

**Graduate Council Minutes
November 4, 2008**

Present: Lawrence Anderson, Jamie Barlowe, Michael Bisesi, Dwayne Demedio, Laurie Dinnebeil, Jeanne Funk, Max Funk, Hans Gottgens, Mohamed Hefzy, Wayne Hoss, Barbara Kopp Miller, Anand Kunnathur, Eric Longsdorf, Sara Lundquist, Sakui Malakpa, Gary Moore, Kelly Phillips, Susan Pocotte, Benjamin Pryor, Ram Rachamadugu, Patricia Relue, Kathleen Salyers, Dorothea Sawicki, Barbara Schneider, Alice Skeens, Dianne Smolen, Mark Templin, Hermann Von Grafenstein, Frederick Williams

Absent: John Gaboury, Scott Heckathorn, Ruth Hottell, Elizabeth Tietz, James Trempe

Excused: Barbaranne Benjamin, Frank Calzonetti, Mylo Jennings, Dong Shik Kim,

Absent: Anastasia Mirzoyants, Azadeh Parvin, Randall Ruch, Krishna Shenai, Amy Thompson

The Minutes of the October 7, 2008, meeting were approved.

Report of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

Dr. Bisesi stated he will expand further on agenda items.

Information and Discussion Items

Graduate Faculty Membership Discussion of New Faculty Hires and Application for Full Graduate Faculty Status

Newly hired faculty into the University from some departments, particularly in the sciences, tend to apply immediately for full membership. The expectations for these new faculty are that they will mentor students, chair thesis and dissertation committees, and teach graduate level courses. Generally, new faculty would apply for and receive associate level graduate faculty membership; with the expectation that they would apply for full membership at some later time. However, these faculty are in a catch-22 in that they may not yet have the track record of a full Graduate Faculty member, but need the privileges of full GF status to mentor and teach graduate students. Since there is no official policy, Council input is sought on whether the membership definitions should be modified to allow full graduate faculty membership for new hires, but with their membership status reviewed in three years rather than the standard seven years. It resembles a provisional status.

This body has the responsibility to set the baseline and departments can set more stringent requirements consistent with their needs. There was discussion and general agreement that if a new hire has the qualifications and endorsement at the departmental level, full membership should be granted in order to be consistent with membership language.

[Motion – Approved Unanimously]

It is the policy of the Graduate Council to grant full graduate faculty membership status for a minimum of three year to newly hired tenure-track faculty who apply for such status and who are expected to build an externally-funded research program that trains and supports UT graduate students.

Thesis and Dissertation Formatting and Style Standards for the College of Graduate Studies

Over the past decade, the standards for thesis and dissertation have eroded significantly. As a result, students lack direction as to appropriate formatting and the variability of submitted documents to the COGS is tremendous. A set of rules and guidelines for standardization of thesis and dissertation formatting, not necessarily a specific style such as APA or MLA, is needed. The Main Campus (MC) handbook does not state the standards. The Health Science Campus (HSC) Graduate Executive Committee has addressed this issue and developed a booklet with two formats and with chapters and manuscripts. The creation of guidelines would be to address areas not covered by particular styles. Dr. Dowd suggested a rough draft document be developed for MC as a starting point with which to then merge with the HSC guidelines. He stated there is a committee working on this. Graduate Council may want to review and approve.

Another concern related to theses and dissertations is that the college specific signature pages imply that graduate degrees are awarded by individual colleges, when in fact they are granted by the graduate faculty. Dr. Sawicki was supportive of including the graduate faculty as an additional or final signature of graduate faculty signature. Dr. Bisesi added that Ohio University has very good templates for submitting and posting electronic theses and dissertations (ETD). There was agreement that templates would be helpful. Departments recommending students use a particular format should continue to do so. Dr. Hefzy pointed out that currently signatures are offered by the advisors of the committee and the Graduate College Dean, all of whom are members of the graduate faculty. The degree is thus offered by graduate faculty, not the Graduate Council.

Graduate Student Enrollment Status

Dr. Bisesi distributed a document titled, Fall 2008 Graduate Enrollment, which provided the number of matriculated students by college for fall semester. Overall enrollment represents an approximate 10% increase.

Interview Schedules for the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

Dr. Relue reported the search committee has narrowed down the list to three candidates. She urged the Council to meet with the candidates and provide feedback on the evaluation sheets that are provided.

Update from Bylaws Workgroup

Dr. Funk reported the workgroup is making excellent progress. At the last meeting there was discussion on the graduate student role. There will be one graduate student representative body as well as re-arrangement of the Graduate Activities Committee. The workgroup objective is to have a final document by the end of this semester. Dr. Bisesi added individual disciplines would continue to have department/program specific groups while graduate students from all of UT can be members of the Graduate Student Association.

Old Business

Election of Ad Hoc Member At-Large from the HSC to the Executive Committee

Drs. Thea Sawicki and Kelly Phillips nominated themselves to serve in an alternate capacity for the third Member At-Large position currently available on the Graduate Council Executive Committee. Council approved unanimously.

Grievance Procedure from Colleges

Dr. Relue reminded the Council that each college was asked to provide its graduate student academic grievance procedure which will help the Academic Standing Committee to determine whether a grievance has followed process appropriately. Those colleges who have not yet submitted their procedures should forward to Ms. Terri Hayes

Academic Grading – WP/WF Prevalence

On Main Campus, a student can request a withdrawal “W” from a course after the 14-day period and the instructor’s permission is not required. A “W” appears on the transcript. Colleges may have limits of the maximum number of withdrawals. There is a separate policy for medical reasons. On the Health Science Campus, after the 14-day period a withdrawal grade “WP” or “WF” is assigned by the instructor. The “WF” grade would be assigned if the student’s grade was at the level of “D” or lower. Dr. Bisesi clarified use of “WP/WF” as advantageous to the student if there are extenuating circumstances in that they have ability to repeat the course with the intention to improve grade. The original grade is on the transcript. The Banner system did not appear to have an appropriate tracking function so the default currently is “W”. The issue was discussed by the HSC Graduate Executive Committee which did not want the option of “WP/WF” to disappear. We have learned that Banner can be modified but harmonization is needed. There needs to be some middle ground with withdrawal. Dr. Bisesi suggested that this issue be further discussed by an ad-hoc committee of equal representation. Dr. Pocotte suggested a comprehensive list be developed of graduate issues to be harmonized such as dates of thesis, grading policy, etc.

Organizational Reports

Graduate Student Association

Ms. Anastasia Mirzoyants, President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), provided the following report: Since the last Graduate Council meeting, GSA had its monthly meeting on October 16th, during which Dr. Bisesi was introduced to graduate students and they had the opportunity to discuss with him some of the academic and financial issues experienced by graduate students. Some of their concerns were the graduate student travel reimbursement fund and the discrepancies in graduate assistantships between Science and Humanities students. On October 30th, the GSA had a Halloween masquerade at Rocky’s Attic. Although the number of students attending was smaller than expected, the event was a success. On November 1st, nine graduate students volunteered for the Sigma Xi Annual Symposium, which attracted more than 100 participants from both campuses at both graduate and undergraduate levels. For about three weeks, the GSA and GSC have been involved in the discussion related to the merger of the two organizations. At least two different models that might work well for all the students was considered; however, the decision is not finalized. The issue is expected to be resolved by the end of this semester with the introduction of a new model at the beginning of the spring semester 2009. There are two more social events prepared by GSA this semester: November 28th Tailgating and December 19th Christmas Masquerade. The next GSA Assembly is scheduled for November 14th.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Council adjourned at 1:45 p.m.