

## February 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

Members Present: J. Albert, P. Auter, C. Briggs, A. Brown, W. Ferguson, S. Gawronski, R. Gonzales, D. Harrington, , H. Hurst, M. Kightley, J. Lemoine, A. Maida, S. McNerny, P. Morton, D. Olivier, C. Roche-Wallace, K. Smith, C. Taylor, W. Xu, , M. Farmer-Kaiser (ex-officio member)

Members Absent: D. Baker, D. Bellar, K. Evans-Jackson, R. Hernandez, A. Khattab, A. Magidin, D. Stevens

The meeting was called to order by W. Ferguson at 2:02 p.m.

### **Announcements:**

The Council voted to approve the December 15, 2015 meeting minutes, with corrections made on page 3 to a grammatical error and page 4 where an unnecessary word should be omitted.

The Graduate Council welcomed Sarah Gawronski, the new Graduate Student Organization president, as a member of the Graduate Council, replacing former GSO president Jane Heels. S. Gawronski thanked the Council for their warm reception and pledged to do her best to represent graduate students.

The list of degree candidates was presented to and accepted by the Council.

W. Ferguson provided updates on the two Graduate Council recommendations (1-Graduate Assistant Policies and 2-International CONI Admission Status) that were sent to the Provost for approval. Dr. Henderson approved these recommendations with their implementation occurring in the near future. M. Kightley asked for clarification regarding when these changes would take place. M. Farmer-Kaiser stated that they would both be effective with implementation of the 2016-2017 University Catalog; she also reported that the revised GA policy will be shared soon with all relevant campus entities and that the International CONI Admission Status change was being applied for Fall 2016 international admissions.

### **Committee Reports:**

Student Appeals Committee – Committee report submitted by Bob Viguerie, not present, and prepared by the Graduate School. Motion made to accept the Student Appeals Committee report. Motion seconded and carried. P. Auter asked about late appeals considered by the Committee via email. M. Farmer-Kaiser reported that, yes, there were additional appeals considered after the meeting and that the Graduate School would provide updated information to include those appeals in the Committee report at the March meeting.

Curriculum Committee – Committee report submitted by Natalia Sidorovskaia, not present. Motion made to accept the report of the Curriculum Committee. Motion seconded and carried.

Fellowship Committee – No report. M. Farmer-Kaiser asked that the Council consider allowing

the Fellowship Committee and the Graduate School to make offers to selected students prior to the March meeting of the Graduate Council, so as to increase chances of securing these top tier students. Motion made to allow the Fellowship Committee and the Graduate School to make offers prior to the March Graduate Council meeting. Motion seconded and carried.

Graduate Faculty Membership Review Committee – W. Ferguson explained the current review cycle was underway as of February 1, and acknowledged the work done over the last semester by the Colleges to revise their individual College criteria for Graduate Faculty membership. Due to timing of the revisions, some faculty might have chosen to be reviewed under either their applicable old or new College criteria for this Spring cycle, but the new College criteria would apply in the Fall 2016.

### **Old Business:**

W. Ferguson asked for updates from the Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Certificate Rules and Regulations. R. Gonzalez stated that he was awaiting further instructions from the Council. M. Farmer-Kaiser explained that the Graduate School will turn the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee and into a catalog entry for the 2016-2017 University Catalog, seeking first the review and approval of Academic Affairs.

W. Ferguson asked for updates from the Ad Hoc Committee on International Student Admissions Policies. M. Farmer-Kaiser stated that there was no report as the Committee had not yet met.

Concerning the December meeting decision to create an Ad Hoc Committee to review the practice of assigning outside observers to thesis and dissertation defenses, W. Ferguson asked for volunteers to both serve as members and/or chair this Committee. M. Kightley, J. Lemoine, D. Olivier, R. Gonzalez, S. McInerney, C. Taylor, and A. Brown volunteered to serve on the Committee with M. Kightley and J. Lemoine agreeing to Co-chair. W. Ferguson then indicated that the Co-chairs would meet soon to discuss the charge and makeup of the Committee.

H. Hurst provided updates from the University Committee on Graduate Student Success and Retention, proposed for creation by the Graduate Council in Spring 2015 and approved by the Provost last Fall. H. Hurst stated that the Committee had already met twice and that they were considering such topics and issues as mentoring, student connectedness, funding, family and departmental support, advising, and other areas. The Committee is planning to break into smaller groups that will carry out different types of exploratory research involving graduate student success and retention. M. Farmer-Kaiser then explained some of the mentoring initiatives that the Committee and the Graduate School is working to carry out in conjunction with Academic Affairs and the Office for Campus Diversity. In addition, the Committee wants to recognize the milestone of graduate candidacy by having an event honoring those students who have reached candidacy. H. Hurst stated that the Committee will ultimately provide a report to the Graduate Council in May and also to the larger University community at the annual Graduate Faculty meeting.

## **New Business:**

W. Ferguson opened the floor for a discussion about the Academic Affairs enrollment expectations/limits for graduate courses and, specifically, the new policies governing Summer session enrollment. K. Smith asked about the enrollment average that has been identified for classes to run, with M. Farmer-Kaiser explaining that the 19-student average came from the Task Force on Summer Scheduling of Courses and Faculty Pay Structure and was based off of a University-wide review of enrollment trends by college. M. Farmer-Kaiser emphasized that this 19-student-enrollment average was a *college* average and not a *department* average; she also explained that graduate courses almost always function as a loss to the University due to small class size, but that larger undergraduate courses often help to offset this loss. Discussion ensued. A. Brown asked if non-faculty-pay courses (e.g., thesis/dissertation hours, internship) count toward this College average, with M. Farmer-Kaiser answering that they do not. The important point was made that all colleges met this average in the past with the exception of the College of Education. Given the important role that Summer sessions play for our graduate students in Education, however, M. Farmer-Kaiser expressed concern but also noted that Academic Affairs and Dean Nathan Roberts have been in discussions about how to ensure that graduate Education courses will run. Concern also was raised over the change in the Financial Aid award year from Summer-Spring to Fall-Summer and what impact that might have on enrollments this Summer session. .

W. Ferguson asked that the Council consider reiterating their support for the University's revised Strategic Plan during this time of administrative transition. Motion made to reiterate support of the Strategic Plan. Motion seconded and passed.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.