2012-2013 Faculty Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs

Agenda

Thursday, October 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2012 at 3:00 PM
CRAIG Room 108

\textbf{Committee members in attendance:} Michael England (Math), Valerie Frazier, Secretary (English), Brooke Van Horn, Chair (Chemistry), and Robert Westerfelhaus (Communication)

\textbf{Ex-Officio:} Amy McCandless (Dean of the Graduate School), Godfrey Gibbison (Dean of the North Campus -- serving as designee until Director of Continuing Education is selected), Cathy Boyd (Registrar).

\textbf{Attending Meetings:} Julie Dahl (Student Records Data Manager), Lynne Ford (Associate Provost for Curriculum and Academic Administration and representative for Provost’s office), Dave Owens (Associate Dean of the Graduate School), Regina Semko (Assistant to the Dean), Penny Brunner (Interim Associate Vice President, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning)

\textbf{Guests:} Roger Daniels (Accountancy), Roxane M. DeLaurell (Chair, Accountancy and Legal Studies), and Martin Erbele (President, Graduate Student Association), Niki DeWeese Leiva (Director of Information & Recruitment, Graduate School)

I. \textit{Call to order.}

II. \textit{Review and approval of the minutes -- from meeting on September 6\textsuperscript{th}, 2012.}

Robert Westerfelhaus moved to approve the September minutes with two minor corrections from Regina Semko. The motion was seconded by Rohn England.

III. \textit{Graduate program proposals from Accountancy.}

A. \textit{Establishment of the International Track}

Roger Daniels, the Graduate Director of the Accountancy Program, discussed the proposed establishment of the International track primarily as an internal advising tool for faculty as they direct students in the program. The program tracks were put in place in 2007 (before Daniels's tenure as director), and without Faculty Senate approval of the descriptions, and now the question arises as to the appropriate path for approval of needed changes. There are currently three tracks in the program: financial reporting/auditing, taxation, and generalist. The addition of an international track would serve students well, facilitating their preparation for entering international accounting markets. The international track designation would also be a desirable line item for student curricula vitae or letters of recommendation.
B. Elimination of the Generalist Track

Roger Daniels next talked about the need to have the tracks in accountancy be aligned with current practices in the department. The generalist track no longer fully encompasses specific trends in the discipline. Emphasis on international law and nonprofit financial reporting are currently popular options in the program. Daniels discussed the need to eliminate the generalist track and retool the tracks to better market and position the program in the competitive field of graduate Accountancy programs.

C. Change in title and course description for ACCT 500

The proposed change pertains to ACCT 500, Financial Accounting Theory. Daniels informed the committee that there is a need to incorporate better verbiage to describe the course, not currently captured in official documents. Prior to the meeting, Daniels electronically distributed copies of the proposed changes.

D. Change in course description to ACCT

The broader issue of how to ensure that the proper channels are followed when making changes to the graduate Accountancy program descriptions was discussed. Cathy Boyd asked about the impact of the proposed program changes on student transcripts and pointed out discrepancies between descriptions in Banner/Degree Works and the College’s course catalog. It is essential that these documents match in order to stay in compliance with SACS and CHE requirements. Daniels mentioned that there are errors in the catalog’s Accounting program description that do not reflect the Senate approved version. He agreed to work with Cathy Boyd to ensure that the version that the Registrar’s Office is working with (the catalog version) matches what was approved by the Senate.

Brooke Van Horn revisited the question of proper protocol for making graduate program description wording changes, as the Senate generally deals with curricular changes. Is this the purview of the Graduate Committee? Rohn England pointed out that there are ambiguities in the definitions of the terms “concentrations” and “tracks”. Importantly, this murkiness might impact our ability to vote on future curricular issues.

Penny Brunner emphasized the need for transparency during the program description modification process. Amy McCandless also mentioned there is a need to distinguish between terms like “focus,” “track,” and “concentration,” which may be unclear to both students and external reviewers. Lynne Ford pointed out that there is a lot of gray area in terms of reviewing internal advising tools regarding program foci or tracks. Rohn England asked whether these types of documents need to be reviewed by the Graduate Committee. The general consensus was that if the information was not recorded on transcripts, the Graduate Committee did not need to review it.

