

University Graduate Council Minutes

Monday April 21, 2014

9:00 am

Animal Bioscience Building Room 138

Council in Attendance:

John Borkowski (Sciences – Letters & Sciences)	Anne Christensen (Business)
Sarah Codd (Engineering)	Alan Dyer (Agriculture)
Christopher Livingston (Arch – Arts & Arch.)	Michael Reidy (Ex Officio, Faculty Senate)
Mary Murphy (Letters – Letters & Sciences)	William Ruff (Educ. - EHHD)
Jean Shreffler-Grant (Nursing) Representative)	Roshan Patel (Graduate Student)
Mary Miles (HHD- EHHD)	

Also in Attendance:

Amanda Brown (Graduate School)	Melis Edwards (Graduate School)
Karlene Hoo (Graduate School)	Erin Smith (Graduate School)

Absent:

Meeting started at 9:05 am

Chair elect: William Ruff

- No comments from campus
- April 07, 2014 minutes approved unanimously with no change
- Discussion on Level II PhD Psychological Science proposal:
 - Comments from the committee:
 - Classes already offered with the master's degree. Research active faculty want to enhance student's experience with a more intensive research opportunity.
 - Have to be careful. Need to strengthen social sciences at MSU. Don't want to hinder them, however it must be sustainable. Academic analytics needed – compare to other departments. Master's program may lose its integrity. It [doctoral programs] may take resources. Resources are limited.
 - Only three courses above the master's degree. Is this the norm? Need to provide more information.
 - Vote is required of graduate council. Subsequently, both Faculty Senate and the Dean's Council in that order will review the proposal. The Senate will vote stating faculty support/no-support. Dean's Council also will vote. Provost can override the Senate and send it forward to the Board of Regents.

- Proposal to draft a response to the Psychology department
 - A subcommittee of UGC will provide a written draft. The draft will be sent to UGC for approval.
 - Comments will be sent to Committee member Livingston. Committee member Dyer proposed constructing critique by May 15, 2014. Committee member Miles seconded this proposal. Unanimous approval followed.
 - Dean Hoo and William Ruff will meet with the Psychology dept. to give critiques in person.
- Letters of Recommendation:
 - Melis Edwards requested the Council's guidance in regards to potential Graduate student applications for quality – some departments only require one letter. A mixture of requirements exist.

Comments from the committee:

- Three (3) should be the requirement for first time graduate students. Who the student selects to write a recommendation exists as evidence of their judgment. There is rationale for requiring certain letters of recommendation.
- Issue – applicant has no control as to when the letters are submitted.
- Implementation of CollegeNet™ may correct many issues. Full rollout – end of May 2014.
- Exceptions – deal with them on a case-by-case basis. A department head may appeal to the Graduate School to accept fewer letters of recommendation.
- Chair Ruff proposed that 3 letters of recommendation be required and/or a letter from the department head for exceptions.
- Note 1: No letters of recommendation are required for the non-degree seeking student.
- Note 2: The council was opposed to implement a minimum GPA because this does not allow students to enter as a non-degree seeking student and attempt to increase their GPA.

Motioned was made by Committee member Borkowski; seconded by Committee member Murphy seconded the proposal. Unanimous approval followed.

- Committee Updates and Reports

Policy and Procedures Committee: (Murphy, Borkowski, Shreffler-Grant)

- Committee member Borkowski has agreed to chair this committee moving forward.
- Committee members Shreffler-Grant and Murphy reviewed video conferencing:
 - o Committee member Shreffler-Grant collected info, drafted policy and sent out for review
 - o There are two separate policies for masters/doctorate students. Committee member Shreffler-Grant proposed a combined policy. The major change is allowance for up to two (2) members of the committee (excluding the chair) to appear on videoconference. The exception is the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) because of the unique logistics faced by the students and faculty.

