RIT Graduate Council 2014-15 Final Report

Chair: Joseph Hornak (COS)
Members: Charlie Border (GCCIS + at large) for Marla Schweppе (CIAS + at large)
         Carol DeFilippo (NTID)
         Hector Flores (DGS)
         Chris Jackson (CIAS) for Christine Shank (CIAS)
         Deanna Jacobs (CAST + at large)
         Christoph Ficata (Provost’s Office)
         Stephanie Ludi (GCCIS)
         Kshitij Luthria (Grad Student Rep)
         John McCluskey (CLA)
         Jim Perkins (CHST)
         Sean Rommel (KGCOE + at large) for Jayanti Venkataraman (KGCOE + at large)
         Andreas Savakis (KGCOE)
         Thomas Trabold (GIS)
         Linda Underhill (CAST)
         Donald Wilson (SCB)

Academic Program Proposals Reviewed
New Programs
   M.S. in Computing and Information Science
      GC decided not to vote on the proposal and send it back to the college for revision.

   PhD Mathematical Modeling
      GC approved the proposal by a vote of Y10, N3, A1

   MS in Media Arts and Technology
      GC decided not to vote on the proposal and send it back to the college for revision.

   MS Healthcare Interpretation
      GC approved the proposal by a vote of Y16, N0, A0

Changes (> 33%)
   Master of Business Administration (MBA) Curriculum Change
      Changes were proposed which address ethics and social responsibility, add more technology
      focus to the program core, and add more design thinking to the program core.
      GC endorsed the request.

   Master of Architecture (M Arch) - Dennis Anderjko and Jules Chiavaroli 1/28/15
      Changes were proposed based on insight gained from four years of operating the program and
      the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB).
      GC endorsed the request.

Policy Proposals Reviewed
Policy Proposals Reviewed
   Modification of Policy D02.0 II B [added text is underlined]
      The basic entry requirements for graduate degree candidates include the completion of a
      baccalaureate degree and whatever other evidence of the applicant's potential to complete graduate
      studies may be required by the particular program. Rare exceptions to the baccalaureate
      requirement can be made in the case of candidates who have demonstrated unusual competence
      in their field of specialization. For these exceptions the recommendation of the department chairperson
      or director and the approval of the appropriate dean and Dean of Graduate Studies on behalf of
      Graduate Council are required. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall report such waivers and
outcomes to Graduate Council on an annual basis. The department chairperson or director shall keep the Dean of Graduate Studies informed on the academic standing of a student admitted with a waived baccalaureate requirement.

GC approved the proposal by a vote of Y13, N0, A1

Change the limits on satisfactory grades at the graduate level.

Proposed Wording: A satisfactory grade at the graduate level may only apply to seminar, cooperative work experience, and internship courses where programs have determined that a traditional alpha system letter grade is inappropriate.....No more than 15% of a program’s degree credits may be “S” graded courses. The college’s Curriculum Committee must approve the use of an “S” grade in a course.

GC approved the proposal by a vote of Y13, N0, A0

**Petitions Heard**

**Baccalaureate Degree Requirement for EMBA Applicant**

Graduate Council waived the baccalaureate degree requirement for one Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) applicant.

GC approved the request by a vote of Y10, N0, A0

**Baccalaureate Degree Requirement for CMS Student**

Graduate Council waived the baccalaureate degree requirement for one Center for Multidisciplinary Studies (CMS) student.

GC approved the request by a vote of Y14, N0, A1

**7-Year Rule Appeal**

One student petitioned to overturn his denial of an extension to the 7-Year rule.

A GC subcommittee did not grant an extension.

**Waiver of the Transfer Credit Limit for students in the Bridges to PhD Program.**

Graduate Council granted Dean of Graduate Studies the authority to waive the 20% limit and transfer in up to 30% of the graduate credit from the University of Rochester.

GC approved the request by a vote of Y14, N0, A0

**Procedural Discussions**

**Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Council Members**

This discussion addressed the question, do Graduate Council members act as representatives of their academic units or individuals? Council members are representatives of their academic units and as such bring proposals and opinions from their college to the council. Council members bring the perspective of a college to any discussion, but vote their conscience based on what is best for the institute after considering the perspectives of the council members from the other colleges.

