



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

University Graduate and Professional Council Executive Summary 2008

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The Council began the year with an unfinished Senate request to change the membership of the committee. This was tabled at the end of April, 2007 and then presented to the Senate on October 2, 2007. The UGPC asked for representation from all graduate programs, even if they are housed in the same college rather than one member per college. After being tabled again, the UGPC chair worked with Doug Haneline to re-draft the language. On November 6, 2007, the language was accepted and the membership of the Council now includes all graduate programs.

The next issue addressed was a financial aid change that affected all graduate programs. Nancy Wencil from the Financial Aid office explained that for graduate students, 5 credits of graduate level courses must be taken per semester to qualify for aid. After the 5 graduate credits are taken, students can take either more graduate or undergraduate classes. The subsidized loans rose this year to a cap of \$8500 and unsubsidized went from \$10,000 to \$12,000. Professional is now \$20,500.

The UGPC chair met with interim VP, Dr. Tom Oldfield to discuss what could be accomplished this year. Marketing, a change in the graduate project assistant policy, and deferment were selected as priorities. The UGPC first discussed the graduate project assistant policy. This year for the first time, DPS would not issue graduate assistants faculty/staff parking passes without them first purchasing a commuter pass. They did not recognize them as anything but student workers. This sparked discussion that the current graduate project assistant policy needs to be revised to reflect the needs of the graduate programs and should include the “perks” of the position. Meetings were held with Human Resources (Beth Krueger & Michelle Balliet) and Student Employment (John Randle). The policy was then reworked with the goal of it being removed from Human Resources and being placed back under Academic Affairs. The draft was presented to Dr. Oldfield and it is now at the President’s Council.

Information was gathered about deferment. In Grand Rapids, students pay a \$35 application fee and fill out an employee tuition form. A letter is obtained from the employer as to what benefits are available, deferring the employer paid amount. These are completed every semester. On the main campus, deferment is different where a student pays 50% up front and then the rest is divided into 2 payments. When having an employer pay, the policy is the 1st term the student pays and when they are reimbursed, they then apply it to the next term. Paul Quick stated that there are several logistic problems with Banner—such as late charges and holds when deferment is used. In the past, Big Rapids had a policy similar to GR, but when students would leave the place of business or not get the expected grade,

and the payments would stop. There are no figures, though, to how many of these have gone to collections. A meeting may be set up between the VP's office and GR, BR, and UGPC.

Although marketing was a priority, funding was tied up. Next year UGPC will work on a marketing plan to present. We look to next year to continue to develop a structure for graduate education at Ferris.

Other business conducted by the UGPC involved review and approval of several graduate course revisions and additions. These included: New Nursing Elective-NURS 616 Increasing Cultural Competence in the Nurse Leader; COEHS-CJ Creation of Crim 597-Special Studies to replace Crim 497 due to financial aid change. COB: Creation of Advanced Studies Certificate in Business Intelligence and Informatics.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Hogan, Ph.D.