

**Minutes
Graduate Council
February 14, 2008**

Members Present: Hinsdale Bernard, Nicholas Boer, Roger Briley, Tom Buggiey, Joe Dumas, David Edwards, John Freeman, Gale Iles, Marc Loizeaux for Boris Belinskiy, Cathie Smith, Chris Smith, Joyce Smith

Members Absent: Neslihan Alp, Linda Fletcher, Kristi Gibbs, Pamela Guess, Michael Long, Jonathan McNair, Brian O'Leary, Vicki Petzko, Mark Schorr, Kim Turner

Ex-officio Members Present: Deborah Arfken, Stephanie Bellar, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Theresa Liedtka, Craig Reddock

Guests Present: Linda Orth, Chris Tanis

Summary of Actions

- Approved the use of S/NC grading for PHYT 783 and 791 courses, 11-0-0
- Approved a special exception from Challenge by Special Examination for DPT, 11-0-0.
- Approved on first reading a motion to raise the cumulative GPA for Graduate School admission to 2.75, 10-0-1

Opening of the Meeting and Approval of the Minutes:

Joe Dumas, serving as chair in Vicki Petzko's absence, opening the meeting at 3:20 p.m... David Edwards moved and Joyce Smith seconded a motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2008. The following items needed corrections: the spelling of Ahmed Eltom; placing Ahmed Eltom in the guest classification, and changing the adjournment time to 4:56 p.m. The minutes were approved unanimously.

One change to the February 14, 2008, agenda was made: A discussion of grading for two Physical Therapy courses was added.

Presentation of the New Graduate School Web Site:

Working together, Chris Tanis from University Relations and Yvonne Kilpatrick and Jan Uhles from the Graduate School have revised the Graduate School Web site to reflect a great emphasis on information for prospective students. Graduate Council members suggested that the page on research be made more complete with information from each of the programs and links to departments and colleges.

The new Web site will be uploaded for use on Monday, February 18, 2008.

Grading for PHYT 783 and 791 in the tDPT Concentration:

Because of the ambiguity about the grading for PHYT 783 (Focused Advanced Clinical Practice) and 791 (Special Topics in Physical Therapy) and because of the intent to use credit by challenge examination, this topic was added to the agenda. When the concentration in Transitional Doctoral Physical Therapy was reviewed in spring 2007, there was apparently no discussion of the type of grading to be used in the two courses. The assumption on the part of Graduate Council was that each of the courses would receive regular ABC-type grading, but the intent of the PT faculty making the proposal (as recalled by Cathie Smith) was that the courses would use satisfactory/no credit grading. The minutes of Graduate Council do not mention any discussion of grading. In late fall 2007, the faculty of the Physical Therapy department requested that the courses be graded with S/NC. Compounding the problem was the intent that the provision of challenge by special examination would be used to provide credit for the two courses, and that policy specifies a grade of A, B, or C.

David Edwards moved and Nick Boer seconded a motion to acknowledge the intent, which was not properly documented at the time of the tDPT proposal, and approve S/NC grading for PHYT 783 and 791 and approve the addition of appropriate language to the 2008 Graduate Catalog. The motion passed, 11-0-0.

In discussing the credit by special examination policy (p. 20, Graduate Catalog), Linda Orth said that there can't be two systems for grading these courses.

Tom Buggey moved and Joyce Smith seconded a motion to provide Physical Therapy with an exception from the A, B, C, grading of the Credit by Special Examination policy with the understanding that S would be the equivalent of B or better. The motion passed, 11-0-0.

Graduate Council members asked to review the overall credit by special examination policy at its next meeting with a view to consideration of whether all credit by special examination should be given on a satisfactory/no credit basis.

Discussion of the Cumulative GPA for Admission to the Graduate School:

Because SACS requires a regular review of admission standards, Deborah Arfken asked Graduate Council to discuss the GPA used for first level admission, admission to the Graduate School. This GPA is not necessarily the same one used by the individual degree programs. The Office of Institutional Research provided two charts, showing the GPAs for first-time graduate students at UTC in fall 2007.

Discussion covered many topics. Yvonne Kilpatrick mentioned that raising the GPA would preclude Financial Aid for conditional students who might be more numerous than at present. Joe Dumas said that the alternative GPA of 3.0 in the senior year might help students qualify. Roger Briley said that raising the standards might enhance the perception of the Graduate School and thus improve enrollment. He also mentioned the effect on faculty that is caused by low admissions standards; he said that the "best and brightest take little effort to produce graduates. The others you have to work to death with." Gale Iles said that UTK's admission standard is already higher than UTC and will

probably go higher. Deborah Arfken said that any change in admission standards has to go through the full governance process, including the Board of Trustees; and if a raise occurred, it would have to be phased in. Saying that we need to look as good as we can, John Freeman made a motion to raise the cumulative GPA for admission to the Graduate School to 2.75; the motion was seconded by David Edwards and approved 10-0-1. It was the sense of the Graduate Council that this was a major item and would be brought back for a second reading at a future meeting when, it is hoped, more Graduate Council members would be in attendance. To this end, Deborah Arfken agreed to invite Michael Biderman to attend the next meeting and describe the effect on the I/O Psychology program when its admissions standards were raised in the 1990s. Mark Loizeaux encouraged Graduate Council members to discuss the topic with faculty in their respective departments before the second reading on February 28, 2008.

Due to a shortage of time, the next agenda item (Discussion of Transfer Credit Policy) was deferred until the next Graduate Council meeting. Other pending matters, including the timeframe for doctoral degrees and a discussion of graduate certificate programs (with a report from the subcommittee examining the viability of those programs) will also be placed on the agendas for the next meeting.

It was announced that program liaison Jessica Featherngill will be leaving the Graduate School office at the end of next week for a position in Georgia in order to be closer to her family. Dismayed Graduate Council members were reassured that Mark Fairchild was willing to work overtime to pick up the slack until a replacement for Jessica can be hired.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Elwell Arfken
Dean, the Graduate School