

**Graduate Council**  
**Unapproved Minutes**  
**1/31/18**  
**10:30 AM**  
**MCOB 101**



Members Present: Harold Pardue, Eric Loomis, Tom Johnsten, Alex Sharland, Susan Santoli, Stephanie Fitzpatrick, Lorene Flanders, Susan Gordon-Hickey, Robert Cloutier, Bret Webb, Treena Finney, Debra Chapman, Gayle Davidson-Shivers, Mark Taylor, Heather Hall (for Kathy Bydalek and Leigh Minchew), Payton Marinello, LaSonya Toney, Kelly Osterbind, DeAnna Cobb

Members Absent: Kathy Bydalek, David Forbes, Barry Dale, Thomas Rich, Sam Fisher, Leigh Minchew

Guests: Heather Nix, Norma Jean Tanner, Lynda Garvin

Agenda and other information were distributed before the meeting, handouts also available at meeting.

Dr. Pardue opened the meeting by requesting the members to introduce themselves. A quorum was verified.

1. **Minutes from previous meeting (10/23/17):** Minutes motioned, seconded, approved.
2. **Admissions Update (Heather Nix/Lynda Garvin):** The upcoming Summer and Fall programs are now approved in the WebAdmit. Members were reminded to keep their users up to date. Can program administrators be copied and carried over to new programs? This question would be put to Liaison at the next status meeting. Members also reminded to enter cumulative GPA in the Notes Section for applicants. South does not necessarily accept the GPA recorded on the transcripts of other institutions due to repeats and grade forgiveness. Payton Marinello is available for training in how to determine GPA. Removing the requirement of manually entering courses and grades is a load off the students, but puts this task on us. In case of an audit (internal, federal), we must follow our admission policies precisely. The question arose as to why the GPA must be so specific. Harold Pardue mentioned that the GPA requirement was an item to discuss in today's meeting and asked how we could accept other institution's GPA. Admissions would need to develop a new policy on acceptable GPA and Enrollment Services would need to be involved in the process. Eric Loomis motioned that transcript GPA from regionally and nationally accredited institutions would be accepted by South. International schools are different however, so they would not be covered. Motioned, seconded, approved to accept the stated GPA from accredited regional and national institutions. Harold Pardue to work with Enrollment Services on developing the new admission policy on GPA requirements. Programs reminded to check admission dates for consistency as there are discrepancies from the program webpages, Bulletin, and Admissions webpage. Heather Nix said they are working to pinpoint "hang-ups" for the applicants in the admission process. Letters of recommendation for international students is one. Usually the LORs are form letters that the applicants upload. WebAdmit is not recognizing this as completing that part of the application. Debra Chapman offered that the requirement can be removed from the program and that will avoid the incomplete status notification. Harold Pardue announced that graduate student enrollment is down overall by 3%. Comparing WebAdmit to Banner is challenging (Eric Loomis stated the metric changes make comparisons difficult). Harold Pardue followed by stating he will hire one of our international students to remind our international applicants to complete their application in the system.
3. **Annual Spring Research Forum (Harold Pardue):** Recommended picking 5 students to present posters as the main component of the program for the research forum, similar to UCUR, rather than having a keynote speaker. The Council agreed and Harold Pardue and DeAnna Cobb will coordinate on how to pick students to present.
4. **Strategic Planning Meeting Update (Harold Pardue):** Stated that the turnout and productivity was outstanding. Members from the Registrar's office and Admissions were thanked for participating. Self-development emerged

as the theme of this meeting, for both students and faculty. Robert Cloutier (moderator) agreed and said that the goals developed were attainable. Further, this was an easy meeting to moderate due to participation and willingness. Feedback is welcome. We need volunteers to serve on a subcommittee for the 5 year plan, which needs to be developed by the end of this Summer term. Harold Pardue urged council members to consider serving on this committee and to email him. The subcommittee would start around the end of February.

5. **Graduate School Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's program (Harold Pardue):** Double counting of credit hours has been approved and this program would be great to promote as a University initiative. This will not change any undergraduate programs; it will only transfer hours. It would be a valuable tool to keep our own honors and motivated undergraduate students by providing them a pathway to a graduate degree at decreased cost and time this program would be aimed at our highly motivated and academically qualified students as an incentive to stay for a graduate degree and it not intended for the average student. Concerns about ABET and ACHE accreditation were raised and discussed. More research is required. The concern that accelerated programs "cheapen" the value of the degree was expressed and discussed. Program participation needs to be voluntary. There was insufficient support to call a vote. Harold Pardue would work on a revised proposal based on feedback. Harold Pardue to work on revised proposal and move forward with pilot programs. Pilot programs can move forward without an official ABM program because all the forms and policies are in place to accelerate programs. Heather Nix remarked that international students would have another layer of requirements for participation and to keep that in mind.
6. **Teaching Graduate Faculty membership category (Harold Pardue):** We have 250-300 administrative appointments to the Graduate Faculty each academic year. Academic Affairs has moved to a 3 year appointment cycle for part-time faculty. A three-year review for graduate faculty appointment would align with the personnel appointment cycle. Eric Loomis commented on the last sentence in the proposal. Currently, department faculty do not review administrative appointments. DeAnna Cobb clarified that this only involves teaching administrative appointments and not thesis/dissertation committee member appointments. Moved, seconded, approved to adopt this category.
7. **Validation of expired coursework (Harold Pardue):** Students occasionally request coursework to count if they are running over the time limit by a semester (7 years for master's, 10 years for doctoral). This is a small number of students; however, this issue usually arises several times per year. Upon research, other institutions have a revalidation of course policy, example UAB. Eric Loomis asked how to accurately assess student competence? Testing? It needs to be a program decision and a form could be developed to approve. Signatures would satisfy SACS. Robert Cloutier offered that adult students do have many life demands that potentially interfere with timely program completion and this would add value for our students. Eric Loomis proposed an edit to the policy, from "The determination of validation should be based on a comparison of the expired course and the current course or the results of an examination or other appropriate assessment of the student's knowledge to "The determination of validation should be based on the results of an examination or other appropriate assessment of the student's knowledge by the program"
8. **GS Form 5 requirement (Harold Pardue):** This is the COMP committee form and should only be used for research students, not for coursework only. An entry in SOATEST in Banner is sufficient to verify the exam result for course only students. After some discussion about the purpose of various GS forms, Susan Gordon-Hickey proposed a subcommittee should review the GS forms (Robert Cloutier, Alex Sharland, Susan Gordon Hickey). Motioned, seconded, approved.
9. **New Business:** The GPA acceptance issue was discussed earlier in the meeting, and it was decided to accept the transcript GPA. Harold Pardue asked if we should have a required GPA for Graduate School admittance and do away with the provisional admission status? The problem is that various programs have had students apply from very academically rigorous and prestigious schools, with a GPA too low to accept. However, their GPA would be comparable to the average student here. Harold Pardue as members to discuss this proposal in their academic units and he would provide a formal proposal for the council at its next meeting.

Another new business item is a Lab Safety Requirement which will be forthcoming. Research students will be included. A form draft was enclosed with the meeting agenda materials. Compliance is driving this form. No action required at this time.

10. Meeting motioned, seconded, and approved to adjourn.