) registered for the Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM) 2003 Winter

Scholars Symposium, January 23-25, 2003. All Graduate Council members are invited to attend.

- d. Recruitment Assistance Grants transfers will be forthcoming.
5. Dr. Michele Williams reported the following activities for the Graduate Student Association (GSA).
- a. The last GSA meeting was held on January 14, 2003. Attendance was better than at previous meetings.
 - b. GSA made two travel awards during Fall 2002 semester, each for \$100. This semester, travel award amounts have been increased to \$200 (maximum amount per student). A student must actively participate in a conference to be eligible.
 - c. A graduate research fair will be held on April 3, Colvard Union Ballroom. Graduate students will have an opportunity to present their research in either poster or presentation form. Awards will be given. Information about the fair will be distributed soon.
 - d. On March 1, GSA will participate in the Bulldog Benefit, a Saturday of Service, a community service project that will provide cleaning, painting, repair, etc. to senior citizens in Starkville. Service requests must be turned in by February 12.
 - e. MSU's SA, along with students from the other seven public institutions, will attend a legislative session during education appropriations.
 - f. The GSA Banquet is tentatively scheduled for April 16. Additional information will be forthcoming.
6. As an item of old business, the Council discussed the draft document on Academic Misconduct (developed by the Subcommittee for Review of Penalties for Academic Dishonesty by Graduate Students, comprised of Dr. Tom Hosie, Dr. Greg Dunaway, and Dr. Dwayne Wise). The draft document was distributed by Dr. Boyle at the November 15, 2003 Graduate Council meeting.

Dr. Hosie noted that the subcommittee followed the outline of the current policy. There is a need for more stringent sanctions involved with academic dishonesty by graduate students. This draft provides the Council a number of alternatives relative to sanctions.

The Council first discussed the definition of “academic misconduct,” as drafted by Dr. Wise. Consideration was given to such issues as cultural differences, usage of computer files, and “honest mistakes.” The Council viewed the definition as satisfactory.

Secondly, the Council discussed the “Sanctions” section of the draft. Dr. Hosie took the lead on the discussion of this section. With a first offense, as drafted, the assignment of “F and D grades” might result in unsatisfactory performance, causing the student to be terminated from graduate study based on not maintaining a “B” average.

Dr. Tor Schultz noted that sanctions should be stated on course syllabi.

Dr. Peter Ryan noted that academic misconduct is a severe action and that sanctions should be severe.

The process is laid out in a step-wise approach. After initial sanction, a form will go forward to a Graduate Academic Misconduct Review Committee. In the case of a second offense, the sanction becomes very stringent.

The first offense allows a student to be dismissed depending on the program. The program is responsible for setting guidelines except when specifically outlined by the academic misconduct document. The second offense will result in a grade of “F” in the course and the student will be suspended for one or more semesters and may be permanently dismissed.

The Council discussed the definition of “permanently dismissed.” Discussion also covered whether programmatic dishonesty is more severe than dishonesty in a course. The document must provide some latitude for unknown circumstances. The dean of the college (programmatic) would have to support permanent dismissal.

Dr. Dunaway noted that a Notification of Academic Misconduct form (Dr. Hosie distributed a draft form) would be placed in the student’s file in the Office of Graduate Studies. If a student were found guilty of academic misconduct, that information would be available if the student applies for another program. The Director of the Office of Graduate Studies would serve in a coordinating position when a student is found guilty of academic dishonesty within a course not in the student’s department.

The Council discussed the issue of what status a student, who has been found guilty of academic misconduct, would hold during the appeal process.

Each program must establish specified, academic dishonesty programmatic sanctions.

Dr. Boyle asked that the Council e-mail comments to the subcommittee.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.