Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Senate
October 16, 2012

The meeting was called to order by President Sanda Erdelez at 3:30 pm in S204 Memorial Union.

Senators and administrative representatives attending: Doug Bowles, Sam Cohen, James Endersby, Sanda Erdelez, Sanjeev Khanna, Charles Nilon, Earnest Perry, Carol Snively, Marty Townsend, Peter Vallentyne, John Wigger, Lisa Zanetti, George Justice, Mannie Liscum, Ashley Siebenaler, and Ruth Erwin (Graduate School) and John Gahl (visitor).

Senators and administrative representatives absent: Jeni Hart, Tracy Kitchel, Ton Stam, Erica Thieman (Graduate Student Association).

A motion and second were made to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2012 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

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

Graduate School Report

Dr. Justice indicated that he had returned from the Association of Graduate School (AAU/AGS) meeting. There he heard a national report on NIH future of the Biomedical workforce and the changes within that. Also schools are thinking about time to degree, completion dates and outcomes. Dr. Wilkins is working on a project on this campus about this. A good example of a website would be Northwestern University website on their time to degree and completion dates statistics.

Graduate Student Association

Because Ms. Thieman was unable to attend there was no GSA report.

Executive Committee Meeting Report

Dr. Erdelez indicated that the Executive Committee met to help plan the agenda and discuss a faculty appeal regarding doctoral faculty status. She announced that the Executive Committee had made a recommendation to Dr. Justice on the faculty appeal.

Standing Committee Reports

Dr. Snively announced that the Academic Affairs Committee did not have a report since they had not received any course proposals yet this semester. Dr. Vallentyne announced that the Awards Committee had six applications for the Distinguished Masters award and had made their selection which will be announced next spring at the Graduate School Awards Reception.

Unfinished Business
Dr. Justice introduced the paper. He indicated that the charge by the Strategic Plan was what motivated the creation of the White Paper. Dr. Justice said that he used a WordPress ePublishing format for the creation of the document which allows for comments to be added. Dr. Justice indicated that he had shared the document with the Provost and Council of Deans. He stated that the document is open for comments by the Senators, the University as a whole and also those outside the University community. It should be a project of the GFS every year to discuss and review the document. The document is not considered to be Graduate School policy. A question was raised about controversial items and Dr. Justice indicated that his purpose was to have individuals rethinking about what traditionally has been done. He said he tried to raise questions from the readers. A senator suggested that controversial elements in the White Paper might form the basis for several campus-wide forums this year. The Strategic Plan requires that the GFS provide input and Dr. Justice urged the GFS to read the White Paper and pick items that they would like to discuss. A suggestion was made to have an email discussion during the months to discuss different ideas. Dr. Erdelez will meet with Dr. Justice to put together a schedule of topics to discuss through the end of the year.

A Motion and second were made to bring topics from the White Paper out to campus meetings. This can be done on a case by case basis with the Senators talking among themselves through email first. The motion was approved.

**Dissertation Approval Page**

Ms. Siebenaler indicated that she looked at both AAU and SEC schools with regard to how the dissertation approval page was handled. Options possible for MU include:

- Creation of a new form (M-4/D-5) that would convey the committee’s approval of the written document which would not require original, handwritten signatures; could be submitted electronically through ImageNow. Downside was that this might cause confusion among students, faculty, and staff; and would create issues with binding as the form would not look like the traditional approval page.

- Combined defense and written work approval forms to be held by Adviser/Committee Chair until all changes are made satisfactorily which would also not require original, handwritten signature; could also be submitted electronically through ImageNow; would ensure both defense and written document are complete before submission of form, puts much of the responsibility in the hands of the Adviser/Committee Chairperson; could cause issues in instance where students request verification of a successful defense prior to dissertation submission; binding issues would again be a problem; and the new form would again cause confusion.

