Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

**Members** (15): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Simon Karn (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Erika Hersch-Green (BioSci), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Audrey Mayer (SocSci), Zhenlin Wang (CompSci), Caryn Heldt (ChemEng), Veronica Griffis (Civ&Env), Patty Sotirin (Rhet), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Warren Perger (ElecCompEng), Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Noel Urban (NonDeptEnvir)

**Guests** (7): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Amberlee Haselhuhn (GSG), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Sarah Lucchesi (Lib), Thy Yang (IPS), Mary Stevens (IPS), Christopher Babbitt (Career Services)

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

2) Review and approval of 02/04/14 meeting minutes.

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Research Only Mode (N. Urban): The committee was tasked to propose an alternative to Research Only Mode in which students would be able to take a limited number of classes at a reduced rate. Please refer to the handouts section of the GFC website for background and current rules. The committee proposes that in addition to the above “research-only mode”, an additional mode would be created that would enable graduate students who have passed all required course work and (doctoral students only) who have passed their qualifying exam and proposal defense to enroll in “research-intensive mode” for up to two terms. In this mode, students would register for six (6) credits of research at 1/3 the standard tuition rate and three (3) course credits at the standard tuition rate (i.e., pay for the equivalent of 5 credits at the standard tuition rate). Compared to the present situation, this scheme reduces by 1/6 the cost to the student/researcher for taking up to six credits of courses. The revenue-neutrality of this scheme can only be assessed once it is known how the number of students eligible for research-only mode but who take courses is changed. (If that number does not change, the scheme would cost the university; if the number increases sufficiently, the university could generate additional revenue). Accordingly, we suggest that the plan be evaluated after two years to assess the revenue impacts as well as the degree to which the plan satisfies the desire for advanced graduate students to enroll in courses without a cost penalty.
      • (Q): Do the two semesters proposed have to be consecutive?
      • (A): No
      • (Q): The proposal is calculated based on a three credit class, if it were a two credit course could students enroll in seven credits of research?
      • (A): This would have to be looked into as there may be accounting/banner issues.
      • (Q): Do students in Research Only Mode currently have the option to audit a course?
      • (A): When a student audits a course, they still have to pay, the only difference is that they do not receive a grade.
      • (Q): What is the next step for this proposal?
      • (A): Dean Huntoon will forward the proposal to the Budget Team for feedback.
      • (C): Before this is forwarded to the Budget Team, it will need to be presented in a proposal format with the following clarifications: 1. The semesters do not need to be consecutive. 2. Whether or not a two credit course can be taken rather than a three credit course.

4) Old Business: No Old Business
New Business:

a. Changes to Co-ops & Internships (C. Babbit/T. Yang): This fall the co-op course was managed in Canvas. This software resolves concerns of students and advisors. The changes to the program are a result of feedback from students and faculty. Many students requested more interaction with the University and one another, clearer grading criteria, and better visibility of due dates. Advisors requested clearer grading requirements to reduce time and increase impact on grading process. Now co-op students are required to submit all of their assignments by the final day of the semester. This eliminates the four week post-semester due date. Discussions are designed to help students answer the reflective essay questions throughout the semester, and students are reminded of the required assignments periodically throughout the semester. Career Services will still enter a “P” grade for all co-op students at the end of the semester and allow academic advisors ample time to complete the grading. The academic advisor is expected to grade the technical essay questions for their students. Advisors are encouraged to post discussion questions or readings and to communicate with their students. Advisors will be added as either a tech or a TA into Canvas. Please see the handouts section of the GFC website for complete details.
   - (Q): Do international students need to apply for OPT to do this?
   - (A): The internship option is no longer being overseen by Career Services. The University is now defaulting to the term co-op. International students will be required to have a co-op over the summer if they wish to pursue what was previously referred to as an internship. Due to this change they need a work authorization called curricular practical training (CPT).

b. Proposal to Require Course Syllabi to be Posted on Canvas (A. Storer): The following proposal will be brought to the Senate on 3/5/14 (18-14): “Background and rationale: The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is hearing more and more that students want a standard starting point for a course. Distributing paper syllabi is now regarded as an outdated practice and a questionable use of resources. Although many instructors may have objections to using Canvas more broadly, this policy would allow students to assume a standard starting point, and faculty would still have the freedom to direct students to whatever other resources they prefer to use (e.g., their own website), or to also distribute paper syllabi if necessary. Proposal: We recommend the following change to Senate Policy 312.1 on the Syllabus Requirement for all Courses at Michigan Technological University: Replace the text: ‘The instructor of each section of any course at Michigan Technological University shall provide each student enrolled in their section of the course a printed copy of a course syllabus or shall provide students with a URL containing the web-based version of such a document’ With the following text: ‘The instructor of each section of any course at Michigan Technological University (with the exception of research sections) shall post either a course syllabus document or URL link to the course syllabus within the Learning Management System course (currently Canvas) linked to Banner and created for that section’.
   - Post Meeting Note: This proposal was rejected by the Senate on March 5, 2014.

6) Motion to adjourn at 5:02 pm.