Lynne Ford brought to our attention that there may be insufficient oversight as to what goes into the graduate catalog, and attention needs to be paid to the relative consistency of program descriptions, to provide the most accurate information.
possible to students and external reviewers from SACS or CHE. She emphasized that while there may not be a mandate for the Graduate Committee to give such oversight in this area, there is the potential for the committee to positively impact graduate education as a whole. The committee should have additional processes in place to prepare for the burgeoning growth in the Graduate School. There may be more programs in the near future with similar internal advising and program description issues as Accounting. We may want to follow the precedent set by Undergraduate Programs for formal curriculum oversight and governance. The Graduate Committee may decide to re-examine the scope of its duties and look to the Faculty Manual as a point of reference.

Rohn England returned to the Accounting program proposals before the committee. He asked whether Roger Daniels was requesting advice as to how to proceed with making changes in descriptions. Daniels indicated that he needed approval from the Associate Provost in order to proceed further, and he had been encouraged to come before the Graduate committee. Lynne pointed out that the language for the descriptions in the catalog can be determined by individual departments. Daniels agreed to add specific learning outcomes to his proposals and to work with Lynne and Penny to satisfy any additional concerns. The committee agreed to have the revised accounting proposal circulated and approved via email. Rohn moved that we approve agenda line items III. A and III. B after Roger Daniels had made the necessary adjustments. Valerie Frazier seconded the motion. Rohn England motioned and Robert Westerfelsa seconded the approval of item III.C. Robert motioned for approval for item III.D and Rohn seconded.

Niki DeWeese Leiva pointed out discrepancies in the catalog descriptions for ACCT 570 and ACCT 575 (regarding prerequisites and approvals) that needed to be corrected. It was moved by Brooke and seconded by Rohn to approve the changes.

Cathy Boyd emphasized that it is important that the Registrar and the college as a whole are kept in the loop and updated regarding changes in the accounting tracks. Penny reiterated this concern. Amy McCandless reminded the committee of the various stages in the graduate program curriculum approval process: Graduate Committee→Graduate Council→Faculty Senate→Registrar→Catalog.

The issue of whether the forms on the Graduate School website had been updated was raised. Amy informed the committee that over the last year, Brooke has worked assiduously to revise the forms, and Brooke will now work to make sure that the learning outcomes are properly included on the forms.

IV. Motion to add a graduate student member – see motion from e-mail.

A. To be sent to Graduate Council and then to By-laws committee – for their presentation to the Senate if approved.

Brooke introduced the proposal to add a graduate student member by mentioning the precedent set by other departments and committees on campus. She emphasized the importance of student enfranchisement. Martin Erbele, an MPA student and President of the Graduate Student Association, spoke in favor of the
inclusion of students into the process of graduate curriculum governance and reassured the committee of the commitment and engagement of graduate students. GSA has a committee which recommends graduate student representatives for campus committees, and it would be someone from this committee or the president of GSA who would serve on the Graduate Committee, if invited. Robert voiced his concerns that graduate students often have little experience in curricular governance and that their tenure in graduate programs would be too short for them to become fully invested in the process. Martin tried to allay this concern by reaffirming the students’ stake in graduate education decision making. Rohn raised the issue of whether adding another member to the committee would increase the probability of ties or deadlocks in committee voting. The question was asked as to whether the chair could vote and break ties, per Robert’s Rules. It was also discussed whether a graduate student should be a voting or nonvoting committee member. Many committees on campus and at colleges regionally allow for graduate student voting. After some discussion, it was decided that Graduate Committee members would informally poll their departments to assess opinions about including a voting or nonvoting graduate student on the Graduate Committee. Brooke will also send out an email to the Faculty listserserve for additional feedback on this issue.

IV. Follow up – Motion to add Provost and Director of Continuing Education.

A. Motion approved by Graduate Committee on January 26th, 2012 and approved by the Senate in April 2012, but has not yet been posted within an updated FAM (2012-2013) from By-laws committee – should be available shortly (not posted as of 10-1) – will update our committee when posted online.

Brooke updated the committee on the addition of the Provost and Director of Continuing Education to the committee. They will be added to the agenda and minutes as ex-officio members.

V. For the good of the order.

We were informed that some committee members had difficulties opening up emailed agenda documents, and it was suggested that these documents be disseminated in pdf or rich text format.

Rohn asked whether noncredit continuing education courses not formally connected to College of Charleston degree programs should be under the jurisdiction of the Graduate Committee. This issue will be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

VI. Adjournment.

*The next meeting will be held on Thursday November 1st, 2012 at 3:00 PM*