Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

Members (16): Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Zhenlin Wang (CompSci), Simon Carn (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Shane Mueller (CogSci), John Durocher (BioSci), Judith Perlinger (Atmos), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Eugene Levin (SOT), Audrey Mayer (SocSci), Patty Sotirin (Rhet), Veronica Griffis (Civil), Andrew Storer (SFRES), Jiguang Sun (Math), Noel Urban (Non-Dept Env),

Guests (7): Jacqueline Huntoon (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Amberlee Haselhuhn (GSG), Jim Frendewey (SOT), Beatrice Smith (ESL), Ron Strickland (HU), Sarah Lucchesi (Lib), Jacque Smith (Grad Sch)

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

2) Moment of Silence in Honor of Dr. Tom Drummer.

3) Elect a Chair:
   a. Dean Huntoon verbally called for nominations. There were no responses. An email call for nominations went out prior to the meeting which resulted in the nomination of Dr. Andrew Storer. With a unanimous vote A. Storer accepted the chair position.

4) Review and approval of 04/02/13 meeting minutes.

5) Old Business:
   a. Proposal to Modify (revenue-neutral modification) Research Only Mode (Dean Huntoon): Dean Huntoon calls for an ad hoc committee to pursue options in the modification of Research Only Mode. Amberlee Haselhuhn, Noel Urban, Nancy Byers-Sprague volunteered. The committee is tasked with addressing possible alternatives to our current Research Only Mode with the consideration that any modifications should remain revenue-neutral as well as benefit students and faculty. One of the issues discussed in past meetings was that after a student enters Research Only Mode they are unable to take additional courses. Possibly there should be a mechanism by which they can take additional courses - possibly allowing them to take a limited amount of credits. P. Moran originally brought this to the GFC. A. Storer will ask him to serve on this committee.

      • (Q): Was P. Moran’s proposal not revenue-neutral?
      • (A): Dean Huntoon answers that it was not. The current policy says that a student can come out of Research Only Mode entirely and take classes or they could stay in Research Only Mode (registered full-time - nine credits but a student only pays for three credits) and pay regular tuition to take additional courses. P. Moran wanted to make it less expensive for students to take additional courses.
      • (C): If a student is supported for nine credits in Research Only Mode, the department is only paying for three credits. A suggestion is that departments could loosen the departmental requirements and fund the student for three or six more credits which would be the same as paying for nine credits normally.
      • (C): The proposal brought forth by P. Moran proposed that all graduate students pay a small amount so that those in Research Only Mode could take additional credits.
      • (C): Most of the objection to the original proposal was not the idea it was more about how to handle the revenue.

   b. Proposal for Determining When International Students Need ESL Services (Dean Huntoon/B. Smith): A proposal that Dean Huntoon crafted based on last year's discussions was that students
with TOEFL scores below 79 iBT should be evaluated upon arrival. Based on this evaluation the ESL program will recommend appropriate support services. Over the summer IGTAAP (International Graduate Teaching Assistance Program) services have been expanded (with funding from the Provost and Graduate School). The SPEAK test will no longer be administered. Taking its place is the Language Skills Assessment. ESL requests that departments contact them thirty days in advance of the student's arrival because ESL will be administering a paper based TOEFL test to the student when they arrive on campus and the tests need to be ordered and delivered in advance. In the fall ESL administers TOEFL free of charge to Michigan Tech students the first Monday of orientation week. After the test there is a second layer of interviewing. ESL can then provide an advisor or department chair (whichever is preferred) with the assessment and recommendation.

- (Q): Is this in reference to students who have not taken the TOEFL before arriving on campus?
- (A): No, this is in reference to students who may have a need for additional language assistance. In the past a department would determine that an accepted student was not at an English speaking level that was indicated by their TOEFL scores. By the time the determination is made (typically 6-8 weeks into the semester) it is too late for ESL to assist the student.
- (Q): What if a student has a score higher than 79 and then it is determined that the performance is not matching the score and the semester has already begun?
- (A): IGTAAP should help in this situation.
- (C): A recommendation is if there is a concern before the student arrives on campus, Skype with them.
- (D): Motion to approve the proposal passed. The Graduate School will work on a process to identify the students and see about evaluating the process as it goes.

