

## Minutes of **University Graduate Council**

April 7, 2009

**Present:** Tim McDermott (AG), Bonita Peterson (BUS), William Ruff (EHHD), Robert Maher (ENGR), Carl Fox (DGE), CHAIR Yves Idzerda (L&S-Science), Rita Cheek (NURS), David Keto (STUDENT), Tanya Skurski (STUDENT).

Also attending were Nathalie Cailaud (INT'L PROG), MaryKay West (DGE) and Donna Negaard (DGE).

Meeting commenced at 9:05 a.m. in 114 Sherrick.

### Approval of Minutes

- For March 10, 2009 – moved, seconded and **unanimously approved**.

### Open Campus Forum

- No one came forward.

### UGC Committee Reports

- None given.

### DGE Staff Reports

- Board of Regents Update
  - a) Board approved the MA and PhD for American Studies, the MS in Health Sciences, the distance delivery for M.S. in Agricultural Education.
- Tuition Waiver Update
  - a) "What do you need to know" was handed out; Donna will expand and send to all department heads—to notify all PIs and grad students
  - b) Changes will start with summer semester—affects existing students
  - c) Colleges have received their allocations
  - d) Waivers have been separated from graduate appointments
  - e) Will begin testing the electronic form of the GAAF this week
  - f) GTAs and GRAs must have minimum of 6 credits and be appointed for the entire semester
  - g) If a department goes over their waiver allocation, the department or college will have to cover the overage
  - h) May have to go back to granting agency for financial assistance.

----- Break in Staff Reports -----

### Proposal from Computer Science – Courses Only Plan B Option – John Paxton

- a) There is a demand from local industry for a MS degree in computer science (courses only, no thesis) as workers do not have time to pursue full thesis based MS
- b) There is also a national need for more professional MS degrees
- c) The proposed MS could be an interdisciplinary degree

#### Discussion:

- d) Can “courses only”/no research involved” be considered a full Masters of Science degree?
- e) The degree includes a 2 hour oral comprehensive exam based on the courses taken in the program
- f) UGC suggests that a seminar be included to help develop student’s communications skills or, alternatively, students could complete a semester-long project in which they submit a paper to a mock “national conference” and give a presentation
- g) Partial funding might come from outside companies who are requesting the computer science degree
- h) Title of the degree is very important – on transcript, could have MS Computer Science with “professional option” or “thesis option”
- i) Would require 30 course credits (21 credits must be 500 level)
- j) Education and Nursing already have professional master’s degrees at MSU
- k) Times of classes may need to be changed for working people—early mornings or late afternoons—would that affect daytime students?
- l) Workers are already working on projects (could they use project for the degree?) –some companies do not want their projects to become public
- m) Carl will check to see if B of R needs to be involved
- n) Carl needs: (1) official approval from the Dean of Letters and Science, (2) list of 20 credits required, (3) list of 10 credits of electives, (4) estimate of number of new students who will enroll
- o) UGC members agree with the concept of the proposal.

----- Back to DGE Staff Reports -----

- Presidential Scholarships

- a) Eligible students must have undergrad GPA above 3.5
- b) DGE will award 25 scholarships at \$1,000 each for new graduate students
- c) Email sent out 2 weeks ago requesting nominations of students.

- Graduate Student Capacity Study

- a) DGE will send out a capacity questionnaire to each department
- b) Departments will determine their minimum, maximum, and optimal capacities for students based on a number of factors (e.g., faculty, funding, space, etc.)

- c) The results of the study will stimulate discussions in grad programs about opportunities and barriers to growth.
- Graduate Handbook
  - a) Would be a general source for information for graduate programs
  - b) 43 page draft is ready for review by DGE
  - c) Policy and Procedures Committee and Grad Coordinators will also review
  - d) Plan to publish in Fall 2009.
- Graduate Fees
  - a) Donna gave out a handout of fees DGE charges
  - b) Fees charged have not been in effect for a full year; a financial report will be provided after the full year of implementation.

#### PhD Dissertations – Lay Person Abstracts

- a) UCLA is proposing that PhD students prepare abstracts of their research in terms that lay people could understand
- b) The purpose is to share and promote university research with the public
- c) Abstracts could be collected in an annual publication
- d) UGC members felt it would be a great idea—not only for PhD but also for MS degrees.

#### Elections for Chair and Vice Chair

- Need nominations for next meeting, April 21.

Meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

MaryKay West, Secretary  
Division of Graduate Education