- Slight changes to the existing approval page in practice and process which would allow the acceptance of faxed or scanned signatures as long as they were legible; could be submitted electronically through ImageNow; be convenient for those traveling; would make the processing of the document more efficient; and would maintain the look of the traditional approval page.
Ms. Siebenaler indicated that the majority of the schools she reviewed use the last option. MU accepts original signature to maintain the integrity of the form. The GFS discussed the options. A motion and second were made to approval option 3 as the option to use. (Option 3 is: Slight changes to the existing approval page in practice and process.)

- Acceptance of faxed or scanned signatures as long as they were legible
- Could be submitted electronically through ImageNow
- Very convenient for those who are traveling whether it be student or faculty member
- Would make the processing of the document more efficient
- Would maintain the look of the traditional approval page

The motion was approved.

NEW BUSINESS

**Genetics Area Program Doctoral Faculty Criteria and Appointment Process**

Dr. Justice provided the reasoning for the changes in the Genetics Area Program was due to GAP being an interdisciplinary program and that in the past GAP had forgotten they had to have the process. The GAP program application indicates that in accordance with Graduate School Policy, faculty formally associated with the Genetics Area Program that are already appointed members of the Doctoral Faculty in their home departments are not required to be re-reviewed. Instead, once documentation of Doctoral Faculty status in the home department is received and verified, the Genetics Area Program will notify the Graduate School that a faculty member has satisfied the requirements for acceptance as GAP Doctoral Faculty. Continued Doctoral Faculty status in GAP will be contingent on maintaining Doctoral Faculty status in the home department. Faculty whose Doctoral Faculty status has lapsed and who do not choose to renew it in their home department can reapply for GAP Doctoral Faculty status using the second mechanism listed below. The criteria being reviewed are used for those individuals without doctoral faculty status in their tenure-home department. This will provide a more formalized process than in the past. A question was raised on item 6 on the application, “List activities as a major advisor for graduate students (MS and PhD) for the last 5 years. Please include all students who have entered your lab and indicate with an asterisk any that left before completing their degree with you. Indicate the reason for failure to complete the degree with you.” The GAP Doctoral Faculty Criteria and Appointment Process were tabled until the next meeting so that a determination could be made if the statement would result in a FERPA violation.

**Proposal for Emphasis Areas in Nuclear Engineering**

Dr. Gahl from the College of Engineering joined the meeting and gave the background and motivation from the faculty committee who came up with the proposal. The emphasis areas will have core courses that reflect courses that are offered in Nuclear Engineering programs across the country and are accredited by ABET. The courses for the emphasis areas are courses that are currently being taught across this campus.

Questions rose including: how many people would be interested in the emphasis areas? Dr. Gahl indicated that it would not be a problem to populate the areas. Courses would be taught
once a year. They were hoping for 35 students in the emphasis areas with 100 people as a successful number in all the emphasis areas. He indicated that China is looking to Europe and North America to educate their students with a huge demand to send students to the USA. Engineering has an MOU with China for a 2+2 or 3+2 program and the students in these programs come to MU and pay their own way.

Another question was raised about the current graduate programs. It was noted that the current program was not accepting students and that the new program’s emphasis areas do not overlap with the emphasis areas currently in Nuclear Engineering.

Another question was regarding the language competencies of potential international students and Dr. Gahl indicated that had not been a problem with the students they currently have, who fulfill the Graduate School’s minimum score on the TOEFL examination. All International students must fulfill the minimum language requirement, which is set by the Graduate School after having been determined and approved by the Graduate Faculty Senate.

A question was asked about the number of new courses versus existing courses. Mostly the courses used will be 7000/8000 existing courses. Of the 17 courses used 8 are 8000-level. The 7000-level courses will be used to get students interested in the emphasis areas. There will be adequate numbers of 8000 level courses for students to fulfill Graduate School requirements for 8000 or 9000 level courses.

It was again noted that the vote on the proposal will be held at the next meeting.

There will be a Graduate Faculty Senate meeting in December with the Faculty Council. The next meeting will be November 27.

The meeting adjoumed at 5:03 pm.

Submitted by

Ruth Erwin
Graduate School