

Rhode Island College Graduate Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018  
Kelly Board Room, Roberts

Members Present: Caroline Caswell, Elizabeth Holtzman, Paul Jacques, Cherise Lee, Marie Lynch, Chris Marco (chair), Diane Martell, Leo Pinheiro, Magdalena Ostas, Leslie Schuster (non-voting), Marie Wilks

Guest: Alexis Gorton-Rogel (minutes taker)

I. Call to Order: 10:04 am

II. Motion to approve minutes from prior meeting (Jacques, Wilks).

Action: 8 approve; 1 abstention; 1 voting member had not arrived yet.

III. Report of Chair

- *Courses not taught in three years*: Still waiting for information from one of the schools.
- *Website updates*: No progress. A new meeting with Steven King is scheduled this afternoon.

IV. Report of Dean of Graduate Studies

V. Old Business

- *Revisit discussion of waiving GRE for RIC Graduates*: It was suggested that the policy in the manual be revised to read "Official report of scores on standardized admission tests: See individual programs for their test requirements" thus allowing programs to come forward with proposals and justifications. Dean Schuster was not available for comment, so the matter was tabled for her input.
- *Continued discussion of School of Graduate Studies*. The survey of program directors was completed and the results discussed. The open sessions with faculty and staff are being planned. Also, committee members will each contact a school to inquire about their administrative structures for graduate programs. All information collected will be incorporated into the recommendation provided to Provost Hamilton at the end of the semester.

VI. New business

- *Online learning proposal*: The Graduate Committee discussed the role of online learning for graduate programs. No specific proposals were made nor any votes taken. The consensus was that the Graduate Committee supports having individual graduate programs develop hybrid and/or fully online offerings (both courses and programs) according to their needs. As for the proposed partnership presented by President Sanchez to develop large-scale online programming at RIC, the Graduate Committee had many questions and could not provide a specific recommendation without knowing the answers to these questions:
  - Who would teach these courses? Would they be taught by large numbers of adjuncts many of whom may not reside in the state of RI?
  - To what extent would departments have control over the hiring of faculty to support a large-scale online initiative?
  - Would existing tenure-line faculty have the first option to teach in the online programs?

- How would RIC need to expand its staffing (e.g., advising, Records office, financial aid, disability services), and how would this expansion take away from existing hiring needs given the FTE cap?
  - Who will support the necessary technology, both the initial implementation and ongoing support for online infrastructure?
  - Would control of the curriculum remain in the hands of faculty? Who maintains intellectual property rights over online courses, the instructors or the outside partner?
  - Why is there a rush to implement this in only a few months? Can the process be slowed down to ensure it is an appropriate fit and, if so, that it is implemented appropriately?
  - If we agree to a trial period, can we decide not to pursue it further without any ramifications?
  - One of the key features of RIC is the mentoring attention from faculty. How do we ensure that we don't harm our brand by creating a larger-scale, more anonymous environment?
- *Graduate Student behavioral expectations:* It was suggested that the Grad Studies Policies and Procedures Manual provide information about the roles of the student as learners, advised by faculty and staff. Discussion included what the language might be and whether a student could be discontinued in their program for behavior that contradicts program standards. It was requested that committee members research their professional organization for discipline-specific ethical standards that might be applied to their programs. Conversation will be continued at a later time.

VIII. Adjournment: 11:56 pm