Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

**Members** (17): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Louisa Kramer (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Zhenlin Wang (CompSci), Leonard Bohmann (Eng), Mari Buche (DataSci), Keat Ghee Ong (BioEng), Tom Merz (BusAdm), Caryn Heldt (ChemEng), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Susan Amato-Henderson (CogSci), Jiguang Sun (Math), Audrey Mayer (SocSci), John Durocher (BioSci), Patty Sotirin (RTC)

**Guests** (4): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers Sprague (Grad Sch), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Jaque Smith

1) **Meeting called to order at 4:03 pm.**

2) **Review and approval of 1/13/15 meeting minutes.**

3) **Committee Reports:**

4) **Old Business:**
   a. Definition of Joint Faculty (A. Storer): The suggestion to use the term “Affiliated” to refer to faculty currently referred to as “Adjunct” was discussed during the last GFC meeting (1/13/15). Suggestions: add wording such as “Appointments are for three years and may be renewed following review by the unit hosting the joint appointment and approval by…(suggest the same list as is there for initial approval).” Concern was expressed that the term “Joint Appointment” does not differentiate from people on a joint appointment that includes salary and responsibilities in more than one unit. Some felt there should be a limit to the number of units that a person can be appointed in, others felt that this might limit the potential for cross disciplinary connections.

   • **TO DO:** Please be prepared to vote during the 3/3/15 meeting.

5) **New Business:**
   a. STEM Graduate Certificate Proposal (S. Amato-Henderson): The Department of Cognitive and Learning Sciences proposes the establishment of a “Graduate Certificate in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education.” Students completing this certificate will develop competencies in planning and delivering effective STEM instruction and conducting research on topics related to teaching and learning in the STEM disciplines. Please review the handouts section of the GFC website for complete details. This proposal is being reviewed concurrently by the curriculum policy committee. An email call for vote will be sent out on Friday, February 6. Please send a “Yes” or “No” vote to hlsuokas@mtu.edu to accept or decline the proposal.

   • **POST MEETING NOTE:** Motion to approve passed (call for vote via email as stated above).

   b. Proposal to Change Rules for Graduate Committees – External Members (D. Charlesworth): The policies for external committee members on thesis or dissertation examining committees of thirteen universities were examined. Based on the results of the benchmarking (see the handouts section of the GFC website for details) the Graduate School proposes the following changes to the requirements for graduate committee membership at Michigan Tech. 1. The requirement that master’s committees include an “external” member be eliminated. 2. Definition of “external” member for PhD committee be revised so that the external member is defined as a member of the Graduate Faculty who has a 50% or greater appointment outside of the student’s academic home department. If a student is advised by two co-advisors, the external member must be from outside the administrative home(s) of both co-advisors. The role of the external member role is to promote cross-disciplinary scholarly collaboration and consideration of the dissertation research from a perspective that might not be available if all committee members were drawn directly from the student’s field of specialization. Discussion followed with suggestions to modify the wording of (2.) as it excludes people outside of Michigan Tech as those outside of the University do not hold an appointment. Possible solutions: define “internal” (as those who have a 50% or greater appointment inside of the student’s academic home department) rather than defining “external” (all others not included in the definition of internal).

   • **TO DO:** Please be prepared to vote during the 3/3/15 meeting.
• **POST MEETING NOTE:** The following clarification was sent to the council via email from Dean Huntoon: At the most recent meeting of the GFC, during the discussion of external committee members, the question came up about whether or not people from outside the University (e.g., ad hoc members of the graduate faculty) are considered internal or external for the purposes of a graduate committee. The dean asks that you and your constituents consider the following. Graduate faculty are appointed only through nomination by a department chair and college dean or school dean, these individuals are appointed by the unit that most closely matches their academic discipline. Because these people represent the academic discipline that they are appointed by, the dean suggests that they should be considered "internal" for that discipline and "external" for all other disciplines. This concept is open for discussion at the upcoming meeting. In addition, the question of internal versus external for interdisciplinary graduate programs can be discussed if members would like to propose any changes to this issue.

c. Academic/Conduct Violation Letters (D. Charlesworth): These are letters that come from the Dean of Student’s office when there is an alleged incident involving an academic or conduct violation. These are currently carbon copied to the graduate program director and the chair of the department. Students receiving these letters are concerned that their department may develop a negative bias toward them. Is it important that both the director and chair receive the letter?
   • (D): Yes, both need to receive the letter. It is important that the appropriate people know about these situations.

d. Graduate Student Writing Groups (H. Suokas): Discussion about the writing resources on campus for Graduate students resulted in inviting the Multiliteracy Center to attend the 3/3/15 meeting.

e. **Additional Items:**
   • The Graduate School received 22 GEM applications this year across a variety of departments. J. Smith or D. Charlesworth will be reaching out and identifying these students to the appropriate department.
   • Nominations are due on 2/6/15 for the Outstanding Scholarship, Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching, and Graduate Student Service awards.

6) Motion to adjourn at 5:03 pm.