

**Deans Council Minutes**  
**August 6, 2012**  
**10:30 AM**  
**Allen 611**

Members Present: Jerry Gilbert (chair), Richard Blackbourn, Steven Brown, Timothy Chamblee, Frances Coleman, Lou D'Abramo, Greg Dunaway, Jerry Emison, Julia Hodges, George Hopper, Joan Lucas, Sharon Oswald, Mike Rackley, Sarah Rajala, Lynn Reinschmidt, Peter Ryan, Christopher Snyder, Jim West, Park Wynn.

Others Present: Judy Spencer, Steve Taylor, Ray Vaughn.

Minutes Taken By: Martha Thomas.

1. Upon a motion by Frances Coleman and second by Sarah Rajala, the minutes of the July 2, 2012, meeting were approved unanimously with no corrections.
2. Announcements:
  - a. Jerry Gilbert expressed appreciation to Julia Hodges for leading the academic administrator training sessions. There have been three sessions so far. Dr. Gilbert stated that it is administrators' responsibility to have a working knowledge of the policies and procedures of the university. Dr. Gilbert asked that questions about the interpretation or application of a policy or procedure be directed to the Office of the Provost.
  - b. Dr. Gilbert distributed a handout pertaining to Maroon Edition events. Dr. Gilbert encouraged members of the Deans Council to read the Maroon Edition book.
  - c. Dr. Gilbert stated that the university must prove equivalency of our online courses to face-to-face courses. Dr. Gilbert stated that quality control of distance courses is the responsibility of the department heads and deans. Dr. Gilbert discussed the importance of this equivalency in terms of accreditation and other factors.
    - i. Joan Lucas called attention to software that can be utilized in courses that would video-record the students during examinations. Ms. Lucas stated that these types of controls are permissible, but asked that these measures be considered prior to course registration.
    - ii. Jerry Emison discussed the importance of conveying these controls in the course syllabi.
    - iii. Dean Coleman stated that there are several workshops in the Library that would assist in distance education.
    - iv. Dr. Gilbert stated that the Center for Teaching & Learning is working closely with the Center for Distance Education to address issues related to training for distance education.
    - v. Steve Taylor stated that Tracy Craven is the individual who brought to MSU the software Ms. Lucas mentioned. Dr. Taylor suggested that any questions related to the software be sent to Ms. Craven.
  - d. Dr. Gilbert discussed the draft revisions to the promotion & tenure policy that were shared with the deans. The reactions to those revisions have been forwarded to the University Promotion & Tenure Committee.

- e. Dr. Gilbert announced that there would be a Department Heads' meeting Friday, August 17 at 3:00 PM, location to be determined. Dr. Gilbert stated that one topic to be discussed at this meeting, among others, is the draft revisions to the promotion & tenure policy.
3. Unregistered Sophomores for the Fall:
- a. Dr. Gilbert discussed a report that he distributed previously related to freshmen from the 2011-12 academic year who are not currently enrolled in classes for the fall 2012 semester. Dr. Gilbert explained that these individuals would be utilized to calculate the university's retention and graduation rates. Dr. Gilbert stated that the current retention rate for this group is approximately 81%.
  - b. Dr. Gilbert discussed the importance of making a proactive attempt to contact these students.
  - c. Dr. Gilbert stated that there is a national push to examine the various outcomes of universities, including retention and graduation.
  - d. There was discussion regarding the rising cost of tuition as compared with the integrity of the program. There was discussion of the movement to change the definition of retention and graduation as, for example, transfer students are not being counted in these metrics.
  - e. Dr. Gilbert asked that information in response to the e-mails to freshmen from the deans be shared with Drs. Gilbert and Chamblee as this will help to better explain why these students are not returning to MSU.
4. Academic Operating Policies (AOP):
- a. AOP XX.XX – Graduate Student Grievance Procedures:
    - i. Peter Ryan explained that this proposed policy has been in Associate Deans Council for a while as they worked to clarify language in the policy.
    - ii. Lou D'Abramo stated that the policy was precipitated by a number of graduate student grievances that came forward within the past few years. The first draft of the policy was written three years ago and incorporated into the Bulletin of the Graduate School.
    - iii. Dr. Rajala made a suggested revision to the AOP: that item III.B.5. be edited to state (in part): "... If either party cannot reasonably file a petition for appeal within this period of time, the individual may request an extension and provide the Provost with an estimated date that the petition will be submitted. ..."
    - iv. Dr. Rajala requested that the AOP be modified such that the academic dean is made aware of all grievances involving graduate students within his/her college, regardless of the location of the person alleged to cause the grievance.
    - v. Dr. Gilbert asked whether it would be appropriate for the Provost to utilize a panel to assist in an appeal of a graduate student. Ms. Lucas stated that it would be okay if it were specified in the AOP. She suggested that the appeal panel only have access to the facts that had been previously presented. Dr. Gilbert stated that he would like to have the option to utilize a panel, but not be required to do so.
    - vi. Jerry Emison pointed out that the AOP as written allows grievance appeals to occur only when new facts are available or procedures were not followed.