**Petitions from Academic Units, Faculty Groups, and Individuals**

Any member of the RIT community can petition Graduate Council for a decision on a topic. To expedite the process, Graduate Council requests all petitions be in writing and signed by the petitioners. The latter request is to help determine the level of support for the petition.

**Subcommittee Activities**

**Graduate Conflict Resolution**

A subcommittee worked on guidelines for graduate conflict resolution. The guidelines were shared with several stakeholders across campus. Discussions will continue.

**TA Teaching Workshops**
CAST offered a teaching assistant (TA) teaching workshop over the Intersession. It was well attended and received. CAST was encouraged to continue the workshop and the Provost was encouraged to continue to support it.

Thesis/Dissertation Quality
Work continued on establishing requirements for thesis quality. Concerns exist about requiring a thesis format and the loss of program and advisor flexibility. Discussions also focused on the policy for thesis/dissertation archiving. An attempt was made to strengthen the language but stalled due to issues over enforcement of the process. It is becoming clear that what is needed is either a culture change and the part of the program directors regarding this topic or resources to establish a quality control checker. The group will continue to work on this topic and initiate a discussion of the primary archival format for a thesis/dissertation.

MS on Way to PhD
One PhD graduate program received a request from an international student to receive an MS degree after completion of its requirements. It was stated that a MS degree is necessary for obtaining a teaching position, regardless of the higher degree. All the PhD program directors were queried and concerns and interest in awarding a MS on the way to a PhD assessed. Concerns centered on some students leaving after a MS and using the practice as a way to receive a free MS degree. Most program directors were in favor if it was an option and not a requirement. Graduate Council will continue to examine the requirements for such a process.

Expand Glossary of Governance Policy
A group was tasked with looking into creating a searchable index to the online RIT Policy Manual. This task was deemed unnecessary due to the recent implementation of such an index to the manual.

Guidelines for Graduate Program Proposals
Due to the large number of program proposals received by grad council which are lacking in key content, the guidelines will be revised to include examples of good proposals. No proposal will be included until it has also been approved by NY State.

Graduate Scheduling
Concerns were raised about the adequacy of the current scheduling system for graduate education. Concerns included class time length, meeting frequency, and the use of reading day. It was learned that the Registrar is working on some changes and we should examine these changes before proceeding.

Periodic Evaluation of Graduate Programs
This charge was removed due to efforts are currently underway to establish a procedure to review all programs. It was felt that Graduate Council should be kept in the loop on these activities as it is their responsibility to oversee the quality of graduate education.

Miscellaneous
No significant advances were made regarding Graduate Residency, Graduate Assistant Definitions, Graduate Advisor Terminology, and Establishing a web portal for communicating with program directors.

Additional details on all of the above items can be found in the minutes of Graduate Council meetings located on the Dean of Graduate Studies web page.

Suggested Charges for 2015-16
Grad Ed in the Strategic Plan
Articulate a vision and recommendations for how to implement the graduate education goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

Guidelines for Graduate Program Proposals
Establish a set of guidelines for submission of graduate degree and certificate proposals which maximizes the number of good proposals and minimizes the number of proposals which make it to Grad Council.

Graduate Enrollment Estimates
Enrollment estimates from GES are always very positive. Do we always pick good programs to propose or are there other factors which skew the estimates. We would like to look into the enrollment projection process.

Graduate Minor Policy
Establish guidelines for Graduate Minors.

Financial Viability of Graduate Programs
Examine ways of providing the Provost input on the cost and long term viability of new graduate programs.

MS on the way to a PhD
Come to a conclusion on whether RIT should make this more readily available and if so, streamline the process.

Graduate Residency Requirement
Study the need for PhD students to be physically present on campus for a certain number of semesters and provide a recommendation if this requirement should be changed.

Graduate Thesis/Dissertation Issues
Work on issues related to quality, guidelines, standards, paperless archiving, timing, and certification after submission.