The meeting was called to order at 3:09 pm by Anna Sosa.

I. Welcome, Announcements and Brief Reports

   A. Approval of the Minutes of the November 28, 2012 meeting — Anna Sosa

   Minutes approved by all present, with one abstention.

   B. Graduate Student Government Report — Cassie Rivas

   Cassie Rivas reported on the upcoming GSG Travel Awards for May and December. She also mentioned the upcoming elections and will provide more information at the next meeting. Ms. Rivas asked the UGC members to encourage their students to run for GSG. When asked if students will receive information about the elections through email, she responded that students will receive an email directly from GSG about the upcoming elections.

   C. Dean’s Remarks — Ramona Mellott

   Dean Mellott welcomed the Committee back after the holiday break. She announced the upcoming deadline of February 14 for submitting the academic strategic plan for new degree plans. She encouraged members to begin the planning and discussion now, as a lot of planning is involved for new degree plans. New emphases are not required to be on the academic strategic plan.

II. Consent Items

   All items were approved by the members present.

   A. College of Health and Human Services

      1. NUR 677, “Research Methods for Advanced Practice Nurses,” Fall 2013 – Catalog Description, Prerequisites
2. NUR 700, “Introduction to Doctor of Nursing Practice: Designing Theory and Research,” Fall 2013 – Course Title, Catalog Description, Prerequisites
3. NUR 701, “Healthcare and Policy for Advanced Practice Nursing,” Fall 2013 – Catalog Description, Co-requisites, Prerequisites
4. NUR 702, “Healthcare Technology and Informatics for Advanced Practice Nursing,” Fall 2013 – Prerequisites
5. NUR 703, “Doctor of Nursing Practice Clinical Practice,” Fall 2013 – Co-requisites, Prerequisites
6. NUR 704, “Scholarly Inquiry Doctoral Project Research,” Fall 2013 – Catalog Description, Co-requisites, Pre-requisites, Units
7. NUR 705, “Leadership for Advanced Practice Nurses in Clinical Practice,” Fall 2013 – Catalog Description, Prerequisites
8. NUR 706, “Dissemination of Scholarly Inquiry Project for Advanced Practice Nursing in Clinical Practice,” Fall 2013 – Units
9. NUR 707, “Epidemiology for Advanced Practice Nursing,” Fall 2013 – Prerequisites

III. Action Items

A. College of Health and Human Services

1. Nursing Practice, DNP, Fall 2013 – Major Requirements-Course(s) Added, Major Requirements-Course(s)

Sally Doshier, Associate Dean of the School of Nursing, spoke about the new course and changes to the program, which reflect the change in sequencing and the addition of a new course to cover gaps in the program. These changes are also related to an upcoming accreditation in November 2013.

A motion was approved for the changes to the program.


A motion was approved for the new course.

B. College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

1. Positive Behavior Support: Graduate, Fall 2013 – Certificate Requirements-Course(s) Added, Certificate Requirements-Unit Change

Dan Davidson from the Institute of Human Development spoke about the new course and changes in the graduate certificate in Positive Behavior Support. The certificate was approved in 2006. At that time, most students pursuing the certificate were from different disciplines interested in knowledge. He noted that people are now taking the certificate to become licensed by BACB (Behavior Analyst Certification Board), and they are changing the certificate to include the BACB levels of conduct. The certificate change reflects an increase from 15 to 18 credits to include a standalone course in Ethics.

The certificate has seen a decrease in enrollment since UA and ASU created similar certificate programs. There are currently 90 students in the program, which is online, and 12 students graduated in 2012. The interest in the certificate remains high, especially with those working in psychology, school psychology, early intervention, and autism.

A motion was approved for the changes to the certificate.


A motion was approved for the new course.

IV. Informational Items
A. January 23, 2013, FAST TRACK Report

Item was reviewed with no comment by representatives.

V. Discussion/Action Items

A. Research Integrity – Ramona Mellott

Dean Mellott presented the Research Integrity report and proposal at the last UGC meeting. She asked all of the members to share the information with their departments and send any feedback to her. Dean Mellott asked the members for their feedback, which she will take back to the Research Integrity Committee for consideration. None of the members had any feedback, but Dean Mellott asked the members to email any feedback to her before the next Research Integrity Meeting in two weeks. Remarks from the last meeting will be shared with the committee.

There was a question regarding whether the proposed training will overlap with the CITI training. Dean Mellott answered that the CITI training is included as part of research integrity training and explained that the NSF and NIH requirements state that some level of training is needed and should include online and in-person trainings. When asked if students are required to have the training, Dean Mellott answered affirmatively. Students currently attend IRB training if they are working with human subjects, but Dean Mellott noted other types of research training, including collaboration, citations, and plagiarism, should probably be included in student training. She mentioned that some courses provide training in other areas, and the new research integrity grant would cover some of that training. Dean Mellott also noted that some universities require this training for all graduate students, but she feels that NAU is not quite ready for this.