- vii. Dr. Hodges suggested that language in the AOP be written to be consistent with the undergraduate policy governing grievances or grade appeals.
  - viii. Steve Brown expressed concern that the policy as written may encourage all grievances to be appealed to the Provost.
  - ix. George Hopper expressed concern that the dean would not be aware of a grievance having been filed until the Dean of the Graduate School had sent a recommendation to him/her.
  - x. Dr. Emison expressed concern that the time-frame governing the filing and processing of a grievance might be insufficient or difficult to govern.
  - xi. Dr. D'Abramo made a suggested revision to the AOP: that the procedure be clearly specified when a grievance is filed against a dean.
  - xii. Dr. Emison expressed concern that the Dean of Students would be utilized to define whether an issue would be handled under this policy or another policy. Judy Spencer stated that, per Title IX, students need to be referred to the Dean of Students for advice concerning a grievance, whether it is related to academics or otherwise.
  - xiii. Dr. Gilbert stated that the Office of the Provost would work with Dr. D'Abramo and Office of General Counsel to re-draft the policy that would then be sent to the Associate Deans Council for reactions.
- b. AOP 13.09 – Credentials for Teaching:
- i. Dr. Ryan stated that this AOP was brought back before the Associate Deans Council with the proposed revisions that the Registrar's Office would "lock-down" allowing instructors of record changes on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of class and that there be clarified descriptors for credentials needed to be an instructor of record.
  - ii. Dr. Rajala expressed concern that directed individual study and special topics courses not be counted under the requirement that an instructor of record must possess "a master's degree with a concentration of at least 18 graduate semester hours in the same or related teaching discipline."
    - 1. A suggested revision to the AOP was editing Item 1.C. under "Policy/Procedure" to read: "a master's degree with a concentration of at least 18 graduate semester hours in the same or related teaching discipline. Thesis and dissertation research hours do not count toward the 18-hour requirement. With special permission/justification, directed individual studies, special topics courses, or similar study hours may be counted towards the 18-hour requirement."
  - iii. There was discussion regarding whether graduate students are permitted to teach other graduate students.
  - iv. A suggested revision to the AOP was editing the heading "Graduate Teaching Assistants as Instructors of Record" to "Graduate Assistants as Instructors of Record."

- v. A suggested revision to the AOP was editing the last sentence under the heading “Graduate Assistants as Instructors of Record” to read: “Graduate assistants cannot serve as instructors of record for graduate level courses except in the rare occasion in which they are certified through commensurate experiences as described below.”
  - vi. Dr. Gilbert stated that Drs. Chamblee, D’Abramo, and Ryan would make the edits to this AOP to bring back before the Deans Council at their next meeting.
5. Other Items:
- a. Dr. Ryan reminded the Deans Council that New Faculty Orientation would be held Tuesday, August 14. Dr. Ryan asked that RSVPs be sent to Ann Ray.
  - b. Park Wynn stated that he would e-mail the deans with information regarding The Drill which will be held Monday, August 20.
  - c. Dr. D’Abramo stated that there were between 6 and 8 international graduate teaching assistants who had not yet appeared for the workshop. He stated that he would contact each student’s respective dean.
  - d. Lynn Reinschmiedt stated that Amy Adkerson and Debbie Wade will be conducting a series of 8 master class scheduling workshops. Dr. Reinschmiedt stated that interested administrators contact Ms. Adkerson to sign up.
  - e. Ray Vaughn announced that the NSF Director for Graduate Research Fellowships Program would be on campus September 28 and that additional information will be sent in the coming weeks.
  - f. Dr. Reinschmiedt announced that at midnight on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of class, the instructor of record field would be “locked down” in BANNER. He stated that Information Technology Services is working on an eForm to request changes after the 10<sup>th</sup> day of class (which would require Dean and Provost approval).