Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

**Members** (15): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Simon Karn (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Erika Hersch-Green (BioSci), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Audrey Mayer (SocSci), Jiguang Sun (Math), Julie King (ChemEng), Veronica Griffis (Civ&Env), Patty Sotirin (Rhet), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Eugene Levin (SchTech), Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Noel Urban (NonDeptEnvir)

**Guests** (5): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Amberlee Haselhuhn (GSG), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Sarah Lucchesi (Lib)

1) Meeting called to order at 4:05 pm.

2) Review and approval of 01/14/14 meeting minutes.

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Research Only Mode (N. Urban): The committee received data from the Graduate School yesterday which will need to be reviewed by the committee. N. Urban will propose a meeting and will have a report at the next GFC meeting.

4) Old Business:
   a. Thesis/Dissertation Review Committee (D. Charlesworth): Members were asked to bring this proposal back to their departments and to be prepared to vote at this meeting.
      • (Q): If the Graduate School will no longer review drafts, does the student still need to submit a draft to the Graduate School or do they only submit the form?
      • (A): Yes, they will need to submit a draft. This will ensure that the committee has also received the document. The Graduate School will review the title and approval pages.
      • (Q): What if a student wants their draft reviewed?
      • (A): The Graduate School staff is always available for questions and guidance, that practice will not be discontinued. Having the time freed by not reviewing drafts will also give the Graduate School staff more time to offer trainings that will help guide students through the thesis/dissertation process.
      • (Q): Is there a thesis/dissertation template for LATEX?
      • (A): There is one available from Gowtham that can be downloaded from the blog.
      • (Q): Can a compromise be made on the deadline dates proposed and the current dates?
      • (A): Yes. After receiving all the feedback we will try to come to a consensus on the dates.
      • (C): The Peace Corps program’s main concern is with the students who are returning from their overseas practicum who may find it difficult to meet the new deadlines. It is suggested to move the last day to hold a final oral exam to Friday of week 12, rather than the proposed (Monday, Week 11).
      • (C): Moving the day to Friday may make it difficult for faculty as there may be an expectation that they should be available for finalizing the process over the weekend following the defense (if it is scheduled for that Friday).
      • (C): Master’s students may find the proposed deadlines difficult to meet because they typically have a full class load.
      • (C): There are objections to moving the deadlines back. The students are potentially being deprived of time to complete a quality product.
      • (C): One of the reasons for these new deadline proposals is to assist students in finishing within the same semester in which they defend.
• (Q): With understanding the need for an extension and for the reasoning behind pushing the deadlines back it is suggested that the last day to hold a final oral exam be moved to Monday or Tuesday of week 12, rather than the proposed (Monday, Week 11).
• (C): Professors have a lighter class load on Tuesdays (as opposed to Mondays).
• Call for a motion to amend the first recommendation in two ways: 1. Last day to schedule a final oral examination, deadline – Tuesday, Week 10 (rather than Monday, Week 9) and 2. Last day to hold a final oral examination, deadline – Tuesday, Week 12 (rather than Monday, Week 11).
• Motion to amend passed.
• (D): Motion to approve the proposal with the above amendment to the first recommendation passed. All changes (deadlines, draft reviews, etc.) will start in the fall. This needs to be communicated with your students.

5) New Business:
   a. Call for Volunteer to Serve on the Dean Performance Review Committee (A. Storer): The Graduate Faculty Council needs to identify a member to serve on the Performance Review Committee for the Dean of the Graduate School. Per policy, each third year the dean is reviewed. This is a twelve person committee that will include a representative (tenured) from the GFC, Senate, a faculty member from each college/school, a member of staff council, graduate student government, a representative from a research center/institute (selected by the Vice President of Research), a representative at large, and a Dean with an active PhD program.
      • (Q): Are there any volunteers?
      • (A): Keat Ghee Ong (Biomedical Engineering) volunteered and will serve on the committee as a representative from the Graduate Faculty Council.

6) Other:
   a. Evaluation of Graduate Students: Last month an informal poll was taken asking about current practices in evaluating graduate students. A. Storer asks that if you have a form that you would like to share, send the form to him and he will make a shared document on Google drive that other departments can view.

7) Motion to adjourn at 4:41 pm.