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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, April 9, 2015

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #1044

Graduate Council Minutes No. 1044

April 9, 2015

Present: Calderon, Caswell, Clayton, Coon, Deemer, Kucuksari, Nesbit, Pohl, Power, Teske

Guests: Joy Thorson

Absent: Beall, Chatham-Carpenter, Fontana, Gacke, Noh, Stokes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Clayton. Motion by Caswell to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2015 meeting; seconded by Calderon. Motion approved.

Graduate College Reports

Coon reported that the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center would be the venue for the Graduate Commencement ceremonies on both Friday and Saturday nights. Future Graduate Commencement ceremonies are planned to take place on Saturday evenings in the McLeod Center.

On behalf of Schwieger, Clayton reported that the 8th Annual Graduate Student Symposium was well attended and nicely executed. Both faculty members and students provided positive feedback and students were excited and appreciative. Clayton also extended a thank you to all those involved in the Symposium including the judges.

Chair of Graduate Faculty Report

On behalf of Beall, Clayton reported that the Annual Graduate Faculty meeting on April 8th went very well and attendance was good. The topic for discussion during the meeting was "What Does Change Mean for Graduate Education at UNI?" Comments and suggestions from the discussion were collected and will be reviewed for ways to potentially implement these suggestions.

Clayton noted that following the annual meeting, Faculty Chair Scott Peters mentioned that he had recently been in a meeting that included President Ruud along with Tim Kidd and Lauren Nelson from the Faculty Senate. In the context of the announcements that Chatham-Carpenter would be leaving UNI to take a department chair position in Arkansas and Coon would be stepping down from the Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs position, the question was raised about what would be done with the

position Chatham-Carpenter currently holds. Several years ago the positions of Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate College were merged. The concern that Peters mentioned to President Ruud and to the Graduate Council and Graduate Faculty leadership was whether one person can truly excel in these two demanding roles. The roles are complimentary, but are becoming increasingly time consuming considering requests from the Board of Regents, emphasis on enrollment management, etc. Peters had suggested to President Ruud that he personally felt that the president should consider separating those positions. Peters also suggested that if the Graduate Council wished to do so, it may be useful to adopt a resolution to send forward. Clayton then read the resolution drafted by Beall that the Council had been provided previously.

Pohl commented that the Council should go one step further and state that in addition to separating the associate provost and graduate dean positions, the associate dean position should be maintained as well. Clayton mentioned that with the yearly curriculum review cycle there will be a need for more frequent GCCC meetings which the associate dean chairs. Although there may be less curriculum material to review, the review process will occur more often with the new cycle. In response to a question related to why there would not be an associate dean, whether it is money or efficiency, Clayton responded that there is nothing official, there are just ideas at this point. One idea that has come to Clayton's attention is that it could be more palatable to faculty who are not happy about the increasing number of administrative positions if either the graduate dean or the associate dean position was part-time or combined with other duties. She said she had no sense at all as to whether or not this is something that is being considered, but thinks it is still in the talking state. She added that if faculty think that it is important to retain the associate dean as a full-time position, it may be a good idea to have a group of faculty state this.

Power said he was happy in 2011 when the two positions (associate provost and graduate dean) were combined because he thought it upgraded the status of the position. He continued that if there were no additional work, it would be a benefit to the person who is in that role since they are not only the dean of the graduate college, they are also an associate provost. However, if that person is really doing two jobs then that is a disservice. As far as having an associate dean, the sad news is that in most of the colleges that is the person who does most of the work. So getting rid of that position would make the dean job even less attractive since graduate programs have grown. Pohl mentioned that according to Chatham-Carpenter, the graduate dean position is a full-time position at this university. Power said that administration has increased on campus without an increase in faculty, and administrator salaries have gone up faster than faculty salaries. Nesbit clarified that the proposal emphasizes the need for a Dean of the Graduate College and that person needs to be focused primarily on Graduate College responsibilities. Regarding the associate provost position, Coon noted that with additional reporting and accreditation requirements, the continued development of an enrollment management plan, etc., the responsibilities of that position have grown significantly.