- Petition for outside situations (inability to travel due to remoteness, and so forth).
- Who defines ‘remote?’ There were examples of people claiming to be remote when they weren’t
- Pre-proposal would alleviate issues. Approval must be sought first rather than after the fact.
- Discussion:
 - o There is need for a pre-approval to be submitted ahead of time.
 - o Graduate representatives and Graduate Coordinators/Administrative assistants are to be informed on what the Graduate School policies are and what is required.
 - o It also is the graduate student’s responsibility to read and comprehend the policy.
 - o Proctor – Qualifications? Requirements? Role?
 - o Chair of the committee is required to assure the integrity of exam process.
- Committee member Christensen: Opposed to video for dissertation defense.
 - o Not okay for the student to not be present.
 - o The student should report to the location (where the chair and Grad Rep are located) of the defense.
- Committee member Dyer: It is more important that the student not be alone. A doctoral student should travel to the location of the chair of the committee.
- Committee member Murphy: Defense is the follow-up to all coursework and research.
 - o If there is a proctor, this person doesn’t need to be a faculty, but they must guarantee quality.
- The current video conferencing policy is for comprehensive exams only. A new policy is needed for defense of thesis and dissertation.
- Suggestion: use policy for both and write a caveat for special circumstances.

Proposal: MASTERS and DOCTORAL: *Video Conferencing during Comprehensive Exam and Defense of Thesis. Excludes Doctoral Defense of Dissertation.*

The Graduate School allows for students to video conference with committee members using the following requirements:

- Must be a two-way conference with video.
- The conference process is initiated and completed by the student and/or department.
- All costs incurred are the responsibility of the department and/or student.
- If communication is broken during the examination and cannot be re-established, the examination must be terminated and rescheduled for completion at a later time/date.
- Two (2) members of the committee, not including the Chair or Graduate Representative, are allowed to video conference. The following exception to this allowance is the College of Nursing’s DNP Program:
 - o The DNP student and committee members, including the Chair and Graduate Representative, must be visible via video camera to the entire committee, as well as be present at a College of Nursing campus (locations: Bozeman, Billings, Missoula, Kalispell, Great Falls). Neither the student nor any committee member is allowed to telephone into the conference.

- The student and Chair may petition the Graduate School to allow more than two (2) committee members including the Chair or Graduate Representative to participate via video conference.
 - The petition must address why the stated requirement of allowing at most two (2) committee members to participate via video conference cannot be accommodated
 - If no committee member can be present with the student, then a qualified proctor must be present at the student's location throughout the entire examination. The Chair is responsible for upholding the quality of the exam or defense, which may include a proctor being present as selected by the Chair. The proctor must submit confirmation in writing via an email or letter to The Graduate School that he/she was present at the student's location for the entire examination.
 - Committee member Reidy motioned to approve above; Committee member Christensen seconded the proposal. Unanimous approval followed.
- Inactive Students
 - The Graduate School brought to Council's attention the need to create metrics that will identify active students. This will allow for:
 - Improved overall accuracy of enrollment and P&T reports.
 - Identifying committees that should be inactivated.
 - Identifying graduate representative whose service is not being utilized.
 - Tracking progress to degree.
 - Discussion
 - a. Annual reporting of students' progress
 - b. Holding faculty accountable for knowing students status
 - c. Paper trail showing active/inactive. Protects faculty and students
 - Committee member Codd set a motion for the Graduate Dean to have the ability to poll faculty via a form for annual progress information. Committee member Christensen seconded the motion. Unanimous approval followed.
- Discussion Items
 - Nominations for Vice-Chair – Committee member Reidy suggested waiting until fall. Chair Ruff suggested identifying an “acting” vice-chair
 - Chair Ruff nominated Committee member Christensen, who respectfully declined.
 - Committee member Dyer nominated Committee member Codd, who respectfully declined.
 - Dean Hoo nominated Committee member Borkowski, who accepted.
 - Confirmation of the Chair of UGC: Committee member Dyer agreed to be chair for fall 2014–spring 2016
- Dean Hoo thanked everyone for their participation, looking forward to next year.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:57 am
 - Next scheduled meeting: To be determined once Fall 2014 class schedules are confirmed