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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, April 25, 2013

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #1025

April 25, 2013

Present: Clayton, Coon, Hays, Iqbal, Pohl, Roberts (for Milambiling), St. Clair, Schmitz, Terlip, Waldron, Wynstra (for Caswell), Zhanova

Absent: Bartlett, Christ, Licari, Power

Guest: Susie Schwieger

The meeting was called to order by Chair Clayton. Motion by Pohl to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2013 meeting; seconded by Terlip. Motion approved.

Graduate College Reports – Coon reminded everyone that Graduate Commencement would be taking place on Friday, May 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the McLeod Center.

Coon explained that as she was preparing summer tuition scholarship information and looking toward graduation and commencement, she realized that students who are not registered in any way are not getting her e-mails. Some of these people would be those who might actually be thinking about finishing their degree.

Coon provided the Council members with a handout regarding the possibility of implementing continuous registration for graduate students, which included current wording from the catalog related to continuous registration:

“Graduate students who have completed all of their program courses but not all of their graduation requirements, e.g. comprehensive exams, thesis, paper/project, recitals, etc., must be continuously registered until the degree is completed. Students reaching this stage will be automatically registered in the course xxx:29C/xxxx 629C, Continuous Graduate Student (xxx/xxx refers to the student’s major department), and assessed a \$50 fee. Continuous enrollment insures that students can access their university email accounts and utilize the library and its services through graduation.”

Coon pointed out that Continuous Registration has never actually been automatic; departments have to notify the Registrar’s Office of students who should be on Continuous Registration. She would like to explore the possibility of making Continuous Registration automatic; if the student is active in their program and is not registered, they are placed on continuous registration, whether they are finished with their coursework or not. The idea would be that degree-seeking graduate students are continuously registered from the time they begin until they graduate. Coon outlined some of the benefits associated with Continuous Registration which included:

- Students would not fall out of communication with the University. As long as they are on Continuous Registration in Fall and Spring, they would get the mass e-mails sent out from the Graduate College (regarding applying to graduate, graduate assistantship opportunities, scholarship opportunities, professional development opportunities, etc.) and from other university offices. Also, students would show as enrolled for the purposes of having access to the library and its services. We would

not have students being Discontinued in their program for lack of enrollment and having to be manually reactivated. This may also reduce the problem with students not completing their degree within the 7-year recency period.

Disadvantages to Continuous Registration which included the following were also mentioned:

- Students who want to take a few years off before finishing the degree will not want to be billed \$50 a semester. Also, the way the policy currently reads, it is only students who are done with their coursework that are supposed to be on Continuous Registration. To implement that would require a query of Academic Advisement and some manual inspection of the results. To go to automatic enrollment in Continuous Registration/Postcomp, the Graduate Council would need to change the policy to state that "Graduate students in degree programs must be continuously enrolled until the degree is completed."

Coon asked the Council if it foresaw any other problems with the Continuous Registration and added that she recognizes that there will be students who genuinely want to withdraw and there will be a mechanism in place for withdrawals. It was noted that the \$50 fee is the amount that is currently in place and that Continuous Registration would start after the student is enrolled and in Active status through the SIS. Other scenarios and considerations related to Continuous Registration and charges to the student were discussed, along with recency issues. Zhanova raised the issue about a student with a serious illness. Coon stated that we would not want to increase the burden on such a student. There would be some way for the student to request not to be charged. Clayton emphasized that no changes would go into effect until there was a vote of approval by the Council and that no students would be charged in the Fall. Clayton noted that as with all other university policies, there should be a mechanism in place for exceptions for special circumstances, and it should be made clear to the students as to who they would need to contact. Several Council members expressed support for the idea. Coon thanked everyone for their input.

Schwieger announced that the Graduate Student Information Meeting would take place on Wednesday, August 28. An e-mail will go out with the time and additional details. The Thinking About Graduate School (TAGS) event for undergraduate students will take place on Wednesday, September 25. This event gives programs an opportunity to set up tables with information to help with recruitment. A new component to TAGS will be for students who are considering doctoral programs on September 24. The 7th Annual Graduate Student Symposium will take place on April 1, 2014.

Chair of Graduate Faculty Report – Pohl thanked the Council for its support throughout the year and thanked Hays for his Brown Bag presentation.

Clayton noted that University-wide elections are in progress until April 30 and that Pohl is running for Graduate Faculty Chair. She added that Jeff Funderburk and Betty DeBerg are candidates for Chair of the Faculty, which is especially important with a new president coming in.

Related to Chris Cox's visit at the last Council meeting, Clayton reported that a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the possibility of an institutional repository. There is one meeting scheduled each day next week. Terlip mentioned that Council members may want to check out the streaming video service if they hadn't had a chance and take the survey. She thought they were very helpful not only for content, but for research purposes. Wynstra added that presentation of such things as the institutional repository is to find out if people are actually interested in them. A lack of interest may indicate that no action is needed. With the way money currently is, if there is a sense that faculty are interested in and see an institutional repository as valuable, a priority would be to ask for that money. Wynstra encouraged everyone to take a look and give input.

