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Graduate Council

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The Graduate Council

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Present: Caswell, Christ, Clayton, Coon, Czarnecki, Fontana, Licari, Milambiling, Muhayimana, Nesbit, Noh, Pohl, Schmitz, Stokes

Absent: Calderon, Ogbondah

Guests: Pam MacKay, Joy Thorson, Susie Schwieger, Diane Wallace

The meeting was called to order by Chair Clayton. Motion by Pohl to approve the minutes of the September 26, 2013 meeting; seconded by Caswell. Motion approved.

Graduate College Reports – Licari reported that the first round of graduate coordinator meetings had concluded. The meetings were productive, with both meetings covering the same topic, which was the new process to run graduate admissions through the Office of Admissions in a digitized way. This will streamline the process for students, it should minimize the paperwork for the programs without changing the process already in place. Licari thought that Tom Reburn from the Office of Admissions received some useful feedback as a result of the meetings. Additional graduate coordinator meetings will take place in the near future. Since there were conflicts with the previous meeting times, a survey has gone out to find times that accommodate most people for the second round of meetings.

Related to the change in the comprehensive exam reporting process mentioned at the last meeting Licari said he would be sending out a thorough overview of the process. The process change came about as a result of some confusion on the part of students regarding their status, as well as various campus offices, to the point where a degree was awarded when it should not have been. These changes are being made in order to give clarity to students, the Graduate College, those involved in the programs and the Registrar's Office, so that everyone has the same understanding of the status of our students. Licari gave a brief overview of the process that will somewhat parallel the thesis and dissertation process in that the Graduate College will send out a call and programs will respond with names of students who are scheduled to take the comprehensive exams in a particular semester. The old comprehensive exam reporting form was a combination comprehensive exam/research paper form, which had been very confusing. There are now separate forms; one for comprehensive exam and one for research paper. With the new forms it will be easy to identify the status of each student. Those in the Graduate College, Registrar's Office and the student themselves will have a better understanding of their status as well. Licari said that it is also important that a student knows that all offices involved know what their status is. He concluded by saying that communication with the student will also change since they

will be notified by both e-mail and regular mail as to whether or not they passed the comprehensive exam.

Coon reported that the first meeting of the Graduate College Curriculum Committee (GCCC) and college faculty will take place tomorrow, October 11 and that the Council could expect curriculum at the next Council meeting.

Schwieger reported that *The Graffito*, which had been published quarterly will now be published monthly in PDF format. Workshops entitled *How to Use LinkedIn as a Graduate Student* and *How to Make the Most of a Professional Conference* will be held yet this fall. Registration for the Graduate Student Symposium will start in November and marketing will begin next week for the April 1, 2014 event. Schwieger concluded by giving an overview of her recruiting activities which included the UNI fair, Wartburg, Luther, and Grinnell. Next week she will go to Central Illinois Graduate and Professional School Fair at Illinois State-Normal.

Chair of Graduate Faculty Report - Pohl reminded the Council that on November 4, Raj Rajendran will be presenting a Brown Bag Lecture entitled "Identifying Attributes That *Really* Matter."

Related to UNI Day at the Capitol, which takes place in February, Clayton asked the Council to give some thought to how graduate education might best be presented at the state level. Any thoughts, particularly those especially related to how the state of Iowa has benefited as a result of graduate education at UNI would be helpful.