c. Accelerated Master’s Recruiting, Including Research Scholars Model (J. Smith): There are currently 14 accelerated master's programs which include three new programs – Forestry, Geographic Information Science, and Civil & Environmental. In addition a proposal from Physics is in review. The Graduate School will be introducing a marketing campaign targeting students for accelerated master's programs. J. Smith met with John Lehman who is now overseeing Marketing and Communications. J. Lehman is very interested in this project. If anybody is interested in providing ideas you are welcome to contact J. Smith or you are welcome to join the meetings. J. Smith has also been building a bridge with undergraduate admissions. They see this as an opportunity to recruit undergrads as well. Including a piece on accelerated master’s programs in undergraduate orientation is also in the works. This would also be added to the undergrad admission campus tour. J. Smith asks that members please look at their websites to ensure that all information is up-to-date and correct because as the accelerated master's centralized website (housed in the Graduate School) becomes live, it will pull the information off of the department's websites. If you are interested in proposing an accelerated master's program there are sample proposals that the Graduate School can provide for you. J. Smith would like to start running lists for the departments that have accelerated master's programs to identify sophomores/juniors who meet the criteria (GPA) for being admitted into an accelerated master's program. The hope would be to personally invite these students to apply to an accelerated master’s program. The question is would departments prefer to invite the students or would they want the Graduate School to do it? J. Smith is also interested in setting up some information sessions for students that could be conducted departmentally or by the Graduate School.

- (Q): What if a department uses more than GPA to determine a student’s eligibility?
- (A): The Graduate School could run the list with the initial GPA requirement and then somebody in the department could further review the students based on their additional requirements.
(Q): Can the Graduate School send the list that they generate to graduate program directors and ask at that point which students they would like the Graduate School to invite to apply.

(A): Yes, that can be done.

(Q): Can a list of points be made and then distributed to each program so that they can determine which will work and which will not work and include a space for the department to make additional suggestions?

(A): Yes, that can be done.

d. Naming of Master Degrees (Dean Huntoon): The purpose of this document is to clear up the terminology used to refer to our master's programs (Plan A, B, C, D) and refer to them as thesis, report, or coursework only.

**TO DO:** Please take the handout (find on handouts section of the GFC website) back to your departments and email feedback to Dean Huntoon. She will bring a revised version to the next GFC meeting. Please be prepared to vote.

6) New Business:

a. Rhetoric and Technical Communications Program Name Change (R. Strickland): The department would like to change the name of the PhD program to Rhetoric, Theory, and Culture. This name better describes what the program has been doing all along and is geared towards a wider audience. This will be brought back to GFC (as old business) when it is ready for Senate introduction.

b. SOT: Dual Degree Program (J. Frendewey/E. Levin): This is a proposal for an agreement for a dual degree master program in Geodesy and Remote Sensing or Cadastre at the Siberian State Academy of Geodesy (SSGA) and in Integrated Geospatial Technology at Michigan Tech. There are a few students who are already interested. SSGA is a very reputable university. E. Levin has visited the university and found they have quality students, especially in mathematics. This agreement would bring capable students from Russia to Michigan Tech and provide Michigan Tech students the opportunity to study in Russia.

(Q): Who has reviewed this proposal?

(A): Dean Huntoon (Graduate School) and Jim Baker (Innovation & Industry Engagement). The Dean's council is currently reviewing. This will need final approval from the Curricular Policy Committee.

(Q): Looking at the courses listed in the proposal, it appears that there may be more appropriate courses that should be listed.

(A): The courses listed carried over from the existing master's program. All suggestions are welcome.

(Q): What about related costs, such as international travel?

(A): Students pay for the cost of travel.

**TO DO:** Please take the proposal (find on handouts section of the GFC website) back to your departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting. Please be prepared to vote.

c. Publishing Agreement – Additional Approval Signature (D. Charleworth): D. Charlesworth was contacted by a faculty member regarding the required signatures on the publishing agreement (the agreement that the student submits at the end of the thesis, report, or dissertation stage). Currently the advisor or the graduate program director signs off on the form. They are approving whether or not the document is released globally or strictly to a Michigan Tech audience and whether or not the document has an embargo. An issue arose where the faculty advisor of the student was not the principal investigator (PI) on the grant that the student was working on and there was no communication in terms of what the PI's requirements were. The faculty member asked that D. Charlesworth bring to GFC a question as to whether a signature line for a PI can be added to the form.
• **TO DO:** Please take the suggestion back to your departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting.

7) Motion to adjourn at 5:01 pm.