New Business - Discussion of the Faculty-based Curriculum Management proposal presented by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Management committee

Clayton explained that an ad hoc committee was formed by the Faculty Senate to talk about faculty input into curriculum processes. A draft of the proposal from this committee was distributed. It was noted that the proposal had been presented to all governance groups except for the College of Business Administration, which would take place tomorrow and the committee has also met with Provost Gibson and Licari. Wynstra pointed out that there is no Library representation on the ad hoc committee and the Library Faculty Senate had not been presented with the committee's information.

Terlip presented the following information:

The formation of the committee came as the result of a Faculty Senate retreat. One of the major goals of the retreat was to take a look at what happened with program closures last year and try to figure out how this was done without faculty consultation. Since a new program cannot be approved without faculty approval, the committee feels that the process should be the same for a program to be closed, so the faculty would, at a minimum, be consulted. The committee would also like to see faculty take ownership of the curriculum.

The committee went through old governance documents, reviewed the curriculum manual, policies and procedures, etc. It also tried to look at what other issues might have an impact on curriculum. Terlip noted that there is a seven year program review, but that is not connected to review of the curriculum and there is a separate committee for that which is not charged with reviewing curriculum or monitoring programs. The ad hoc committee felt that the faculty should take a more active role in monitoring programs, rather than letting administration do that on their own. Curriculum review committees, UCC and GCCC are already busy.

As a result, the ad hoc committee is proposing the creation of another committee that would review data on an annual basis. The data would not be the type that would demand a lot of extra work in terms of departments having to put together reports. In year three there would be a mid-cycle review instead of waiting seven years to address a problem. It was also mentioned that programs could be put in touch with other programs with similar issues. The ad hoc committee thought this would let the faculty

govern the issues and it would familiarize faculty with each other's programs. The criteria for what data that committee would look at have not been decided. If the committee were created, the data would hopefully be the same kinds of criteria the administration would rely on. Terlip noted that faculty does not want two separate sets of criteria; they would not want to do all the work and have it be completely ignored, so there needs to be some sort of buy in, which the committee pretty much has. The first thing the ad hoc committee is recommending is a monitoring committee to help stay in touch with where more resources might be needed or where there might be trouble and who could help each other out.

The committee is recommending some review of the curriculum manual since the two-year curriculum cycle is a little bit out of date. The committee met with Diane Wallace and other Registrar's Office staff to figure out how to make minor changes, such as changing one word in a course title, without having to go through the entire curriculum process. The committee also wanted to get a sense from Wallace as to her perspective on what changes are routine. Terlip referred to a flow chart that was provided that outlined the flow for substantive versus non-substantive changes.

The ad hoc committee wanted to reiterate that it is asking that any time there is any sort of expansion, merger/division of colleges, departments, schools or programs that the issue should go through the Senate. If for no other reason, it causes many problems in faculty governance issues if faculty has no idea what is going to happen, so the committee thinks consultation should be done at that level. Terlip said the Curriculum Management Committee is looking for feedback. She would take notes and specific questions could be directed to Ira Simet.

Concerns/Comments & Responses:

- Iqbal asked about the mechanism for interaction between the departmental faculty and the college senate. Terlip responded that the ad hoc committee that would be created would have representatives elected from each of the colleges, proportionate to the size of the college. Basically, that group would sit together every year and review the data that departments send.
- There were concerns raised regarding the accuracy of the data from the Office of Institutional Research. It was mentioned that with a yearly review process that data could be monitored and checked for inaccuracies sooner instead of having to go back through ten years of data.
- Coon suggested that the committee have a liaison to Institutional Research to talk with them about what criteria they are using as they generate their data.
- Coon clarified that new programs can be proposed at any time, not just on curriculum cycle.
- There was a comment regarding who would provide teach-out plans for a closed program if closure is a result of administrative action, not faculty action.
- There should be a reporting mechanism through the Graduate Council related to graduate programs. Without this mechanism in place, changes could be made related to graduate programs without Graduate Council's

knowledge. Recommendations of the committee regarding graduate programs need to go through the Graduate Council.

- Faculty should have a say in what criteria the committee would evaluate.

Schmitz said that her program is accredited by a national body and it has different ratios so the numbers are always low and this situation would need to be noted. Terlip agreed and added that this would need to be a consistent part of the Senate's report every year and would provide the chance to map trends every three years.

Clayton thanked Terlip and Pohl for their work on the proposal.

Clayton thanked St. Clair and Zhbanova for serving on the Graduate Council and representing graduate students so well. Hays noted that St. Clair received a Pass with Distinction on his comprehensive exam. She thanked Hays and Waldron for their strong support of graduate education. Clayton noted that it would be Hays' last Graduate Council meeting. On behalf of the Council, she wished Hays all the best in his retirement. Certificates of appreciation were presented.

The meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday, September 12, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. in Lang 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nedrow
Secretary