**UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL**
**MINUTES**

August 30, 2022 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. President's Conference Room

Council in Attendance:
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)
Michael Everts (Architecture)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Jennifer Thomson (Faculty Senate)
Wade Hill (Nursing)
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)
Catherine Dunlop (Letters)
Marc Giullian (Business)
Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Amy Reines (Sciences)
Brian Rossmann (Library)
Brennan Reeves (Office of International Programs)
Heidi Koenig (Student Representative)

Also in Attendance:
Emily Peters (Graduate School)

Absent:
Jane Mangold (Agriculture)
Arts Representative

Meeting started at 1:00 pm

**May 2nd, 2022 minutes**

- Motion to approve by Windchief, 2nd by Hill, motion passes unanimously

**Announcements**

- **Update from the Dean**
  - Enrollment numbers will be released after census
  - Welcome/Welcome back event last Friday
  - New event: first generation graduate student meet and greet tomorrow
  - 3 successful kickoff sessions for new graduate students
  - Current average GTA stipend went up 15% from last year: $1791/month for 19hr GTA
  - Discussion on housing for graduate students
    - Council could consider developing a proposal to put forward to address graduate student housing. This is an equity/diversity issue.
  - All levels of grad students currently have the same priority, may consider a system to prioritize first year graduate students

- **Faculty Senate update (Thomson)**
    - On the agenda to discuss graduate curriculum review—trying to streamline the process

**Old Business**

**New Business**

- Sub-committee appointments
    - Email Emily a ranking of committees you are interested in serving on
    - Pending chemistry proposals that need to be reviewed by curriculum committee
- FCSED-CER: Family and Consumer Sciences Education Graduate Certificate
    - Overview of proposal: similar structure to the school library certificate, online courses, focus on teachers that don't have an endorsement in this area, 18 credits, many might already have a master's degree, focus on high school and middle school family consumer science teachers
        - OPI changed endorsement rules since this was proposed, may now be able to take a praxis exam instead of additional credits. This could lower the estimated enrollment.
        - The program would have to apply for financial aid eligibility
        - Recognize need for this program
        - Q: The proposal says 80% online?
            - A: Believe the courses are all fully online. 80% is mentioned because it is the threshold for being coded as an online program.
        - Q: Mentioned 18 stackable credits, is this allowed?
            - A: Yes, all 18 credits from a certificate at MSU could be used toward a master's degree at MSU, pending approval by the master's advisor/committee.
        - Q: Will additionally sections of the course need to be added for the projected enrollment increase?
            - We can ask the proposer
- Continuous enrollment policy draft
    - Review policy revisions: required students to be enrolled every academic semester. Some universities believe this type of policy helps time to degree, but reality is our graduate students have complex lives and may need to take time off. This policy as currently written is not being enforced.
        - In parallel, updated with the university's leave of absence language – will eventually update this with the specific process for graduate students
        - Replaced re-admission with the phrasing re-enrollment
    - Feedback (then graduate policy committee to revise):
        - In favor of allowing this flexibility for students' lives
        - Some departments only take on students that have funding, when the student returns, their advisor may not be there to fund them
            - Policy committee could add additional language to address funding more specifically
        - May want to look at the time to degree discussion, how does this policy interact with the push to get students out faster?

        - Q: If a student doesn't enroll, they don't have access to university resources?
            - A: Correct. The idea is tuition pays for the resources and faculty time.
            - Discussion on how this is handled by departments
        - Q: What is the re-admission fee is used for, and is it necessary? Proposed policy language updated in the policy to "may"?
            - Only charged in some circumstances when a student has been out a long period of time and requires an in-depth review. We can get more information from GS Admissions.
- Working plan for graduate student retention
    - Provost has asked every dean to develop a plan and discuss it with faculty in their college.
        - For Graduate School: feedback from UGC and then may present to department heads
    - 10% attrition between first and second year (largest year to year)
    - Review GS retention working plan. Focus areas: engagement, basic needs, and mentoring.
    - Feedback:
        - Missing students getting kicked out by things such as qualifying exams
            - Faculty or peer mentors volunteering to help students prepare for exams has been helpful in other departments
            - Students may be here 3 years and then leave with nothing after failing qualifying exams – would be helpful to have a policy that doesn't allow that
            - Grad School policy does not require qualifying exams—it is left to each department. We have already have minimum GPA and comprehensive exams to measure performance, one possibility is to get rid of qualifying exams all together.
        - Post comp attrition: students burn out, take time away, and have a hard time coming back
        - Examples of 690 courses in Education and Engineering run like a writing group for dissertation or comps: students attend class once a week – provides accountability, time management
        - Ag department offers one credit Intro to Grad Student Seminar course that helps students get started
        - Architecture: implementing more common times to incentivize peer-to-peer learning
        - No benefit for focusing on research. An option to take research as a letter grade instead of p/f would benefit students that excel in research.
    - Could develop a list of good practices from departments across campus
        - Mini grants to departments to incentivize work on strategies that fix their specific needs. Could provide the curated good practices as a place to start.
    - Email any additional suggestions on this topic to Dean Ogilvie
- Suggestions on topics for UGC to address this year

- Pre-tenured faculty that feel they can't say no to a dissertation defense when they are not on contract (e.g. summer). Committee chair, likely tenured, expects that they will be there. Do other departments allow this?
- Aspects of strategic plan associated with graduate level. Maybe Chris Fastnow could present an overview.
- HR/workman comp situation that recently came up with a graduate student. Their contracts need to be structured properly to cover their work.
- Data on retention by department

Adjourned at 2:31 pm

Next scheduled meeting – September 13, 2022