

**GRADUATE POLICY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 6, 2006**

**The following members were present:** Doris Abood, Human Sciences; George Bates, Chair, Biology; Seth Beckman, Music; Bettye Ann Case, Mathematics; Peter Easton, Education; Flip Froelich, Oceanography; David Johnson, Humanities/English; Leonard LaPointe, Communication; Susan Lynn, Education; Nancy Marcus, Dean of Graduate Studies; Rebecca Miles, Social Sciences; Colleen Muscha, Theatre; John Reynolds, Social Sciences; Mike Reisig, Criminology and Criminal Justice; Rodney Roberts, Engineering; Anne Rowe, Dean of the Faculties; Darcy Siebert, Social Work; Lee Stepina, Business; Linda Sullivan, Nursing; Frank Tomasulo, Film.

**The following members were absent. Alternates are listed in parenthesis:** Amine Ghanem, Graduate Student Representative; Eliza Dresang, Information; Kathleen Erndl, Religion; David Humphrey, Business; Dan Markel, Law; Randy Rill, Medicine; Sheri Webber, Graduate Student Representative.

**Also Present:** Lisa Beverly, Graduate Studies; Judith Devine, Graduate Studies; Jayne Standley, Music; Roy Ziegler, University Libraries.

The meeting was called to order at 3:35 p.m. by Dr. George Bates, who informed the committee that the focus of the meeting agenda is doctoral directive status (DDS) and the voting procedures for continuation of DDS in graduate program reviews. Dr. Bates explained that he thought it would be helpful to discuss the procedures, especially for the new members of the committee. He added that the GPC will reconsider its vote regarding continuation of DDS for the faculty in the Geography program. Based on rules set forth in *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, the guide for the Faculty Senate parliamentary procedure, the motion to sunset DDS for Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan passed, but there has been concern by some GPC members over the number of abstentions in the vote.

**Discussion of Quorums and Abstentions in GPC Voting** – Dr. Tomasulo expressed concern about the presence of a quorum at the previous meeting held on October 30. Dr. Bates explained that he discussed the procedures for re-voting and quorum conditions with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. He also asked Dr. Jayne Standley to attend the meeting as a past GPC chairperson and present member of the Steering Committee. According to Sturgis' rules, if one person who voted in favor of a motion requests a re-vote, then that motion can be voted on again. One GPC member who voted in favor of the motion has asked for a revote. Dr. Bates notified the committee that Dr. Mesev, chair of the Geography department, was not available to attend this meeting, so the re-vote will be conducted at the November 13 GPC meeting.

Dr. Standley explained that, for an official action the committee must have a quorum for voting, and a simple majority of the voting members of the committee constitutes a quorum. Under current Faculty Senate by-laws, twelve voting members in attendance constitutes a quorum. Dr. Bates reported that there was one, and possibly two, GPC meetings last year where a quorum was not present. Both meetings were held at uncommon times in locations other than 201 Westcott. Dr. Standley explained that a vote should be held at a later date if a quorum is not present.

Dr. Easton asked if the department chairs of a program under review are required to be present at the vote on recommendations. Dr. Bates explained that this concern had been raised by another committee member. Dr. Tomasulo responded that this was also a concern of his. He remarked that the presence of the department chair may be the reason why there were so many abstentions in the Geography Department DDS continuation vote.

Dr. Froelich asked if GPC meetings fall under the State of Florida Sunshine laws. Dean Rowe responded that she asked the General Council's Office and she was told that GPC meetings do fall under the Sunshine laws, but votes can be held by secret ballot. She explained that it is not recommended that votes be held by secret ballot.

Dr. Bates opened the floor to discussion.

Dr. Froelich explained that his experience in public bodies has been that abstentions are not allowed unless a conflict of interest is present. Dr. Bates responded that, under Sturgis' rules, abstentions are allowed. Dr. Standley explained that in a recent Steering Committee meeting, concern was expressed about allowing abstentions in the GPC voting. The Steering Committee has urged the GPC members to not abstain from a vote, as the GPC is the representative body of the faculty regarding graduate policy. Dr. Bates suggested that if a member does not feel he/she has enough information to vote, then that member should ask for further discussion. Dr. Bates added that he does not feel that he should be inflexible in the procedures and he would welcome further discussion.

Dean Marcus agreed that if there is a lack of information, then there should be further discussion. She suggested that more information on the criteria for DDS continuation should have been provided to the committee.

Dr. Easton explained that, as a member who abstained from voting, he had concerns over the criteria for the granting of DDS in the discipline and what is considered successful publication within the discipline. He wanted to know if there were extenuating circumstances involved regarding the faculty member's research activity. He felt that a lack of information on the criteria was not the only problem regarding the vote. He explained that he felt that the procedures of the review process are also of concern. Dr. Bates explained that the subcommittee chair was not present to discuss the subcommittee recommendation and the Geography department chairperson is fairly new to the position and was not prepared to defend or respond to the DDS continuation concerns of the committee members.

Dr. Bates asked if any committee member would like to make a formal motion regarding establishing a quorum. Dr. Johnson and Dr. Tomasulo spoke in favor of establishing a quorum of twelve.

A **motion** was made by Dr. Tomasulo and **seconded** by Dr. Stepina which reads:

A majority of the voting members of the Graduate Policy Committee shall constitute a quorum at any meeting.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

Professor Muscha asked if a passing vote would be a majority vote by the quorum. Dr. Bates responded affirmatively. Dean Marcus suggested that it would be more appropriate if a member does not agree with a motion that the member not vote in favor of the motion. Dr. Bates pointed

that out he encouraged members to vote no if they were not in favor, rather than abstaining, during the Geography DDS vote.

Dr. Bates explained that he would like to leave the issue of abstentions as it is now, with members not abstaining from a vote unless there is a conflict of interest.

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 13.