Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 7, 2011

**Members** (13): Thomas Drummer (Math), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Eugene Levin (Sch Tech), Sam Sweitz (SocSci), Bill Yarrock (Cog Sci), Steve Seidel (CS), Mi Hye Song (Bio Sci), Blair Orr (PCMI), Dave Watkins (Civil), Andrew Storer (SFRES), Greg Waite (Geo), Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Judith Perlinger (Atmos)

**Guests** (6): Jackie Huntoon (Grad Sch), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Felicia Chong (GSG), Erik Nordberg (Library)

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

2) Review and approval of 01/17/12 meeting minutes with amendment. The following text was added to item 4a, “Seidel commented that this criterion is immeasurable.”

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Thesis/Dissertation Guideline Review Committee (Dean Huntoon): The committee will meet soon and bring updates to the next GFC meeting.

4) Old Business:
   a. Changes to GACS (Dean Huntoon): Dean Huntoon spoke with the Provost about all the comments that she has received. The Senate Survey results were also reviewed and they indicated great favor of GACS. The decision has been made not to modify GACS at this time. No changes will be made and the current GACS rules/policy still applies. What is the next step? Dean Huntoon suggested that the GFC could form a committee to look at the current GACS policy and determine if it should be modified to further enhance the goals of increasing the number, quality, and success of graduate students on campus. Is there anybody interested in being on a GACS committee? Nobody volunteered. This was also brought to the Research Advisory Council. Some thought the current policy should be modified to include associate and full professors’ eligibility for the automatic matches that assistant professors receive. Comments: We are treating these proposals/grants as if they are single investigators but the number of investigators is mixed. How does GACS currently handle these? If there is an assistant professor as the lead then it qualifies. If the assistant professor is not the lead then it is very rare that they receive GACS. One goal of GACS is to bring down the cost of a proposal for an assistant professor so that they are more likely to get their foot in the door. The GFC feels as though the current GACS policy works well and should remain as is.

   b. PhD Guidelines (Dean Huntoon): Dean Huntoon received the following comment by email: the time frame should be stated in either years or in academic semesters consistently throughout the document. The commenter’s preference was that the timeline be stated in years. Semester should indicate academic semester. Comment {JH1} and {JH2} – do we want to allow faculty with adjunct appointments in a unit to be the primary advisor? The GFC answers yes as this seems to benefit most programs. Comment {JH3} – is the current time frame (prior to the end of the second academic semester) for an advisor to be chosen the right time. Yes, as this is only a recommended timeframe. Comment {JH4} – for students in non-departmental grad programs, the external member must not be affiliated with the non-departmental program. Should this remain? No, take it out as the external member should have knowledge of what the student’s project is. Also, being a small campus makes it very hard to find a person who meets this requirement. A program who wants to be more restrictive can be. Comment {JH5} and {JH6} – are comprehensive and candidacy the correct names for the “first” exam and “second” exam? It was determined that a majority would like to change comprehensive to qualifying and candidacy to proposal defense (with clarifying language that once you pass you are considered a candidate). Do any programs administer the proposal defense before the qualifying exam? Yes, it happens on occasion. Dean
Huntoon will add that the qualifying exam should be taken first but exceptions could be made. It is also recommended that the second paragraph under Advisory Committee be removed as it is unnecessary to state. Comment {JH7} – the advisory committee should be appointed prior to the end of the study’s third academic semester. Is this the right time? No, it is recommended that it be changed to fourth semester. Comment {JH8} – the first exam should be administered prior to the end of the fourth academic semester. Is this the right time frame? Yes, it is agreed that this is the correct time. Comment {JH9} – should the text, “It must be given at least two terms before the final oral defense” be removed. Recommended that the word “must” be changed to “should” and leave time frame as is. What does term mean? Dean Huntoon will clarify the text “term” throughout the document. Comment {JH10}, {JH11}, and {JH12} – the candidacy exam should be administered prior to the end of the sixth academic semester. It must be given at least one term before the final oral defense. Is this reasonable? Dean Huntoon is going to change must to should in the last sentence and will clarify that it could be either an academic year semester or summer session. Yes, leave time frame as is. Comment {JH13} – the outside examiner may not be affiliated with the interdisciplinary or non-departmental program. This will be taken out. On the flow chart, under Pass Candidacy Exam (will be changed to proposal defense) Dean Huntoon will add a sub heading for research only mode and state that both exams must be completed to enter research only mode.

5) Motion to adjourn at 4:55 pm.