

## GRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

The Graduate Academic Advisory Committee (GAAC) was extremely busy during the 2010-2011 academic year. Fourteen meetings were held between September of 2010 and May of 2011. These meetings were used to review new proposals for graduate courses and graduate programs. In addition, GAAC considered many policy issues related to graduate programs at UAF.

Voting members of GAAC were: Ken Abramowicz (Chair), Donie Bret-Harte, Lara Dehn, Regine Hock, Orion Lawler, Anupma Prakash, Sue Renes, Jen Schmidt, Amber Flora Thomas, and Xiong Zhang. Administrative representatives participating in the GAAC meetings on a regular basis were: Laura Bender (Graduate School), Larry Duffy (Graduate School), Libby Eddy (Office of Admissions), Jayne Harvie (Governance Office), and Karen Jensen (Rasmuson Library),

In response to concerns about ambiguity related to minimum grades needed for graduate degrees, GAAC passed a motion clarifying UAF's current grade policy stated in the UAF Catalog. The new policy clarifies that a "B" (3.0) is needed for each 400-level course and a "C" (2.0) is needed for each 600-level course (i.e., a "B-" in a 400-level course and a "C-" in a 600-level course do not count toward meeting graduate degree requirements). This motion did not revise existing policy, but merely clarified an issue to ensure that students understood the existing rules.

GAAC also passed a motion to amend the academic dismissal policy for graduate students (as stated in the UAF Catalog). This amendment combined two existing items that are defined to be "unsatisfactory performance" and added a paragraph delineating the consequences that may result if one is academically dismissed from a graduate program.

In response to concerns from various members of the UAF faculty, GAAC passed a resolution recommending the Office of International Programs (OIP), in consultation with national immigration legal counsel, review UAF's interpretation of the "completion date" for graduate programs used for international students, and revise the "completion date" definition to enable students to complete all program requirements before losing F-1 status.

While stacked courses are vital to many graduate programs at UAF, existing regulations are quite vague and provide little guidance to faculty creating stacked courses and to committees responsible for reviewing stacked courses. The issue of stacked courses arose many times during discussions at various GAAC meetings throughout the year. The discussions generally reflected a desire to ensure that stacked courses are truly two different courses taught at the same time. A primary concern was to ensure that stacked courses are sufficiently challenging for graduate students, yet do not overtax undergraduate students. After significant discussion at multiple GAAC meetings, a joint study of stacked courses was undertaken by a group of representatives from GAAC and the Curricular Affairs Committee. This study has not been completed and will continue into the 2011-2012 academic year.

The vast majority of time during GAAC meetings was devoted to the review of a multitude of proposals related to graduate courses and graduate programs. During the 2010-2011 academic year, GAAC approved 52 graduate proposals: 5 new trial courses, 20 new permanent courses, 17 course changes, and 10 program changes.