Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 15, 2014

**Members** (11): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Simon Carn (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Erika Hersch-Green (BioSci), Zhenlin Wang (CompSci), Caryn Heldt (ChemEng), Patty Sotirin (Rhet), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Warren Perger (ElecCompEng), Noel Urban (NonDeptEnvir), Jiguang Sun (Math)

**Guests** (6): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Amberlee Haselhuhn (GSG), Sasha Teymorian (GSG), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Sarah Lucchesi (Lib), Brian Barkdoll (IPS)

1) Meeting called to order at 4:07 pm.

2) Review and approval of 03/04/14 meeting minutes.

3) Old Business:
   
a. Research-Intensive Mode Update (Dean Huntoon): Dean Huntoon met with Dave Reed from the Executive Team/Budget team to discuss this proposal. He was supportive but had a concern as to how to implement the process. The proposal has changed a bit from what was given to the GFC. Right now there is a nine-credit research-only mode. After speaking with Accounting and those mentioned above, they asked that the GFC consider offering three different modes: nine-credit, research-only mode, six-credit research-intensive mode, and a three-credit research-intensive mode. Students could sign up for three, six, or nine credits of research at the price currently charged for research-only mode credits. If the student would like to take a course or two, they would enroll for research-intensive mode and pay for the course credits at the regular tuition rate and for the additional research credits at the research rate. Dean Huntoon will ask Accounting to work with the Graduate School to come up with a proposal that will go to the Executive Team that will outline a strategy that can be implemented. Dean Huntoon will provide updates to the GFC as the proposal moves through the process.

4) New Business:
   
a. Updates from the Senate (B. Barkdoll): The President of the Senate, Brian Barkdoll, volunteered to talk with the GFC to clear up confusion on what should be brought to the Senate. This issue stems from whether or not the Thesis/Dissertation deadlines needed to be approved by the Senate. The Senate Executive Committee felt that they do need to be approved by the Senate. The concerns brought to Dr. Barkdoll about the deadlines are 1) the new deadlines may not give students enough time to finish before the deadline, 2) students may need to enroll for the next semester and students do not want to do that, and 3) the quality of work may diminish if the deadline is too soon. Discussion followed on what needs to be brought to the Senate and what does not. Dr. Barkdoll stated that anything that affects academics needs to be brought to the Senate. The Senate Executive Committee sees the deadline changes as an academic issue.
   
   • (Response to why deadline changes were not brought to the Senate for approval): This change was viewed as a process change, rather than a policy change. In the past the Senate would send a liaison to the GFC meetings to facilitate communication. Dr. Barkdoll will try to ensure that this happens next year if he is re-elected.
   
   • (Response to why the deadlines were changed): One of the largest departments on campus was having issues with the current procedures because their students were adhering to the current deadlines but were still unable to finish in the semester intended because they could not make all of the necessary revisions. This meant that they had to enroll for an additional semester (at a reduced rate in most cases). The students have to pay what is referred to as a resubmission fee, rather than full tuition, and are asked to pay this fee because they are still using University resources. The proposed changes were largely driven by faculty who were disappointed that students could not finish in the current semester even though the students had met all of the published deadlines. Both the student and faculty expectations are not
being met. Changing the deadline will increase the number of students whose expectations will be met. The GFC considered these changes to the minutest detail and took these changes very seriously.

- **(Q):** If a student needs to make so many corrections that it pushes them into the next semester, does that mean they did not submit a quality paper?
- **(A):** The amount of corrections varies from program to program, student to student, advisor to advisor, etc. For example, some departments ask that students do not defend until the paper is ready. The committee works very closely with the student throughout the process. On the other hand, other departments give many comments, feedback, and recommendations at the defense. Sometimes students are asked to do more data analysis and this can take months to finish.

- **(Q):** When research and sponsored programs moves their deadlines, they do not need to bring it to the Senate, why does this need to go to the Senate? What is the function of the GFC? If the GFC (with representation from every graduate program on campus) is unable to look at a Graduate School issue and make changes, what can the GFC do?
- **(A):** There was enough pushback that Dr. Barkdoll felt the proposed changes needed more vetting. There are some issues that involve many entities on campus so it may need to be looked at by more than one group. He believes that both policy and procedure needs to be brought to the Senate.

- **(Q):** Can graduate education proposals be brought directly to the Senate or would the Senate ensure that the GFC considered the proposal first?
- **(A):** Proposals can be sent directly to the Senate. There is no obligation for the Senate to send the proposal to the GFC, although it is wise to. **(POST MEETING NOTE:** The dean was informed after the meeting that Senate Proposal 16-08 (adopted by the Senate on 16 April 2008; item 5 under Proposed Resolution) states: “The University Senate will channel all material related to graduate education through the Graduate Faculty Council before taking action.”

- **(Q):** It would be a good idea to invite the Senate President to a GFC meeting on a regular basis.
- **(D):** The Thesis/Dissertation deadline changes will need to be brought to the Senate as a proposal to be voted on.

b. **Graduate Program Review (Dean Huntoon):** This was originally proposed and approved in November of 2010. It has not been acted on as of yet. Dean Huntoon would like to operationalize this process during the next academic year. See the handout section of the GFC website for more details.

c. **Graduate Faculty Review (Dean Huntoon):** It is stated in the Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty Handbook that “It is expected that department chairs/school deans will continually review the performance of all individuals holding graduate faculty status in their respective units using criteria outlined in Section B above.” Dean Huntoon found that units did not know they were supposed to do this. In the future the Graduate School will try to facilitate this by having the graduate faculty appointment be for a limited time with the option to renew.

d. **GACS Guidelines (Dean Huntoon):** Currently, assistant professors can get cost-share for externally funded proposals from the Graduate School as long as certain conditions are met. Unfortunately, because of several new hires in the past few years the expenditures are outrunning the budget. This is a problem. Dean Huntoon also notes that some faculty receive the GACS funding more than once while others do not ever receive it. Those who are not receiving this are unable to write a compelling proposal because they do not have funding for graduate students and they need the assistance of graduate students to collect preliminary data that are necessary to write a compelling proposal. The proposed change is to stop the automatic commitment to
assistant professors and instead support more finishing fellowships, provide more support for the larger interdisciplinary proposals, provide support for strategic initiatives, etc. This has been reviewed/approved by the dean’s council, research advisory committee, and is given to the GFC as an information item. Please see the handout section of the GFC website for more details.

- (Q): Will Dean Huntoon provide an update next academic year to report how this is going and where the money is being allocated?
- (A): Yes.

5) Motion to adjourn at 4:59 pm.