Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

1) Meeting called to order at 4:10 pm.

Members (18): Nancy Auer (Biological Sciences), Jackie, Bill Yarroch (ASE), Jill Witt (GSC), Judith Perlinger (EPD2), Richard Honrath (ATM), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Kim Fook Lee (Physics), Chris Middlebrook (EE), Eugene Levin (Technology), Beth Flynn (Humanities), Sam Sweitz (SS), Phil Merkey (Comp Sci/Eng), Shekhar Joshi (SFRES), Blair Orr (Peace Corps), Greg Waite (GMES), Joanne Scillitoe (SBE), Gerald Caneba (CE), Jianping Dong (Math),

Guests (4): Debra Charlesworth (Graduate School), Heather Suokas (Graduate School– recording secretary), Brad Baltensperger (Cognitive and Learning Science), William Helton (Cognitive and Learning Sciences)

2) Review and approval of 9/2/08 meeting minutes.

3) Old Business
   a. Status of graduate certificate in GIS (W. Yarroch): A brief e-mail from the Dean of the School of Forestry was read. The e-mail stated that the proposal was being withdrawn and they have decided not to pursue a certificate at this time.
   b. Applied Cognitive Science & Human Factors PhD proposal: Some concern over cost of degree since more coursework is required than usual. Dr. Helton described that more courses are necessary because an undergraduate degree does not exist. As the proposal stands it does not have an existing Master’s degree. It is not clear if a second proposal for a MS program is needed or if it can be included in the PhD program. A motion passed to table the proposal until next meeting.
   c. Parental/maternal leave for graduate students? Is this something we want to examine?: Proposal needed in order for departments and instructors to be able to follow a policy. Discussion concerning whether or not a proposal should arise from GSC or GFC. Motion passed to form a joint committee that will write the proposal. Committee members: Nancy Auer (Biological Sciences), Judith Perlinger (Environmental Engineering), and Jill Witt (Graduate Student Council).

4) New Business
   a. Proposal by E. Flynn to address application deadlines for finishing fellowships: As proposal stands it states that the applications are to be submitted midway through the previous semester, excluding summer session. Questions/Suggestions: do we need a summer policy? Do we need to eliminate the “excluding summer session” wording? How does this pertain to students with teaching assignments during the semester? How do we deal with special exceptions? Should we look into how other universities handle their finishing fellowships? Motion passed to have Dean Huntoon review the proposal and help answer above questions.
   b. Graduate Student Council resolution 2008-3a (J. Witt): Graduate students would like the Experience Tech fee to be optional to them. Motion to support GSC resolution 2008-3a passed.
   c. Graduate School new student orientation (D. Charlesworth): Need to start planning for next fall orientation now. This year every student received a binder (also passed out a
copy to each person at this meeting) including slides, handouts and academic policy and 
codes of conduct. The optional Thursday session was attended by over 100 students. The 
required Friday session was attended by over 200 students. It was a challenge to those 
involved to split the orientation sessions over two days. Dr. Charlesworth proposed a 
one day required session including lunch. She has Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 
reserved for the Ballroom. One of these days needs to be picked. These changes need to 
be submitted by November. We need a council resolution at the next meeting.

5) Motion to adjourn at 5:15 pm.