

Minutes of **University Graduate Council**
February 17, 2009

Present: Tim McDermott (AG), Rollin Beamish (A & A), Bonita Peterson (BUS), Robert Maher (ENGR), Carl Fox (DGE), CHAIR Yves Idzerda (L&S-Science), Rita Cheek (NURS), Tanya Skurski (STUDENT).

Also attending were MaryKay West (DGE), Cassy Dale (DGE), and Donna Negaard (DGE).

Meeting commenced at 9:10 a.m. in 114 Sherrick. With a new video conference system, all members can now see each other.

Approval of Minutes of November 6, 2008

- Not available

Open Campus Forum – Comments from Campus

- None

UGC Committee Reports

- Policies & Procedures – Rob – no report
- Governance – Rita – no report
- Curriculum – Carl – later during this meeting

DGE Staff Reports:

- DGED 501 GTA Development Class for Spring 2009 – Carl
 - a) 13 enrolled for the spring semester
 - b) Class continues to offer GTAs information and support across all disciplines
 - c) Class gives GTAs an opportunity to show GTA training on their transcript which can be very useful to those who would like to become faculty
- Campus Recruiting Weekend
 - a) March 6 – 8, 2009
 - b) Includes Molecular Bioscience program and other MSU departments
 - c) Brings top students to MSU—for departmental visits and interview process
 - d) Includes poster presentations and dinner with MSU alumni speaker

Tuition Waiver Analysis and Task Force – Carl

- a) Analysis of 2008-2009 went to UPBAC last week
- b) The changed policy on tuition waivers last year was successful in recruiting students (goal of 1800 grad students was met with 1850); there was significant growth in international and non-resident students
- c) Unexpectedly, the nonresident tuition waiver budget was exceeded

- d) It is expected that tuition waivers for 2009-2010 will be allocated as dollars to the colleges who will further allocate the dollars to the departments
- e) A Tuition Waiver Task Force (TWTF) has been set up to review the policy – each college has a representative.
- f) The tuition waiver budget will be much more limited this coming year.

New Graduate Request Process – Carl

- a) Curriculum Committee met before Christmas to assess the new course approval process and request form
- b) Carl would like to rely more on the course syllabus for determining approval.
- c) The Curriculum Committee felt the VP for Graduate Education should continue to review all new requests; they would not need to go before the whole UGC unless there were specific questions to discuss
- d) For co-convened courses, Carl will review the 500 level requests

Update on MS in Health Sciences and PhD in American Studies – Carl

- a) The Board of Regents (BOR) has had the first airing of the MS in Health Sciences
- b) There were no questions.
- c) The approval will probably be at the next BOR meeting
- d) The BOR questioned starting the PhD in American Studies during a time when new resources are limited. However, Greg Young and David Cherry will submit a business plan to the BOR to demonstrate the financial soundness of the proposed degree program.

DGE Fees – Rob Maher

- a) Students and departmental administrators have asked about fees for graduate education.
- b) Rob would like to know
 1. What benefit do students get from paying these fees?
 2. How much money annually is raised from each of the fees?
 3. Where does the money from the fees go?
- c) Donna will put an explanation for each fee on the DGE website, and will present a full accounting of all fees to UGC at a future meeting
- d) Carl explained that in order to provide essential student services, fees needed to be collected to provide appropriate support.

Transfer Credit Policy – Carl

- a) The question for discussion was whether non-degree and reserved credits can be counted as “transfer” credits relative to grade requirements.
- b) If non-degree or reserved credits with a grade of “B-” or below are allowed, this can put a student on probation their first semester
- c) A grade of “B-” means that the student did not master the material.

- d) MSU's minimum for graduate admission is 3.0 (B)
- e) DGE would like to change the policy to include the following in the definition of "transfer": credits from outside institutions, MSU non-degree, and MSU Reserved
- f) DGE will revise the Petition to Reserve Credits to state "student must obtain a "B" or better grade in this/these class(es) in order for it/them to be able to be used on a future MSU graduate Program of Study.

Employment Authorization Forms – Donna

- a) DGE uses the form for a grad student who is already appointed as GTA or GRA who is seeking another university position.
- b) The form appears to be useful to insure that students remain in compliance with university policies
- c) Donna will continue to use the form and will revise the form and design training for departments on the form.

Probation / Suspension Rules for GTAs and GRAs – Donna

- a) DGE policy states all GTAs and GRAs must be in "good standing", but in the past, students appeared to not aware of this policy(was not clear on website)
- b) Now students sign an "agreement" for their GTA/GRA position which defines their position and any expectations, restrictions, etc.
- c) The "good standing " Policy has not been rigorously enforced by many depts., it would be a major change to lose GTAs/GRAs when their cumulative GPA went below 3.0
- d) Donna asked council members to discuss this issue with their faculty and bring suggestions to the next UGC meeting.

Graduate Student Forum – Tanya

- a) Approximately 15 students attended the forum on January 26, 2009.
- b) There was not strong consensus for formalizing a graduate student committee or having UGC create a basic structure and hope students volunteer
- c) There was uncertainty as to how useful their time would be spent serving on a committee when they do not know what UGC and DGE does
- d) It is critical to get students' opinions on matters that will affect them (would need to know specific issues to be discussed at upcoming UGC meetings)
- e) There will be another forum this semester to give students a venue to voice their opinions and open the lines of communication between students and DGE.

Items remaining on Agenda will be discussed at the next UGC meeting – March 10.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.
MaryKay West, Secretary
Graduate Education