Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Senate
January 29, 2013

The meeting was called to order by President Sanda Erdelez at 3:30 pm in S203 Memorial Union.

Senators and administrative representatives attending: Doug Bowles, Sam Cohen, James Endersby, Sanda Erdelez, Jeni Hart, Sanjeev Khanna, Tracy Kitchel, Charles Nilon, Earnest Perry, Carol Snively, Marty Townsend, Peter Vallentyne, John Wigger, and Lisa Zanetti, Matthew Cook (Graduate Student Association), George Justice, Mannie Liscum, Ashley Siebenaler, Terrence Grus, and Ruth Erwin (Graduate School) and Ken Dean (Provost Office) (visitors).

Senators and administrative representatives absent: Ton Stam.

A motion and second were made to approve the minutes of the November 27, 2012 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Erdelez presented the agenda for the meeting and it was accepted.

Graduate School Report

Dr. Justice announced that he had attended the inaugural meeting of the SEC Graduate Deans in Athens, Georgia recently. This was the first time the SEC Graduate Deans had met as a group. He indicated the group would be working on a couple of projects. Dr. Justice indicated that the group will meet again in June in Lexington, Kentucky to follow up on the projects. The group will be working with the Provosts and Chancellors on the SEC campuses. Dr. Justice indicated that Jeni Hart is one MU faculty member participating in the SECU faculty development program. Dr. Justice indicated that the deans' group wants to develop a project showing how graduate education benefits the universities and region. He pointed out that MU was similar in size to the other SEC institutions. He also noted that applications were down at MU by 7% from a year ago and that most SEC institutions were also showing declines. (As of February 1, however, graduate applications were slightly up from the previous year.)

Graduate Student Association Report

Since this was Mr. Cook's, the new GSA President, first meeting the group went around the table and made introductions. He indicated that GSA had their first Executive Board meeting and were planning to have set up discussion groups to discuss insurance, post graduate education, and student loans. The group was also starting to work on their annual GSA Banquet which would be held later in the spring.

Executive Committee Report

Dr. Erdelez indicated that the only item discussed by the Executive Committee related to an unfinished agenda item.

Standing Committees Report

Awards Committee

Dr. Vallentyne announced the Awards Committee had completed reviewing the MU Graduate Faculty Mentor awards nominations and were currently working on Distinguished Dissertation nominations.

Academic Affairs Committee

Dr. Snively indicated that the Committee had not been able to review courses in December and had now received the course proposals and hoped to have them reviewed for the February meeting. She indicated that several Committee members had reviewed the Energy Efficiency Graduate Certificate proposal. Committee members had questions and the proposal was sent back for additional information.

Unfinished Business

Dr. Erdelez indicated that the materials for the first item under Unfinished Business were included in the email with the meeting agenda. She indicated that the charge to the Executive Committee (EC) at the November meeting was to examine and make recommendations to the GFS about how to respond to the College of Engineering proposal (CoE Proposal) for a new emphasis area. She indicated the EC met and proposed a Resolution that was distributed to the GFS for an electronic vote in December (document attached). The vote was 14 approvals, 0 denials, and 2 abstentions. She indicated the Resolution was based on the rationale that an entity was not in place for administration of the future nuclear engineering program to which the proposed new emphasis area would be added. Identification of such an entity is needed so that GFS procedures for new emphasis area addition could be followed. The EC also felt that CoE Proposal is time sensitive because its plans to admit students for Fall 2014, and requested that the process identifying administrative structure for NE programs should be expedited by Dean Justice and Provost Foster. The GFS Resolution was sent to both parties interested in nuclear engineering education at MU – the Nuclear Science and Engineering Institute (NSEI), which has so far administered NE programs and College of Engineering (CoE), which proposed addition of new emphasis areas in NE.
Dr. Justice and Provost charged the CoE to administer future offerings of NE programs at MU. Revision of the proposal for addition of new NE emphasis areas is currently under way and will be submitted to GFS for evaluation and approval in the near future. The NSEI faculty has challenged the change in administrative structure for NE programs and, referring to the GFS Bylaws, has initiated a petition signed by 45 MU faculty to call the meeting of MU graduate faculty and vote on rescinding GFS Resolution.

The Senators voiced various concerns and questions about differences between intentions and interpretations of Resolution. Dr. Justice indicated that in response to Resolution MU administration identified that CoE has the best capacity to administer NE Programs at MU and provided several option for organizational formats that could achieve this through inclusion of all stakeholders interested in NE education at MU.

Dr. Justice indicated that Engineering was charged with putting together a Nuclear Engineering Program. It consists of 12 Engineering faculty members, 4 NSEI faculty members and 2 faculty members from Arts and Science. The group has passed its bylaws and will prepare the proposal in accordance with these. The process is under way to move the current NSEI emphasis areas to the new Nuclear Engineering Program. Current NSEI faculty has been guaranteed to teach their courses for five years.

In discussion that followed, several senators expressed concerns about the complexity of situation involving NSEI, which extends beyond GFS responsibilities in graduate academic programming. Information was provided that the Faculty Council is also reviewing and discussing the situation and that the administrative part will be decided elsewhere. There is eagerness to find a solution so that new nuclear engineering students could be admitted.

Bringing discussion back to the topic of petition presented by NSEI to GFS, Mr. Dean indicated to the group that they needed to think about whether the petition was properly presented and if it meets the requirements stated in GFS bylaws. He told the GFS that they need to look at the bylaws to determine what their authority is and how their role is defined. He also indicated that programmatic approvals by GFS continue to go up the chain of authority, i.e. Graduate Dean, Provost, Chancellor, System and State.

After additional discussion of the intended purposes of GFS Resolution the Senators concluded that it does not constitute a legislative act and as such does not meet the procedural requirements stated in GFS bylaws for calling a meeting of the graduate faculty. It was decided that this response should be communicated to NSEI and the petitioners, supported by factual information about GFS actions involving the Resolution and reference to GFS Bylaws. Dr. Erdelez and others would assist in putting the statement together for the GFS review and vote before it is sent to the petitioners.

Requirements for Students’ Satisfactory Progress

Due to the lateness of the hour this item was tabled.

New Business

Agricultural Economics MS-PhD Name Change

Due to the lateness of the hour this item was tabled.

Other Business

Follow Up on GFS and Faculty Council December 2012 Meeting

Due to the lateness of the hour this item was also tabled.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Submitted by

Ruth Erwin
Graduate School