New Business

Discussion of the following question: "When a course is in the catalog as 4000/5000-level (or 3000/5000-level), should departments be able to offer the course only as 5000-level or only as 3000 or 4000-level in a given term?" - Clayton said that classes that were previously 100g-level, are now 4000/5000-level and it appears they are now occasionally being taught as either 4000- or 5000-level, not a combined 4000/5000-level class. Coon has seen recent examples of both situations taking place and in both cases the student wanted to take a course at the other level and was told they could not. Clayton pointed out that students didn't used to have an option of taking one version of a course or another, there was just 100g. Currently, when schedules are submitted, 4000-level courses or 5000-level courses are supposed to be duplicated, but apparently it is possible to not do so. A suggestion was made to offer the 5000-level course for only graduate students and the 4000-level for undergraduate students. Licari said that 4000/5000-level courses can be a real challenge for an undergraduate student, for a graduate student and a challenge for a faculty member to teach effectively. If there is sufficient demand at the graduate level for a standalone graduate course that will provide a better experience for the graduate student, he would be comfortable with the assumption that a department would offer a sufficient rotation of classes to meet the demand of both the graduate students and the undergraduate students who may need to take the course. If there is not sufficient demand, the course could continue to be taught as a 4000/5000-level course. In the SIS this could be seen

as an opportunity rather than a problem, as long as departments rotate through the courses and offer the 4000-level and 5000-level versions frequently enough to be able to meet the demand. Clayton added that the 100g was oftentimes a designation of an upper-level undergraduate course, but with the 4000-level course, it is no longer necessary to use it. There was some discussion that included the fact that because of numbers, certain programs couldn't afford to separate out the 4000-level and the 5000-level. It was also mentioned that there could be cases where there may be enough students to separate the courses, but not enough faculty to teach twice the number of sections. Licari responded that the program would make the decision as to whether or not this would work. If not, the program could continue to offer the combined sections. Licari summarized that he thought this would present an opportunity, if certain conditions were met, to take advantage of those.

Motion by Pohl to allow for the splitting of 3000/4000-level and 5000-level courses; seconded by Fontana. Motion approved.

It was clarified that there could be 5000-level courses for only graduate students, 3000/4000-level courses for only undergraduates or the 3000, 4000/5000-level courses.

Comprehensive Exam Communication Plan - (See comments under *Graduate College Reports*)

Recap of Graduate Coordinator Meetings, Including New Admissions Plan - Licari said that rather than sending application materials directly to the graduate program they are applying to, students would submit their materials through the new admissions portal that is being developed. The process would have everything submitted electronically through the Office of Admissions. Students will see a checklist that of particular items needed as determined by each program. If a student is applying to several different programs, they will see checklists for each program they are applying to. The main question has been how the appropriate people have the appropriate access to student records at the appropriate time. In order to insure that the appropriate access is granted, the Office of Admissions will put out a call related to what each program's review process is, who is involved in the process, when the review process is done, for how long, etc., so Admissions can set up access as needed. Licari emphasized that Office of Admissions is really trying to make sure that the way the system is set up mirrors what programs do rather changing what is currently done. He added that when Admissions makes the call for this information, the information should be provided in a timely manner and in a very specific way so it is very clear what process each program uses.

In response to a comment about the time it would take to set up access for each program and a question regarding if the reason for not granting access to everyone all the time was due to privacy issues, Licari responded that essentially, it is a privacy issue. It would be easier to grant everyone access to all files and assume that no one would access files that they should not be or possibly accessing them at the wrong times. He added that activity is traceable and will log any time a graduate faculty member signs and will log whatever file was accessed and for how long.   Coon commented that if a department decides that it is easier to give all the faculty access all

the time, they can direct Admissions accordingly. Licari added that admissions committees could change each year and if it's half the department on the committee, it might be easiest to give access to all the faculty and only those who are on the committee for a given year should be logging into the system.

Related to timeframe of implementation, Coon said that the imaging system should go live in December. ITS is involved in the programming and security setup of the OnBase imaging system that will be used in conjunction with the SIS. Materials that come into Admissions will be scanned into the appropriate student's electronic file and logged in as received in the SIS. Eventually, the Graduate Student Admission Recommendation Form will be electronic as well. Given that the implementation of the imaging system will start in December and some application materials are already being received, there will be some overlap. Existing paper documents that are submitted directly to the programs will need to be scanned into the new electronic system.

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, October 24, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. in Lang 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nedrow
Secretary