Motion by Power to adopt the following resolution;

WHEREAS, graduate students constitute a significant and growing percentage of overall enrollment at UNI, and,

WHEREAS, there is an increased focus on enrollment management at the graduate level, and therefore a need for the graduate dean to be dedicated to graduate education in order to fulfill the graduate education mission and vision and spearhead enrollment management efforts, and,

WHEREAS, the current structure of the graduate dean serving also as associate provost for academic affairs considerably diminishes the time, efficiency, and effectiveness of the work dedicated to graduate education and graduate faculty, and

WHEREAS, the duties of the associate provost for academic affairs have increased substantially in the last several years, further reducing the time available for graduate education leadership, compared to when the positions were combined in 2011,

Therefore, be it resolved that the Graduate Council requests the UNI administration to separate the position of Associate Provost for Academic Affairs from the position of the Dean of the Graduate College.

seconded by Pohl. Motion approved. Clayton said she and Beall would forward the resolution to President Ruud, Interim Provost Licari and incoming Provost Wohlpart.

New Business

Informational Item about Drop Hold for Graduate Students

Clayton informed the Council that the Academic Advising Council has brought forward a proposal to the provost that students be able to drop a class themselves through the end of the "W" period. Currently, students can only drop a class up until the second week of the semester. The challenge with graduate students is that if a graduate student who receives support drops a course without notifying anyone, they could fall out of eligibility for financial support. One solution to the problem would be to have someone constantly monitor who is dropping, which would not be realistic. Coon added that more importantly, the problem is caught after the fact and support has to be taken away. Realistically, Clayton said that a better option would be to put a drop hold on students, so they could not automatically drop a course. It was also noted that the Graduate College continuously has to check the student's record to ensure that they do not drop below nine credit hours. Students could still drop, however paperwork would need to go through to get this accomplished.

Motion by Pohl to approve the implementation of a Drop/Hold for graduate students who are Graduate Assistants or are receiving a Graduate College Tuition Scholarship, to prevent these students from dropping any classes without a student request. This hold would be an impact of the GA and Grad College Scholarship service indicators that are already being placed on the appropriate students; seconded by Caswell. Motion approved.

Recommendation on wording change to Student Academic Ethics Policy (section V part D – Academic Sanctions for Level Four Violations, <http://www.uni.edu/policies/301>)

Clayton began the discussion by pointing out that a problem with the current Student Academic Ethics Policy is that there is no statement in the criteria for a Level Four violation that specifically refers to plagiarism which occurs in a culminating project for a non-thesis degree, although there is specific language relating to plagiarism as part of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation. She added that this is a University policy, but if the Council agrees that the sanctions for plagiarism in a non-thesis culminating project should be similar to other culminating projects then a proposal should be brought forward to the Faculty Senate and the Cabinet.

Clayton also said that in all other violation levels there is increasing severity. Level One suggests that the student has plagiarized unintentionally or without knowledge of proper citation. Level Two suggests that they have plagiarized intentionally. Level Three violations affect an essential portion of the work for a course or involve repeated violations at lower levels. Level Four contains none of the above language, only that plagiarism occurred in a master's thesis or dissertation. Based on her reading of the policy, even if it was unintentional, if it was part of a culminating project the violation automatically falls under Level Four.

Clayton continued that the reason the wording of Level Four is important is that Level Four violations require expulsion from the University. The policy also includes obligations to the faculty members for enforcement of the policy. The ensuing discussion indicated that faculty do believe that there should be some sort of indication of the level of plagiarism. Some council members also indicated that they were not in favor of the policy when it was constructed, or were not in favor of large portions of the policy. During additional discussion, Coon commented that there is clearly faculty judgement in what constitutes Level Four versus another level. No one outside is looking at the document in question and determining what the level is, and there is certainly room for faculty judgement. It was noted again that if the violation is at Level Four, expulsion is mandatory.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Council agreed to table the item until the next meeting.

Summer session load limits for graduate students

Clayton reported that load limits for undergraduate students in a four week summer session were increased recently from four credit hours to six credit hours. Inadvertently,

the limits were also increased for graduate students. Discussion centered on the advisability of graduate students taking an increased load in the summer. Coon pointed out that some programs that start cohorts in the summer could run into problems with load limits. The ensuing discussion settled on allowing the load limit change to continue this year as a trial period. Coon will contact Patti Rust to ask for a report on summer enrollment and grades so that the council can consider the impact of this change in the fall.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is Thursday, April 23, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. in Lang 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nedrow
Secretary