

9-10-2015

University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 10, 2015

Graduate Council, University of Northern Iowa.

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Recommended Citation

Graduate Council, University of Northern Iowa., "University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 10, 2015" (2015). *Documents - Graduate Council*. 28.

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #1046

UNI Graduate Council Minutes from September 10, 2015

Present: Amin, Beall, Calderon, Clayton, Cutter, Deemer, Dhanwada, Fontana, Hanson, Kucuksari, Pohl, Power, Rod-Welch, Schwieger

Absent: Juby, Teske

Clayton welcomed both new and returning members, and introductions were made around the table.

Motion by Pohl and second by Kucuksari to approve the minutes from April 23, 2015. Motion passed.

Graduate College Reports:

Dhanwada said that she and Cutter have been discussing what the Graduate College can do to support graduate education. They will begin to collect input with graduate coordinator meetings next week, and by looking at the results of the graduate coordinator survey. A survey of graduate students is planned.

Graduate student enrollment is up by approximately 100 students. In response to a question from Pohl about what types of students make up this increase, Dhanwada indicated that she didn't have very specific information yet, but that some of the increase was due to the start of new cohorts in several graduate programs. While cohorts create cyclical patterns in graduate enrollment, the overall goal is still to be trending upward each year.

Dhanwada mentioned that Lisa Baronio, the new Vice President for University Advancement and President of the UNI Foundation has reached out to the Graduate College to discuss potential fundraising efforts in support of graduate programs.

Cutter thanked the Council for their willingness to work with the GCCC on new majors (and associated new courses) proposed as part of the curriculum cycle (Masters of Athletic Training and Teacher Leadership for International Educators MA). After a thorough discussion, including questions submitted by the Council, several changes were made and all of the proposals were approved. The curriculum packets have been forwarded to the Faculty Senate for their agenda on Monday.

Schwieger said that the graduate student information meeting was very successful, with 105 students in attendance and great support from partners both on and off campus. Thinking About Graduate School will be held on Tuesday, September 29th, and will include a presentation from the Academic Learning Center about the GRE. Power suggested that the GMAT be included as well. There was some discussion about how the program is advertised to both UNI students and those from other local universities.

Graduate Faculty Chair Report:

Beall said that the first brown bag was held yesterday, where Ellen Neuhaus discussed the current state and future potential for UNI Scholar Works. Graduate student scholarship is currently well represented; the focus will shift to faculty scholarship this year. Upcoming brown bag presenters include Paul Siddens (October) and Disa Cornish (November).

Clayton encouraged Council members to attend the Academic Master Planning Forums in the Commons Ballroom (Sept. 15th 9:30-11:00, Sept. 16th 3:00-4:30, Sept. 21st 5:30-7:00) to participate in the development of the new mission and vision statements.

New Business:

Pohl nominated Clayton for chair, and Beall nominated Pohl for vice chair. Both motions passed by acclamation.

Clayton summarized the action of the Graduate Council last spring in asking the Provost to separate the positions of Graduate Dean and Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. Primary concerns included that the job duties were such that there was not enough time available to do all of the work well, and the potential for conflicts of interests between issues affecting undergraduate and graduate students. In developing the agenda for the meeting with Provost Wohlpart on Sept. 24th, Pohl suggested that the Council consider presenting him with some options for uncoupling the positions without creating additional administrative positions. Lively discussion ensued, and the following potential solutions were brought up.

- Coupling the position of Graduate Dean with another position (possibly in Continuing Education or the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs)
- Finding a donor who would support the Graduate Dean as an endowed position
- Generating revenue for the Graduate College from credit generating tuition, or possibly redirecting some revenue from Continuing Education (some goes back to the academic colleges and departments, but not to the Graduate College)
- Initiatives that would increase enrollment, thus generating new revenue
- The Dean and/or Associate Dean could be part time faculty members (teaching a course or two). There was, however, some concern that these positions not be part time.

- The duties of the Associate Provost could be split differently, with some being taken on by the Dean (Dhanwada mentioned that this is being discussed, particularly with respect to some of the direct reports)

Clayton asked for other issues that should be discussed. Fontana mentioned community engagement. He also mentioned the relationship between continuing education and graduate education, an issue which also arose at last spring's graduate faculty meeting. A lengthy discussion ensued. Beall will follow up by inviting Kent Johnson and Belle Cowden to participate in a brown bag discussion, and to come to a Graduate Council meeting.

Dhanwada mentioned that assessment is now being divided into undergraduate and graduate programs, and that the Graduate College will coordinate graduate assessment efforts. Deemer asked what role the Graduate Council plays in the quality of graduate education. Calderon suggested that the university could showcase the quality of graduate programs by collecting placement information, and Dhanwada and Schwieger indicated that this was very desirable but that very limited information was available to the Graduate College. A discussion ensued about the best way and time to survey students to collect this information.

Power suggested that it would be useful to the Provost if short biographical sketches of the Graduate Council members were provided to Wohlpart prior to the meeting. Clayton agreed to collect and compile the information, and asked that bio sketches be sent to her by Friday, September 18th.

Discussion of any potential changes to the role of the Graduate Council in the curriculum process was tabled due to lack of time.

Clayton asked Council members to ask colleagues for volunteers to serve on student awards committees.

Meeting adjourned around 5 pm.