Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 11, 2014

Members (15): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Louisa Kramer (Geo), Thomas Oommen (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), John Durocher (BioSci), Warren Perger (ElecCompEng), Noel Urban (NonDeptEnvir), Qinghui Chen (Kines), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Judith Perlinger (Atmos), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Ching-Kuang Shene (CompSci), Leonard Bohmann (Eng), Mari Buche (DataSci), Patty Sotirin (RTC)

Guests (7): Dean Huntoon (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Sasha Teymorian (GSG), Nancy Byers Sprague (Grad Sch), Annelise Doll (Library), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Brian Barkdoll (Senate)

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

2) Review and approval of 11/4/14 meeting minutes.

3) Committee Reports:
   a. Graduate Faculty Review Guidelines (L. Kramer/A. Mayer/J. Perlinger): This committee was formed at Dean Huntoon’s request in order to assist unit chairs/deans with the periodic review of the qualifications of each of their graduate faculty as per Section 1.5.3 “Graduate Faculty Status” of the Faculty Handbook. The graduate faculty being reviewed must have qualifications of graduate faculty and evidence of those qualifications. Details can be found on the handouts section of the GFC website.
      • (Q): 1.c. states, “Has continuing interest in serving as a graduate student advisor.” Should this statement include graduate committees?
      • (A): Since the statement does not exclude committees, the statement is fine as is. Having served on a graduate committee can be seen as evidence that they are interested in serving as a graduate advisor.
      • (Q): 2.b. states, “Regularly published articles in recognized journals having national distribution or books related to their field of study.” What does “regularly” mean?
      • (A): This is to be left up to the interpretation of the chair/dean. This will vary depending on discipline.
      • (C): The committee’s next task is to research what the qualifications are at other institutions. They will present their findings at the meeting on 12/2/14.
   b. Dissertation/Thesis/Report Deadline Changes Proposal (A. Storer): This is in proposal format. The content of the deadline changes have already been approved by the GFC. A. Storer will circulate the proposal via email to the council for comments and input.
      • TO DO: When you receive the proposal via email please take it back to your departments for feedback. Be prepared to vote on 12/2/14.

4) Old Business:
   a. Assuring Graduate Students’ Compliance w/Existing Safety Policy (J. Polzien/C. Wojick): J. Polzien and C. Wojick introduced the new Graduate Student Safety Exit form on 11/4/14. Comments were sent to them offering opinions and suggestions on the form. An example of the feedback and the form can be found on the handout section of the GFC website. The following changes will be implemented based on the feedback: 1. “Teaching” will be removed from the text. For example, the following statement will exclude “teaching” from the text, “Did you do research and/or teaching in a laboratory….” 2. A University department could make a decision to not require the safety officer's signature for their students. Departments who intend to not require the signature need to make a blanket request to the Compliance Office in writing. 3. The Compliance Office is working with Occupational Safety and Health Services to determine the best way to utilize an option for Chemistry to attach or refer to the chemical inventory rather than listing each chemical individually on the form.
      This form will be active spring semester 2015. As you use the form, feel free to send recommendations for improvement to the Office of Compliance, Integrity, and Safety.
b. Research-Only Mode Update (Dean Huntoon): The council was asked to bring the three options (can be found on the handout section of the GFC website) back to their departments and be prepared to vote at this meeting.
   • (Q): Does the statement in Proposal Version C “complete a minimum of 18 credits…” mean that those credits must be completed at Michigan Tech or does that imply that transfer credits will be accepted?
   • (A): They should be Michigan Tech credits. The statement will be amended to say, “Post-master’s students who did not complete their master’s degree at Michigan Tech will need to complete a minimum of 18 credits at Michigan Tech at the 3000 level or above prior to entering research mode. Pre-master’s student’s will need to complete a minimum of 20 credits from Michigan Tech at the 3000 level or above before entering research mode.”
   • (D): Motion to approve Proposal Version C with amendment passed.

c. Prerequisite Checking (T. Jacques): To be discussed on 12/2/14.

5) New Business:
   a. Accelerated MS Deferrals (C. Friedrich): Mechanical Engineering is finding that some of their accelerated students are meeting all the requirements of admittance, being accepted, but then working fulltime and taking one course per semester. This was not the intention of the accelerated master’s degree. Mechanical Engineering no longer allows for accelerated master’s students to be part-time and they must be on-campus. There is not a policy in place that states that a student is required to be enrolled full-time as an accelerated student. The time to degree in the current policy is five years from the time they are accepted into the program.
      • (C): The suggestion is to reduce the time to degree in the current policy (which will need to be Senate approved) from five years from the time they are accepted to two years from the completion of the undergraduate degree.
      • (Q): What happens if a student is coming up on the two year mark and is not going to finish in time?
      • (A): Currently when a student is reaching the time to degree deadline, they are notified and are asked to speak with their advisor. Their advisor is asked to send a memo to the Dean of the Graduate School asking for an extension if the advisor thinks it is appropriate, laying out why the extension is necessary and a plan for completion within the new, proposed timeline.
      • TO DO: Please take this back to your departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting. Please be prepared to vote on 12/2/14.

   b. New PCMI Programs (K. Henquinet): The Peace Corps Master’s International Programs has two new departments offering PCMI options in their degree programs this fall – Electrical & Computer Engineering and Computer Science. In addition, Forestry has added an additional PCMI option in the Geographic Information Science degree pathway. If you are interested in adding a PCMI option to your current curriculum, please contact Kari Henquinet and she will help you through the process.

   c. Graduate Research Colloquium (S. Teymorian): The Graduate Research Colloquium (GRC) is an event where graduate students from all departments across campus can present their research to the University community in a poster or oral presentation. The GRC takes place on February 25 and 26. Sasha will be sending emails to the faculty reminding them of the event closer to the date. Please encourage your fellow faculty members and students, both graduate and undergraduate, to attend. If you are interested in being a judge, please contact S. Teymorian (sateymor@mtu.edu). There will be cash prizes. In past years, departments were also asked if they would sponsor breaks, this year corporate sponsors have been secured. It will be bigger and better.
      • (C): The banquet for awarding research and teaching awards will also be on February 26 so start thinking ahead on who you will want to nominate. N. Byers Sprague will put out a call for nominations in early January.

6) Motion to adjourn at 4:58 pm.