Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

**Members** (18): Andrew Storer (SFRES), Louisa Kramer (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), 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), Keat Ghee Ong (BioEng), Tom Merz (BusAdm), Caryn Heldt (ChemEng), Shane Mueller (CogSci), Jiguang Sun (Math), Yu Cai (SOT), Audrey Mayer (SocSci)

**Guests** (7): Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers Sprague (Grad Sch), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Brian Barkdoll (Senate), Alex Guth (Grad Sch), Theresa Jacques (Registrar’s), Harriet King (GradSch-CAP)

1) Meeting called to order at 4:04 pm.

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

3) Committee Reports:
   b. Dissertation/Thesis/Report Deadline Changes Proposal (A. Storer): Members were asked to take the proposal back to their departments and be prepared to vote at today’s meeting. The current document includes fall dates but it would be helpful if it also includes spring dates. A. Storer will amend the document to include spring dates.
      - (D): Motion to approve passed with the above amendment. This will be forwarded to the Senate for consideration.

4) Old Business:
   a. Prerequisite Checking (T. Jacques): Members were asked to take the idea of prerequisite checking back to their departments and consider how this would impact their individual program. (See minutes from 11/4/14 and the handouts section of the GFC website for further details). T. Jacques was asked to provide a list of graduate courses with prerequisites (post meeting update: the list has been provided and is on the handouts section of the GFC website). A possible alternative is to turn on class restrictions. If the majority would like to turn the prerequisite checking on then a proposal will need to be formulated. T. Jacques would also visit departmental meetings to discuss this further if there is interest.
      - TO DO: Please take this idea back to your departments and consider how this would impact your individual program.
   b. Accelerated MS Deferrals (C. Friedrich): Members were asked to take the proposal back to their departments and be prepared to vote at today’s meeting. It is unclear as to why it matters if students take more than two years to graduate. One of the goals of the accelerated program is to attract our promising undergraduates.
      - (D): Motion to approve was declined.
   c. Update on Graduate Program Review (A. Guth): The Graduate School has been working to take the guidelines for Graduate Program Review (approved by the GFC on October 21, 2010) and update them so that it is clear how they align with the University Learning Goals, University Strategic Plan, and guidance regarding assessment provided to the University by the Higher Learning Commission. This will be helpful for communication with our accreditation authority. Please see the handouts section of the GFC website for draft rubrics that could be used by faculty to assess student learning outcomes. Discussion followed including debate on using the defense stage for assessment, who would be conducting the assessment, what departments are doing at the undergraduate level, and if this is truly assessing the program or if it is more of an assessment of the student. This is in the development stage. Updates will be given to the GFC as this progresses.

5) New Business:
   a. Communications Assistance Program (D. Charlesworth/H. King): The Graduate School Communications Assistance Program (GS-CAP) provides written and oral/aural communication support to graduate students, faculty, and staff. Services available include, but are not limited to, writing assistance, presentation preparation, and formatting assistance. GS-CAP is particularly suited to assist
individuals on an intensive or time-sensitive basis. New this semester – formatting workshops: Join Harriet King, coordinator of the Graduate School Communications Assistance Program for group work hours in the Library. These workshops are provided at no-charge to students working on a dissertation, thesis, or report. The Graduate School is going to use the resubmission fees to pay for this service. Harriet is skilled with MS Office, Open Office, and Adobe Acrobat Pro, and can provide group tutoring and assistance during certain open times (see GFC web handouts section for dates/times). Please take posters back to your area to advertise this service.

b. Definition of Joint Faculty (A. Storer): This proposal is to formalize the definition of a term applied to tenured or tenure-track faculty who contribute scholarship in more than one discipline at the University. It also rectifies the current situation regarding the use of the term “adjunct” at Michigan Tech. The term “adjunct” is not in alignment with the usage of the term at other institution of higher education.
   • TO DO: Please bring this proposal back to your departments and be prepared to vote at the next meeting.

c. Adjunct Faculty Term Redefinition (A. Storer): This proposal is to modify the definition of adjunct faculty to bring the usage of this term as it is applied at Michigan Tech into line with how the term “adjunct” is used at other institutions of higher education. Please see the handouts section to see the proposed changes.
   • TO DO: Please bring this proposal back to your departments and be prepared to vote at the next meeting.

6) Motion to adjourn at 5:00 pm.