

**Graduate Administrators' Council (GAC)**  
**Minutes for Thursday, September 10, 2015**  
**Koch Hall Board Room**  
**9:00 am to 10:30 am**

---

Attendees: Robert Wojtowicz, Chair, Gail Dickinson, Kiran Karande, Richardean Benjamin, Steve Myran, Bonnie Van Lunen, Humberto Portellez, Mary Swartz, Chris Osgood, Kevin

**Ruffalo Noel Levitz Presentation**

- Dr. Wojtowicz introduced Craig Engel from Ruffalo Noel Levitz. Mr. Engel talked about his background and experience and said that his company was hired to help Old Dominion University with Recruitment Planning. He asked Council to share what they felt were barriers to the enrollment process, defining the enrollment process as the whole admissions process from start to finish.
- Council identified the following barriers:
  - File completion, i.e., receipt of GRE scores.
  - Funding – competitors offer better funding, especially for out-of-state students
  - Changing marketplace. Non-profit schools are easier to enroll.
  - Other schools are more flexible with admission criteria.
  - Stipends are really low for full-time students.
  - Lack of advertising
  - Fragmented skill sets – more training needed.
  - We need more online marketing.
  - Website Migration
  - Dependency on website for recruiting. The site is too busy, font is too small, content is buried, and no graduate presence.
- Craig identified four ways to build an applicant pool.
  - Travel
  - Solicitation
  - Referral
  - Student initiated
- Students want human contact. We have an infrastructure problem.
- Dr. Wojtowicz added there is value in having an administrative faculty professional for graduate program inquiries.
- Craig advised that the prospective student process should be within Graduate Admissions. Graduate Admissions can absorb inquiries and refer prospective students to Graduate Program Directors.
- Graduate Admissions needs to know how to help departments.
- More barriers identified:
  - Recognition/Reputation – Not recognized as a research institution. We need to highlight the facilities we have for research.

- Recruitment/Retention is inefficient.
- What is within our control?
  - Flexibility of graduate programs
  - Administrative and technical processes – providing courses that are not 15 weeks long (what the competition is doing).
  - Creation of a “Macro Annual Graduate Marketing and Recruitment Plan,” with departmental micro plans. In addition, there needs to be an administrative plan to steward the macro plan. Implementation and breaking barriers is hard work.
- Components of the Plan:
  - SWOT Analysis
    - Bill Heffelfinger to create with all programs.
      - Who are taking classes?
      - When to they apply?
      - Germination of inquiry?
      - Communication plan needs to match.
      - Should be about 4 pages long with tables and data.
  - Goal Setting
    - 5 to 10 year history of enrollment (may be included with SWOT)
    - Goals should be quantifiable.
    - Three to four goals should be sufficient.
  - Barriers – Driving Forces to Exploit
    - Build interest, conversion, yield, process
    - 15 to 20 key strategies
  - Action Plan – Who, What, Where, When, Cost, & Did it Work?
- Creation of the plan is critical for sustainability.
- Council suggested there should be a mechanism to reward departments who bring additional resources in to the University. In addition to the recruitment/marketing plan, the creation of a financial model was recommended

### **Approval of Minutes for Thursday, May 7, 2015**

- Minutes approved as submitted.

### **Announcements**

- Graduate News Newsletter – Eric White will be the contact person for the Graduate News Newsletter. If you have any students or departmental initiatives that you would like to highlight in the newsletter, please let him know.
- Graduate Student Organization – The Office of Graduate Studies will be having an information session for the Graduate Student Organization. The session will be to help promote interest in the organization and restart it for the coming academic year.
- Graduate Student Health Insurance – Open enrollment ends on September 30, 2015. Students receiving fellowships of \$5000 or more should be reported to Jeanie Kline at [gradhealth@odu.edu](mailto:gradhealth@odu.edu) as soon as possible so invitations can be sent to the students so they can enroll for health care.
- Graduate School Open Forums – The first graduate school open forum was well attended. Feedback was positive, however, there were rumblings that there were not enough resources for the current structure. If that was the case, then why do it if it will be underfunded. The analogy of rearranging deck chairs was used.
- New Graduate Program Directors’ Orientation – Approximately 18 to 20 attendees, with an increase of 30 to 40 for lunch.

- Graduate Catalog – Copies of the 2015-2016 Graduate Catalog can be ordered from Colley Avenue Copies.
- CourseLeaf Training – This training is for the Course Inventory Management module in CourseLeaf. Users are encouraged to bring new course proposals or course changes to the training. CAT (Catalog) Module training will be offered later in the fall semester.
-