Dean Mellott asked the members if this training should be a requirement for those students involved in research or who are receiving research funding. It was suggested that departments should create their own standards. Dean Mellott noted that the training must include face-to-face training and the ability of ITS to track the participation and completion of the training modules. The in-person training should be done at the departmental level, although there is no good way to determine what is happening or not happening in these trainings. Dean Mellott noted the importance of a tracking system to show that NAU is providing the training and meeting the requirements.

If the research integrity training will be a graduate requirement, the UGC will need to approve it. If it will only be a requirement for those students involved in grant-funded research, it will not require a. If the training is only covered in classes, there is no guarantee of what is covered.

B. GPA Policy Change – Evie Garcia

Dr. Garcia stated that the current policy was edited to remove the confusing wording of 2.5 versus 3.0, and if certain departments still want to consider students with GPAs lower than 3.0, they can do so on a case-by-case basis. This policy still reflects the same case-by-case process but no longer contains wording that implies a dual standard. Discussion included suggestions to remove “generally” and “the” in “or the equivalent” in the first sentence for clarification purposes and to add “3.0 or greater” or “at least a 3.0” so as not to confuse international students about the GPA requirement.

Dr. Garcia thinks that the information about departments that have higher standards is located in a different policy. It was suggested that the wording be consistent. Dr. Garcia also clarified that this policy is for all programs. Discussion included whether undergraduate transcripts, rather than master’s transcripts, will still be reviewed for students in doctoral programs with master’s degrees. Undergraduate transcripts are still required and reviewed due to grade inflation in graduate programs. Some departments do request exceptions and conditional acceptance for graduate students who do not have the GPA from their undergraduate studies but do have the grades from their previous graduate studies.

A motion was approved to accept the GPA Policy with the suggested changes.

C. Bylaws Revision of Consent Agenda Criteria – Evie Garcia

Dr. Garcia explained the revision to the bylaws (p.4) reflects the removal of items that have moved to the Fast Track agenda from the consent agenda. The revision will list items to be included on the consent agenda, including plan
A motion was approved to accept the Bylaws Revision of Consent Agenda Criteria.

D. Incomplete Grade Policy – Evie Garcia

Dr. Garcia explained that the left column of the policy is the original policy and the right column includes the proposed changes to the policy. Students must submit a written petition to the instructor if they wish to take an incomplete in the course. Students must also have a passing grade and complete most of the course work to be eligible for an incomplete. Dr. Garcia explained that this policy is for both undergraduate and graduate students. Rather than using exact percentages, the “majority of course work” requirement will be left to the professors.

Dr. Garcia made special note of the last sentence of the first paragraph, “Instructors cannot assign an Incomplete grade unless agreed upon before the course ends.” There have been issues with students in courses that do not match semesters, and professors do need leeway to assign incompletes. Students also need to be notified that it is likely that they receive an incomplete in those classes. To receive an incomplete grade, a contract between the student and faculty is needed. Without a contract, there is no way to enforce policy.

Dr. Garcia asked the members to consider these issues and take the information to their departments for feedback. She is especially interested in what departments think about a policy that will work for faculty and students.

When asked why there was one policy for undergraduate and graduate students, Dr. Garcia noted that there has always been one policy for both undergraduate and graduate students. With the Incomplete Grade Policy, the changes go from the faculty member, through the department chair, and to the Registrar’s office. The Graduate College does not monitor the process.

There was discussion that some members thought contracts were already required for incomplete grades. Dr. Garcia responded that the contract requirement has never been included in the policy, and incomplete grade requirements vary among departments. The contract requirement was added to make expectations consistent.

There was a question regarding which department chair should sign the contract in interdisciplinary programs. Drs. Garcia and Mellott responded that the department responsible for the course should have the chair sign the contract. Dr. Garcia suggested that it might be useful to include this clarification in the policy.

Dr. Garcia also clarified that graduate students have one calendar year to change the incomplete to an actual grade before it becomes a permanent incomplete. Students can request more than one year to complete the incomplete, but this requires instructor permission and chair approval. Dr. Garcia noted that this portion of the policy is up for discussion.

A member asked if someone could interpret “one calendar year” to mean by December of that year. One member suggested using “academic year” versus “calendar year,” while another member suggested using “12 months.” Dr. Mellott did note that this has not been an issue for the thirty years the policy has been in existence and that the contract does specify due dates, so this should clarify the issue.

During discussion, it was noted that an incomplete grade cannot be given in a graded research course. Dr. Mellott responded that if the student completed the expected research for that semester, then the student should pass, rather than receive an incomplete grade. It was suggested that incompletes probably should not be given for graded research courses.

