

# University Graduate Council Minutes

Wednesday, April 29, 2015

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Sherrick 103

## **Council in Attendance:**

Alan Dyer, *Chair* (Agriculture)

Anne Christensen (Business)

Arthur Bangert (Education)

W. Randall Babbitt (Faculty Senate)

Melissa Ragain (Arts)

Ahmed Al-Kaisy (Engineering)

John Borkowski, *Vice Chair* (Sciences)

Jean Shreffler-Grant (Nursing)

Timothy LeCain (Letters)

Mary Miles (Health & Human Development)

Theodore Lipfert (Arts)

Karlene Hoo (The Graduate School)

## **Also in Attendance:**

Amanda Brown (The Graduate School)

Ann Vinciguerra (The Graduate School)

Yves Idzerda (Sciences)

Lauren Cerretti (The Graduate School)

Krista Baziak (The Graduate School)

Loren Acton (Sciences)

## **Absent:**

None

- **Meeting started at 1:05 p.m.**
- **April 15, 2015 minutes**
  - Chair Dyer called for approval, council member Ragain motioned, council member LeCain second
    - Unanimous approval
- **Announcements**
  - MSU Graduate Student Competitive Research Grant: Statistics (Dean Hoo)
    - Received 32 proposals
    - Majority of proposals are from the College of Letters & Sciences
    - Good numbers for first time
  - Communication to Campus: *The Scholar's Corner* (Dean Hoo, Ann Vinciguerra)
    - Handout provided
    - The Graduate School plans to send email newsletter with dates, deadlines, and updates (as needed)
    - Chair Dyer suggests faculty newsletter in addition to a student newsletter
      - Include updates to new forms, policy changes, deadlines, etc.
      - Could help with communication and continuity from UGC meetings/actions
    - Suggestion: Have news items appear on video screens in departments and offices
  - Fall 2015 Graduate Summit planning (Dean Hoo)
    - Student committee to organize, with help from The Graduate School
    - "Council" of Graduate students to meet with the Dean of The Graduate School
      - Convey concerns
      - Give advice on events like the Summit
    - Permanent budget in development from The Graduate School, VPR, and Colleges of Engineering and Letters & Sciences

- Tentative committee meeting set for June 2015 to begin planning
          - The Graduate School will solicit UGC for student recommendations once a date has been set
      - UGC documents on Knox Drive (Chair Dyer)
        - Handout provided
        - A request has been made to use a Knox Drive for all UGC documents
          - Will help to avoid message inundation and version issues over email
        - The Office of Degree Programs & Certificates will always attach Knox access directions to UGC emails
  - **New Business**
    - Policy Amendment Proposal: Who Can Chair Graduate Committees (Yves Idzerda, Loren Acton)
      - Handout provided
      - Current policy only allows tenured or tenure-track (TT) faculty at MSU to chair graduate committees; Non-tenure track (NTT) and Research faculty can only co-chair
      - Would like to allow departments to decide if NTT and/or Research faculty can chair graduate committees, with a tenured or TT faculty as co-chair
      - Discussion:
        - Not allowing research faculty to chair creates a hierarchy of faculty for students
        - Data reporting in Banner only allows one person to be listed as “chair”, and they become attached to the student record
        - Concern regarding financial stability for the student if chair is research faculty
        - Could create legal issues with compensation for advising for the research faculty
        - Graduate Faculty status could solve this issue
          - Suggestion: Tenured/TT faculty are assumed to be Graduate Faculty, Research/NTT faculty would apply to be considered Graduate Faculty
        - Under this proposal, teaching, research, and tenured/tenure-track faculty (at MSU) can serve as chair
        - Nationally, it is not common for research faculty to serve as a chair
        - Inability of NTT faculty to serve as chair has created low morale for some Physics faculty
        - Could The Graduate School add a note to the policy, RE: Financial responsibility rests with the department if NTT faculty serve as chair?
          - Dean Hoo will consult with legal regarding this
        - Clarify between full-time and part-time NTT/research faculty’s ability to serve
      - Procedure is to first inform Faculty Senate of proposal and then post for campus review/comment before UGC has an official vote
      - Dean Hoo suggests that Dr. Idzerda write an appeal for research faculty to serve as chair on a case-by-case basis
- **Old Business**
  - Videoconferencing Policy (Discussion/Vote)
    - If there were a note added regarding the ability to appeal the policy all current forms would need to be revised to include this as well
    - Chair Dyer mentioned that there was a previous consensus regarding the policy
    - **Motion:** Chair Dyer called for motion to approve
      - Council member Miles motioned, council member LeCain second

- Unanimous approval
- Graduate Course Numbering Guidelines (Chair Dyer)
  - Handout provided, discussion continued from last meeting
  - 5xx would be broader, more basic level of courses; 6xx would be more advanced
  - Helpful as a communication device to students for conveying course levels, signaling process
  - Ad-hoc committee approved of new definition (committee members Bangert, Shreffler-Grant, Miles, and the Governance Committee)
  - Possible unintended consequence: If a program is only able to offer 5xx level courses due to smaller specialty areas or lower numbers in faculty, this could hurt recruiting efforts for doctoral students
  - Document is only a guideline for Provost's Office; does not require a vote
- Recruitment Strategies (Council member Lipfert)
  - MFA in Science & Natural History Filmmaking program:
    - Students come in with no filmmaking background, only science
    - MSU was pioneer for degree, other schools have since created own programs
    - Application numbers are down (100-150 applicants in fall 2000 to 12 applicants for fall 2015), but all applicants are very strong
  - Most current film students heard about the program from interdisciplinary schools where an MSU film student gave a presentation
  - Students suggest funding to send them back to alma maters to make presentations about the program
    - Does Council think this is a good idea?
    - Other suggestions?
    - Resources available that Council knows about?
  - Council suggestions:
    - Alumni associations are often a strong resource
    - The Graduate School has travel award grants that are designed to bring students to MSU, but Dean Hoo will ask the Provost to use travel grants to send current students elsewhere to make presentations
- **Curriculum Committee Report**
  - Report on Guidelines for Level of Review of Curriculum Changes (Committee member Miles)
    - Mostly clarified language and who maintains changes (the Provost's Office)
    - Email vote, committee member Miles will save file to UGC Knox folder for council to review
  - GTA/GRA Evaluation forms
    - One more pass and then UGC will vote
- **Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.**