**Graduate Programs Council Meeting**

**Minutes**

**March 21, 2012**

Present: Jody Eberly, Jean Slobodzian, Mark Woodford, Todd McCrary, Stephanie Valentino, Nita Ball, Jessica Solano, Jacqueline Norris, Shri Rao

Excused: Marcia Blicharz, Cheryl Varghese, Susan Hydro

* Minutes from the meeting on February 15th were approved with some corrections
* GPC members discussed the draft of a memo to CAP on the graduate non enrollment policy. Nita Ball suggested that students should have the option to not register for a maximum of 3 consecutive semesters (including summer but not including the winter term). She stated that global students register only during the summer and this is typical for them. The revised non enrollment policy does state 3 consecutive semesters but it was suggested that the memo could clarify in parentheses (including summer but not including the winter term). Jody Eberly suggested that the data from Deb Thompson’s graduate class should also be added in the memo.
* Shri Rao shared the data from the online governance survey that was administered to graduate students. The committee members noted that the data from 31 students in all indicated that a majority of the students felt that there is a need for graduate students to be involved in college governance. 72% of the respondents indicated that there is a need for graduate student association. 65% of students indicated that they were very likely or likely to participate in a GSA. 79% indicated that a virtual community would best facilitate their participation and 58% felt that an on-campus graduate student association would best facilitate participation. A discussion ensued on the data. Some of the key themes in the discussion were as follows:
* A virtual community on campus might be beneficial since many of the students commute to campus.
* Jean Slobodzian mentioned that the virtual community could provide one forum of participation but students are also seeing the value of an on campus presence. Some GPC members felt that the while the virtual community provided a means to get the input of graduate students on an existing policy or policy in formulation, an on campus GSA provided them with a means to actively participate. A virtual community could serve as a vehicle to inform students whereas an on campus graduate student association would provide student an opportunity to be involved and heard. Representatives of the graduate student association can then inform the virtual community and serve as a liaison between the campus/campus happenings and the virtual community. Committee members felt that we need a graduate student association that has a virtual as well as a physical presence.
* Some members wondered if there would be adequate participation in a campus graduate student association. Shri Rao stated that it would probably be challenging initially but it might get a little easier once the GSA gains recognition. Jean mentioned that in any committee people will be initially reluctant. However, once they see they have a voice, they will realize its value.
* Nita Ball raised the question of the adequacy of the current sample. She wondered if it is wise to begin making recommendations based on such a small sample. There are about 800 graduate students on campus. Only 31 responded. She suggested that we get more data. Jean stated that one reason for the low response might be that students get several emails and might have overlooked the survey. Shri Rao suggested that perhaps we could administer this survey directly in our graduate classes. Mark, Jackie, and Shri volunteered to administer it in their classes. Stephanie volunteered to distribute it in her graduate classes. It was also suggested that Shri could send the survey to Leslie Rice for the input from the graduate students in the Nursing school.

The meeting concluded with the members deciding that we would collect more data and reexamine it in our next meeting.

Shri Rao made the announcement that Graduate Studies will be hosting events for Graduate Student Appreciation week and asked graduate coordinators to disseminate this information to their students.

Submitted respectfully,

Shri Rao