

## University Graduate Council Minutes

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Sherrick 103

### **Council in Attendance:**

Alan Dyer, *Chair* (Agriculture)  
Anne Christensen (Business)  
Ahmed Al-Kaisy (Engineering)  
W. Randall Babbitt (Faculty Senate)  
Theodore Lipfert (Arts)  
Karlene Hoo (The Graduate School)

John Borkowski, *Vice Chair* (Sciences)  
Jean Shreffler-Grant (Nursing)  
Arthur Bangert (Education)  
Mary Miles (Health & Human Development)  
Timothy LeCain (Letters)

### **Also in Attendance:**

Amanda Brown (The Graduate School)

Lauren Cerretti (The Graduate School)

### **Absent:**

Melissa Ragain (Arts)

- **Meeting started at 1:10 p.m.**
- **February 4, 2015 minutes**
  - Chair Dyer called for approval, council member Lipfert motioned, council member LeCain second
    - Unanimous approval
- **Announcements**
  - Policy Proposals (Chair Dyer & Dean Hoo)
    - Proposed policies will be posted to the UGC website prior to voting
      - Chair Dyer requests that policy proposals be posted three weeks in advance of UGC meetings in case of possible timing/scheduling conflicts
      - Master's credits toward Doctoral degree policy (proposed 21 credits) needs to be reviewed at a future meeting addressing campus feedback
    - Chair Dyer & Dean Hoo were invited to, and attended, previous Faculty Senate meeting
      - Off-topic: Some question as to whether Faculty Senate needs to approve UGC activities. Faculty Senate Chair Reidy suggested that UGC leadership & Dean Hoo meet with Faculty Senate leadership at a date to be determined.
  - Recruitment Weekend (Dean Hoo)
    - A central recruiter has been hired in The Graduate School and will start February 26, 2015
    - Recruitment weekend event is a STEM doctoral programs recruiting event (predominant participants are Agriculture and Science schools). Occurs during last week of February
    - This year the events are co-funded by the Provost's Office, and the Deans of Engineering, Agriculture and Letters & Science. Fifteen departments and 2 multi-disciplinary programs are expected to bring recruits to campus either during recruitment weekend or in spring 2015.
- **Old Business**

- Graduate Student representative as part of UGC (Feedback from Council)
  - Ideally, college designation would rotate and the student would be a doctoral student
  - Do students have a way of communicating with one another en masse?
    - Not known, but unlikely
    - May change with the Collective Bargaining Agreement in place – students may become more organized
  - Should a terminal master’s student be included?
    - Very different from doctoral & professional students
    - Close enough to have one rep for this entire area?
  - Suggestion to have both research and non-research student representatives
  - If students had their own council, different representatives could bring issues to UGC when necessary rather than having a fixed student representative
  - Suggestion (Dean Hoo): Each council member to write a description of the role and disseminate to their own students to see what resonates with them
    - Council member Borkowski will share the role description with Math Science students at the open meeting next week
  - Tabled by Chair Dyer
- **New Business**
  - Teaching Assistant evaluation form (Draft handout – Dean Hoo)
    - Review of draft – draft is only for UGC at this time because UGC is the policy decision body that recommends to The Graduate School (GS)
    - Suggestion (Dean Hoo): Completed form should go to HR instead of The GS. The GS only wants a copy if the student is rated “unsatisfactory”
      - Would this be held by campus HR or department HR?
    - Evaluation is useful if an appointment is to be terminated for just cause
    - To be completed at the end of every term by the supervising faculty member
    - What is the motive behind the evaluation? Some departments already have review processes in place.
      - Consistency
    - Do most departments give student evaluations in classes for GTAs?
      - Some, they use the official Knapp form
    - When would the evaluation process begin?
      - Ideally, fall 2015
    - GRA evaluation form also is in the draft stage
    - Why is the students’ GPA included on the evaluation?
      - GPA affects eligibility for GTA positions
      - Form to be completed too early for GPA calculation
        - Suggestion was made to remove GPA from form
    - Which committee should review the form and collect comments/feedback?
      - Policy & Procedures committee chair Borkowski volunteered to collect comments/feedback from UGC
    - Off-topic: Collective Bargaining Agreement information link only appears on the HR website at MSU. Dean Hoo stated it also can be found on the Montana University System web site. A link will be sent to UGC members.

- Graduate Representative Report (Feedback from council regarding potential revisions)
  - Make the comment box bigger; possibly rephrase the description of the comment box
  - Change “Written Comprehensive” to “Oral/Written Comprehensive”, but retain “Oral Comprehensive” and “Dissertation Defense”
  - Should presentation format be removed?
    - Goal of this category is to get an impression of the event and culture of the program/department
  - Add box RE: “Invited to participate” in regards to the Graduate Representative?
  - Clarification of responsibilities and what is expected from Graduate Representative
    - Instructions with form? Link to policy?
  - Should the Graduate Representative report on the outcome of the exam? Should they also report the conditions of a conditional pass?
    - The Graduate Representatives’ objective should be reporting if the exam was appropriate and fair, not the outcome
    - Graduate Representatives have commented on impressions of how they feel the student did (passed or failed)
    - If commenting on an outcome, should the representative just check appropriate “boxes on the form” that the outcome was agreed upon by the committee, conditions (if applicable) were articulated to the student, etc?
  - Dean Hoo: The role of the Graduate Representative should be a part of a work-load equation; currently no work-load equation exists at MSU
  - Tabled by Dyer
- **Committee Reports**
  - Policy & Procedures Committee:
    - Report on Comprehensive Exam/Defense form – Conditional Pass (John Borkowski)
      - Handout provided via email from committee chair Borkowski
      - Mechanism that indicates the student acknowledges they have received requirements for a conditional pass
      - Add to the form information about a detailed list of conditions that must be submitted with the form?
      - Is it enough to state that there are “revisions as required by chair”?
      - Would a “conditional pass” option on the form be too formal and complicated?
      - What if there is a disagreement amongst committee members?
      - Should the chair hold the form, unsigned, until conditions are met?
      - Tabled by Chair Dyer
    - Signature Page for Thesis/Dissertation
      - Signature Page used to exist, but was removed. No one seemed to know when or why.
        - Should this be added back to documentation process?
- **Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.**