Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 14, 2014

Members (20): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Thomas Oommen (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), John Durocher (BioSci), Ching-Kuang Shene (CompSci), Julie King (ChemEng), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Warren Perger (ElecCompEng), Noel Urban (NonDeptEnvir), Jiguang Sun (Math), Keat Ghee Ong (BioMedEng), Qinghui Chen (Kines), Leonard Bohmann (Eng), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Judith Perlinger (Atmos), Mari Buche (DataSci), Audrey Mayer (SocSci), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Yu Cai (SOT), Yoke Khin Yap (Phys)

Guests (6): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Sasha Teymorian (GSG), Nancy Byers Sprague (Grad Sch), Chris Wojick (Civil & Env), Jacque Smith (Grad Sch), Joanne Polzien (Compl, Integ, Safety)

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

2) Review of 09/02/14 meeting minutes. 5a. needs to be amended for clarification.

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Graduate Faculty Review Guidelines (Dean Huntoon): An initial meeting has been scheduled.

4) Old Business:
   a. Research-Only Mode Update (Dean Huntoon): After discussion at last month’s meeting an additional option has been introduced (see handouts): Discussion of the three options now proposed addressed the following questions.
      • (Q): What if I feel a student is ready for research-only mode after taking 21 credits and passing their qualifiers? The above states they must have a minimum of 30 credits.
      • (A): This is about ensuring that students do not rush and are not rushed by others into research-mode.
      • (Q): Can the wording be changed from “30 credits for pre-master’s students” to “20 credits at 3000 level or higher?” (Note: this recommendation is based on the number of coursework credits required for master’s degrees).
      • (A): Yes, a new revised version of the proposal will be prepared.
      • (Q): Can online students take three research credits and only pay for one. Right now they have to take nine to get into research-only.
      • (A): Yes.
      • TO DO: Please take the three options that now exist back to your departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting. Be prepared to vote.

   b. Graduate Program Review Call for Program/Department Volunteers (Dean Huntoon): There were no volunteers. The dean will meet with the Provost and they will pick two programs in collaboration with the other academic deans.

   c. MS in Applied Physics Proposal (Y. Yap): Members were asked to bring this proposal back to their departments and to be prepared to vote at this meeting.
      • (D): Motion to approve the proposal passed.

   d. Procedures for Applying to a Graduate Certificate Program (J. Smith): Members were asked to bring this back to their departments/programs and decide whether or not they want their students to apply and be admitted into a certificate program in order to earn a certificate. Currently the policy is that students must apply and be admitted, but this is not happening. Is the policy unnecessary for students who are also earning a graduate degree at Michigan Tech? Is it important to track this data for degree-seeking students?
      • (D): Allow students who are earning a Michigan Tech degree to earn a certificate without having to go through a certificate application/admissions process.

5) New Business:
   a. Assuring Graduate Students’ Compliance w/Existing Safety Policy (J. Polzien/C. Wojick): There will be a change starting spring semester 2015 with the safety exit policy as it is applied to
graduate students. The change comes about because graduate students are leaving departments with unwanted or unlabeled materials and the departments are responsible for paying for disposal, which can be expensive. Existing university policy states:

"Department chairs are responsible for ensuring that each employee or graduate student has properly disposed of all scrap, raw materials, product samples, waste, and laboratory samples from their office and work areas prior to leaving the University or transferring to another department. Another department member(s) must accept responsibility for any equipment, unused chemicals, or product samples that are not disposed. An exit statement of compliance, including an inventory of all equipment and materials retained and the name of the person to whom they have been transferred, shall be made in writing by the department chair, signed by the exiting employee or graduate student, and kept on file for three years."

Unfortunately for many chairs, there has not been a way to ensure this policy was enforced. In order to assist chairs and to allow for university-wide compliance with the existing policy, a form was developed that is intended to be used by all exiting graduate students as part of their exit process. The form has been tested and several departments across campus are already using it. The Graduate School has agreed to assist in ensuring that the form is completed by exiting graduate students (those who graduate or notify the graduate school that they are withdrawing). Students are responsible for filling out the form, getting the required signatures (student, advisor, department safety officer, and the department chair) and submitting the form to the Graduate School. If the form is not completed and submitted to the Graduate School, students will not be eligible to graduate.

- (Q): If a TA finishes teaching a semester course in a lab that has equipment and materials, they then have to be responsible for these materials?
  - (A): They are responsible for ensuring that the materials they used are labeled and/or properly disposed of. This form has been tested with both TA and RAs. As part of their TA responsibilities.
- (Q): What about those materials (fuel, oil, etc.) that are permanent parts of the lab and are there all of the time? Does the TA become responsible?
  - (A): The intent is to answer the questions on this form for only the materials they procured/used.
- (Q): Maybe there should be a separate form for TA’s?
  - (A): The interactive form is adaptive. The questions that are asked of students are customized to address different student types (e.g., RA versus TA). So there is only one form, but it changes character depending on the answers to different questions.

**TO DO:** The interactive form will be sent to the GFC list serve. Please pass this on to your departments and email feedback to J. Polzien or C. Wojick. J. Polzien will be invited to the next GFC meeting to answer additional questions.

b. Accelerated MS Deferrals (C. Friedrich): Will be discussed at next meeting.

c. New PCMI Programs (K. Henquinet): Will be discussed at next meeting.

d. Call for Committee – Dissertation/Thesis/Report Deadline changes, Proposal Format for the Senate (Dean Huntoon): Andrew Storer volunteers. He asks that Dean Huntoon send him the last version that the committee worked on.

e. Prerequisite Checking (Dean Huntoon): Will be discussed at next meeting. Theresa Jacques will be invited to provide additional information.

f. Changing History (Dean Huntoon): Will be discussed at next meeting. Theresa Jacques will be invited to provide additional information.

6) Motion to adjourn at 5:02 pm.