

Graduate Administrators Council (GAC)
Minutes for Thursday, October 27, 2011
Koch Hall Board Room
9:00 to 10:30 am

Attending: Brenda Neumon Lewis, Chair, Missy Barber, Chris Osgood, Richardean Benjamin, Deanne Shuman, Robert Wojtowicz, Cheryl Baker, Osman Akan, Mary Swartz, Ali Ardan, Austin Jersild

Also attending: Judy Bowman

Introduction of Austin Jersild, Faculty Senate Representative

Approval of September 29, 2011 Minutes

- Minutes were approved.

Graduate Catalog

- Dr. Lewis advised Council that the 2011-2012 University Graduate Catalog had been distributed to Associate Deans and Graduate Program Directors.

Office of Graduate Studies Newsletter

- Copies of the Office of Graduate Studies Newsletter were distributed to the members of the Council. Dr. Lewis informed the Council that the newsletter was prepared by Nicholas Benson. Nicholas Benson is a graduate assistant in the Office of Graduate Studies, majoring in Lifespan and Digital Communications. Dr. Lewis advised the Council that another newsletter will be coming out in December. If there are suggestions, ideas for articles, or information about funding sources for graduate students, contact Nicholas Benson. The newsletter was also distributed electronically to all graduate students, graduate program directors, and associate deans. It is also posted on the Office of Graduate Studies website.

Announcements/Updates

- Doctoral Mentoring Award – The Provost's Council supported the changes recommended by the committee. Each college will have one nomination and the awardee will be chosen from that pool. College nominees will receive a certificate from the Office of Graduate Studies and will be invited to the award recognition dinner. Dr. Lewis asked members to please inform faculty and students about the award.
- VCGS Graduate Research Forum – Dr. Lewis asked Council members to encourage students to submit proposals for the forum. The date of the forum has been changed to Thursday, February 16, 2011 from 4 to 6 pm. Dr. Lewis advised Council that transportation will be made available to students who participate. Last year, eight students participated.

Follow-up CourseLeaf Training and Next Steps

- Spreadsheet was given to Associate Deans to collect information regarding workflow. Dr. Lewis explained that collecting the workflow information will enable us to make sure that Courseleaf has the correct information. Judy Bowman asked Associate Deans to collect information for both undergraduate and graduate college committees.
- Judy Bowman advised Council to continue to send paper course form changes for now. Notification will be sent out when course changes can be made in Courseleaf. A letter with further instructions will be sent out in the next week or so.
- After some discussion regarding the workflow process, it was decided to start the workflow with the department chair, rather than the department committee. The workflow template will be distributed to the Associate Deans for completion. It was agreed that the templates would be completed and returned within a week and a half.

Graduate Bench Mark Issues

- Mary Swartz reminded Council that the Result of Master's Examination or Requirement forms (M2) and the Result of Doctoral Examination or Requirement forms (D3) should be submitted as the students complete the benchmarks on the forms. Some departments are now submitting these forms when all of the benchmarks have been completed. When this is done, it appears as though all of the benchmarks were completed on the same day. When these forms are not submitted timely, theses and dissertation titles cannot be reported to the Commencement Office. This creates problems because the titles are printed in the commencement books.
- Council was also reminded of the policy regarding submission of theses and dissertations. The policy states that they must be submitted at least two Fridays before Commencement. Theses and dissertations submitted late are often sent with a justification that a committee member was unavailable to sign. Committee members have a responsibility to the student to make themselves available or if they cannot be available, then alternative arrangements should be made.
- It was decided to reconstitute the committee to review the Result of Master's Examination or Requirement form (M2) and the Result of Doctoral Examination or Requirement form (D3). The committee will make recommendations to GAC.
- Dr. Lewis asked Council to remind GPDs and staff that it is no longer required to submit these forms to the Office of Graduate Studies. Originals should be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Continuous Enrollment Policy

- Dr. Lewis advised Council that there has been an increase in the number of requests for exceptions to the Continuous Enrollment policy. She reminded everyone that master's students must be enrolled in the semester in which they graduate and doctoral students (following their advance to candidacy) must be continuously enrolled until they graduate.

"Brown Bag" Workshop

- Based on recommendations from the Graduate Administrators Workshop, Dr. Lewis is planning to have a "brown bag" workshop to review/discuss policies and procedures. Council members suggested creating a log to record the different types of questions asked. It was also suggested that Dr. Lewis refer calls back to Associate Deans.

Revised Reinstatement Policy

- The revisions to the reinstatement policy were approved, however, when the procedures were created, it was decided that the department chair and the GPD should be in agreement with the reinstatement decision. Because of this change, the policy had to be resubmitted to Committee C. Staff should be made aware of the new policy. As soon as the recommendations are received from Committee C, Dr. Lewis will communicate with the GPDs.

Graduate Needs Survey

- Committee consists of Mona Danner, Bill Heffelfinger, Tisha Parades, and Sharon Judge. The survey will look at the needs of graduate students. The development of a survey was proposed as a result of feedback from SEES. They would like to assist in providing a sense of community for graduate students. Inquisite will be used to create the survey and some incentives will be provided. Dr. Lewis said that the committee was looking at identifying strategies to provide feedback to students that participate in the survey, to close the loop. Also, they were considering focus groups to help provide information for survey data.

No additional topics were discussed.

Meeting adjourned.