Proposed Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Graduate Education

The third subcommittee, focused on graduate education and research at the GNU, have spent several months reviewing current procedure and proposed future practices for graduate education at the Abu Dhabi and Shanghai portal campuses. Based on our detailed review of these procedures and practices, we have developed several recommendations that we here share with the larger committee. It is our conclusion that all of these recommendations are very important to the success of the GNU. It should be noted that several of these recommendations are policies that have been endorsed by other stakeholders at NYU, in some cases even by the President and Provost. The endorsement of some of the recommendations by other groups strengthens our conviction of their importance. We also note that many of these recommendations take the form of general principles – rather than specific criticisms or document-specific critiques. It is our hope that these general principles articulate core values of the NYU faculty – who we represent in formulating these recommendations – as it works to maximize the success of the growing portals and the continuity of the entire enterprise at NYU.

Guiding Principle 1:
While it is of the highest possible importance to insure that faculty recruiting and tenure at AD and SH be made at the highest possible standard, we recommend against entangling graduate teaching, faculty recruiting and tenure in policy statements or procedures. These are separate issues. They should continue to be decided on and governed separately.

Guiding Principle 2:
For any plan that involves graduate teaching by adjunct, affiliate or otherwise affiliated faculty, departments in NY (and elsewhere) must indefinitely retain the right to terminate those affiliations. It is a core academic value that departments grant indefinite licenses to faculty for mentoring students only when they grant those individuals tenure within their department. This has largely been the way affiliations between units (for the purposes of graduate teaching) have been previously managed throughout the NYU network. That approach has proven powerful and successful. We encourage all stakeholders to consider that approach as new mechanisms for graduate education are developed.

Guiding Principle 3:
There has been significant uncertainty about whether, or to what extent, graduate programs at the portals will someday become independent of (although remaining heavily interconnected with) graduate programs in NY. While there is no doubt that the graduate programs at all portals will benefit from permanent and rich interconnections, we believe that the university community should continue to discuss the possibility that some of the graduate programs at the portals may become autonomous at some future time. Just as the graduate programs at the School of Medicine and Arts and Sciences are interconnected but autonomous, we believe that leadership should continue to explore that well tested NYU model at the
portals. One big advantage that we see of adopting this strategic posture is that it encourages leadership in AD and SH to build and grow graduate programs in a way that suits the specific needs of their portals while still serving the needs of the GNU.

Guiding Principle 4:
Existing and future regulations with regard to graduate teaching should not restrict the freedom of a department or group at a portal to affiliate with units elsewhere in the university. Many portal units may choose to affiliate strongly with a single department in New York, and we see that as a positive feature.

Guiding Principle 5:
Getting graduate students to AD and SH in the immediate future should, in our opinion, follow two key approaches: First, NYU-NY students choose to travel during the course of their graduate study abroad to complete research at a site or portal. Second, graduate students receiving stipends tied at the time of their admission to AB and SH travel abroad to complete their dissertation research. The first of these approaches is already well developed in a wide variety of forms at NYU. It provides the foundation for much of the existing circulation by graduate students through our study abroad sites. It has, and should continue to, provide great strength to our graduate programs. The second newer approach is specifically aimed at building capability for endemic graduate education in AD and SH. We note here that important and novel though this is, this new approach need not require a new model for graduate education – just a new source of funding.