Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 2, 2010

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

Members (19): Bill Yarroch (ASE), Andrew Storer (SFRES), Amy Marcarelli (Bio Sci), Steve Seidel (Comp Sci), Pat Martin (Env Pol), Craig Friedrich (ME-EM), Blair Orr (Peace Corp), Dave Watkins (Civil), Seth Donahue (Bio Med), Eugene Levin (Sch Tech), Greg Waite (Geo), Tom Drummer (Math), Marta Wloch (Chem), Paul Ward (Cog & Sci), Gerard Caneba (Chem Eng), Thomas Merz (Bus), Michael Bowler (Rhet & Tech), Dave Hand (Env Eng), Chris Middlebrook (Elec & Comp Eng)

Guests (6): Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Jacque Smith (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Sean Gohman (GSG), James Frendewey (Sch Tech), Soner Onder (Comp Sci)

2) Review and approval of 10/05/10 meeting minutes with the following amendment to New Business (5a): S. Joshi and B. Rose also presented the forestry and geology proposals.

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Dismissal/Appeal/Grievance Policy (Dean Huntoon): GFC approved this policy last month. Debra Charlesworth is working to align the policy to fit the University’s Policy on Policies and the University’s Policy on Procedures. Once the policy is in the correct format it will be forwarded to the Senate.
   b. Advisory Guidelines (N. Byers-Sprague): The handout includes bold text which reflects the proposed changes. The text allows for a co-advisor to be from outside the student’s administrative home department and recommends but does not require that this co-advisor not fill the role as sole external member on the student’s committee. Before recommending a sole advisor who holds an adjunct appointment in the student’s administrative home department, the appropriate graduate program director should ensure that this person is sufficiently familiar with the department/school standards for research and with applicable university policies/procedures and that this person can maintain adequate contact with the student. Departments can set stricter rules as they see fit. Computer Science objects to allowing an adjunct professor to become sole advisor and believes adjunct professors as sole advisor should be the exception, not the rule. Computer Science did some research and found that most research universities do not allow adjunct to be sole advisor. The concern is that the adjunct advisor will advise the research in terms of their (the advisor’s) home department rather than the student’s home department. Forestry has adjuncts who are working with the Forest Service who do advise PhD students and forestry finds this extremely valuable to the student. Forestry is also looking at ways that their graduate degrees can be advised by people from other units. Computer Science would prefer that the adjunct serve as a co-advisor rather than the sole advisor. Which departments on a regular basis have incidents where an adjunct is the sole advisor? Forestry and there are some cases when this applies to Mechanical Engineering. Computer Science thinks the language should reflect what most departments do rather than have the rule reflect what one or two units do. Computer Science would like this tabled. They would like to bring this discussion back to their department. Motion to table passed. This will be discussed again next month. Another issue to bring back to your department for discussion is whether or not the tuition differential and the computing access fee should follow the advisor or follow the student’s home department (for example: you have an advisor in biology who is advising a forestry student, does the student pay the tuition differential/computing access fee in biology or forestry)?
   c. Graduate Program Review (B. Orr): The online handout lays out when the review will occur and what expectations should be met. The review would typically happen once every five years. Will this be available online? Can this be completed online? Online completion could be possible depending on how each program surveys their current and past students (paper survey, survey monkey). Is promoting continual improvement a function of the Graduate School? A lot of the review is how each unit rates themselves. It analyzes what is going on in your graduate department. Motion to approve passed.

4) Old Business
   a. Provisional/Conditional Admission-Formally known as Master's Path (N. Byers-Sprague): This is a change in policy to match what is currently happening. The current language states that we do not allow
provisional/conditional admission but some programs are allowing this and have stated so in their program proposals submitted and approved by the Senate (Biomedical Engineering and Computer Engineering). Questions/Concerns: The text using the words “earn a graduate degree,” does that refer to being awarded a degree or to pursue a degree? To earn a degree is to be awarded a degree. Mechanical Engineering often has students who take remedial course as well as 4000 level courses. The remedial courses will not count toward the degree but the 4000 level courses will. What is the process for admitting a student conditionally? Biomedical Engineering writes the student a letter informing the student that they are accepted conditionally and the letter also states the requirement, for example: completing certain courses successfully. Motion to approve passed.

b. Tracking Students Who are Both Certificate and Degree Seeking (N. Byers-Sprague): Postpone to Dec. 7
c. Fellowship Update (D. Charlesworth): Postpone to Dec. 7
d. Addressing Dissents (N. Byers-Sprague): Postpone to Dec. 7

5) New Business
   a. RCR Training (Dean Huntoon): Postpone to Dec. 7
   b. MS in Geospatial Technology (J. Frendewey/E. Levin): The culture of the School of Technology has been changing over the last five years. A short term goal of the School of Technology now includes offering MS degrees. There is a need on campus for advanced geospatial course offerings and in order to do this it needs to be an interdisciplinary approach. The School of Technology has the faculty, staff and finances to support this program. The Dean’s Council reviewed and supported this proposal. As of now there are three students on campus waiting for this degree to be offered. There are also fifteen additional candidates in their database. This proposal allows for opportunities for collaboration between departments. Questions/Comments: How will the SOT handle the educational framework for training graduate students? SOC has collaborations with Cognitive Sciences and Electrical Engineering; therefore they have plenty of faculty and experience to support this degree. Will this be housed in the School of Technology as opposed to being non-departmental? That is the plan but it is not necessary to house it in the SOT. Who are the target group of students (what degrees must they have in order to be accepted)? Undergraduate students studying surveying, students in the school of engineering with emphasis in geospatial, civil engineering, environmental engineering, mechanical engineering and cognitive sciences are all acceptable. Having basic knowledge in engineering and geospatial technology is the kind of students they are looking for. It is asked that SOC brings a handout to the Dec. 7 meeting outlining entry requirements and what sort of requirements the students must have in order to be considered for this program.
   c. Certificate in Geospatial Technology (J. Frendewey): SOC anticipates a lot of enrollment from the aerospace industry. The aim of this certificate is to offer continuing education and professional development. Please read the proposal and bring your comments to next months’ meeting.
   d. Outstanding Scholarship Award: Text Change (N. Byers-Sprague): Postpone to Dec. 7
   e. Discussion of Research Only Mode Adjustments (S. Gohman): Postpone to Dec. 7

6) Motion to adjourn at 5:09 pm.