Dr. Garcia asked the members to take the policy back to their departments and to email her with any comments or concerns. The policy will be voted on at the next meeting.

E. Dismissal Policy – Evie Garcia

Dr. Mellott opened the discussion of the Dismissal Policy by noting that there is not currently a policy for dismissing graduate students for academic reasons. For legal reasons, one policy is needed that does not include different departmental exceptions. With different exceptions, students in one department can ask why they receive different treatment than another department. A level of compromise is needed between the different departments to create one policy for all graduate students.
She also noted the changes to the policy from the previous version. The current version addresses the different areas of dismissal, including low grades or not meeting research requirements. Students may also be dismissed for non-grade related issues, including professional ethics violations or the failure of a student to pass comprehensive exams. One step was removed because the word “probation” cannot be used because the Registrar uses the designation “probation” on transcripts when graduate students drop below a 3.0 GPA. The phrase “academic disqualification” will be used in place of “probation” in the policy.

Dr. Garcia then opened the policy up for discussion.

There was a question regarding where ethical issues fall under academic disqualification. Dr. Mellott responded that ethical issues such as academic dishonesty follow a different process, unless the violation leads to dismissal for academic reasons. Defining “good academic standing” provides more leeway for the department to define progress. Issues that revolve around professional behavior, whether a professional ethical issue or not, also fall under good academic standing.

There was also a request to explain disqualification for non-degree graduate students. Dr. Garcia explained that students who are not seeking to earn a degree or who take non-degree courses are still monitored and subject to this policy.

The Committee then discussed the disqualification process. If a student only receives 6 credits of “C” grades, then the student does not go into the academic disqualification status. Once a student receives the third “C” grade, the student then enters the academic disqualification status. Previously, this decision was left to each department, and departments either moved to dismissal or negotiated with the student. Entering the disqualification status prompts a meeting with the student. Students also cannot graduate with three “C” grades, so one of the classes must be repeated. There was some concern that with the old policy, a student receiving three “C” grades would enter the dismissal status, but with the new policy, a student would need to receive four “C” grades before entering the dismissal status.

There was a question about whether the department should initiate action, rather than waiting for the notice from the Graduate College. Dr. Garcia explained that departments can review the same grade reports she reviews and place an advising hold before the Graduate College places the hold.

Another member asked if students still qualify for a GA with two “C” grades, especially if the student is guaranteed two years of funding. Dr. Mellott noted that GA contracts are only for one year. It was suggested that something about “remaining in good academic standing” should be added to the GA appointment letter to avoid challenges from students when funding is withdrawn due to low grades.

It was suggested that the policy should distinguish between credits toward the master’s degree or overall credits. The example of an Engineering graduate student taking a Spanish class and receiving a “C” grade was provided, and the member asked if this counted towards the two “C” grades. Dr. Garcia noted that it should include all courses a graduate student takes, whether or not the course is in the student’s area of study. Graduate students are expected to maintain a standard of “B” grades or better, regardless of what courses are taken. She gave the example of students taking courses outside their area of study to maintain their financial aid and simply getting F grades on courses not on the program of study. Placing a hold on a student prompts a discussion with the student’s advisor, who can help with a plan to successfully move forward toward the degree.

Dr. Mellott noted the need for clarification regarding when a student is put on notice to move towards dismissal – is it after the student receives two “C” letter grades or is it when the student receives three or four “C” letter grades? Putting a student on disqualification status after two “C” grades may be too soon but waiting for the third or fourth “C” grade may be too long. Dr. Garcia will check the wording in the policy. Placing a hold on a student with two “C” grades is penalizing the student because they are still in “good academic standing.” Dr. Garcia added that the wording of “good academic standing” may need revision. Discussion included the suggestion of placing the student on probation after two “C” grades, so the advisor has a conversation with the student before an additional “C” grade is earned. It was also suggested that Dr. Garcia include wording that the student must meet with the graduate coordinator or advisor within two weeks of receiving the letter to discuss options. Dr. Garcia reported that she could add this process to the letter she sends to all students who receive 2 “C” grades, with a copy to departments. There
were also suggestions of changing the policy from 6 hours to 5 hours of “C” grades or adding statuses of “provisional” or “pre-disqualification.”

Dr. Garcia added that if a student receives a “C” grade, retakes the class and gets a “B” grade, but then gets a “C” in a different class, this still counts as two “C” grades. She has not previously looked at GPA, as students can have two “C” grades or even F grades and still maintain a 3.0. If she begins to look at GPA, this could have hidden implications, especially in departments that have harder classes.

Members should take the policy back to their departments for discussion and input for February’s meeting, so that the policy can be voted on in March.

VI. Agenda Items for Next UGC Meeting
   A. Dismissal Policy
   B. Incomplete Grade Policy
   C. Research Integrity

UGC Chair-Elect, Anna Sosa, adjourned the meeting at 4:46 p.m.