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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, January 12, 2012

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #1009

Graduate Council Minutes No. 1009

January 12, 2012

Present: Bartlett, Botzum, Caswell, Clayton, Coon, Etscheidt, Hays, Husband, Iqbal, Licari, Nelson, Pohl, Power, Waldron, Wartick (for Bauman)

Absent: Schuchart

Guest: Susie Schwieger

The meeting was called to order by Chair Clayton, who welcomed everyone back from the holiday break and welcomed Waldron back from PDA. Motion by Pohl to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2011 meeting; seconded by Husband. Motion approved.

Licari welcomed everyone back from the break. He noted that graduate student stipends and tuition scholarships should be set; any issues at this point would be due to students not having the appropriate number of program hours on their program of study or due to other paperwork issues. Everything that came to the Graduate College in the appropriate format and in a timely manner had been processed on time. He thanked everyone for their help.

Coon reported that the University Faculty Senate approved the College of Business Administration curriculum and will start the College of Education curriculum and proceed from there. She will update everyone as the process moves on.

Related to nomination deadlines for faculty awards, Coon encouraged Council members to consider nominating faculty for the awards and to encourage their colleagues to do so. The James F. Lubker Award for Faculty Research is a university-level award administered by the Graduate College; the Distinguished Scholar Award is a Graduate College award that used to have a nomination deadline early in the Fall semester. The decision was made to change the deadline since there had been no nominees over the last several years and the thought was that the Fall deadline may be part of the reason. Coon also mentioned that the nomination process had been changed so if people had considered nominating someone in the past and found the process cumbersome, they may want to look at the revised process. She noted that the Outstanding Graduate Faculty Teaching Award nomination deadline is also approaching. The award deadlines are Tuesday, January 17 for the nomination and Monday, February 13 for the materials submission deadline for the nominees. Coon concluded by commenting that if Council members had nominated someone for these awards in the past, she would encourage them to do so again and added that there have always been very outstanding nominees.

Coon asked Council members if they would be interested in serving on the committees for the student awards. The committee for the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award met in the Fall semester because there was an external deadline. Coon thanked Iqbal, Husband, and Clayton for serving on that committee. Coon said three-member committees would be ideal although, a two-member committee would also be

acceptable. There was a question regarding a due date for reviewing nominee materials. Coon responded that materials need to be reviewed by the end of February in order to allow enough time to notify the winners and have the appropriate payment paperwork processed. It was clarified that award committee members do not have to be members of the Graduate Council. Coon asked everyone to mention the awards committees to their departments. Clayton asked that names of those interested in serving on the committees be provided to Coon within the next week or so. Bartlett volunteered to serve on the committee to review Outstanding Creative Master's Thesis Award materials. Clayton also noted that although they take time to read, the final products are usually quite good and it is enjoyable to see what students are working on.

Schwieger reminded everyone that the 5th Annual Graduate Student Research Symposium is scheduled for Tuesday, March 27. At this point judges for the poster presentations are Helen Harton, Clayton, Licari and Etscheidt. Schwieger is looking for one or two more judges for these presentations. Coon, Dale Cyphert and John Fritch will serve as oral presentation judges; several more judges are being sought. Creative presentation judges at this point are John Wiles and Rebecca Burkhardt; five other people have been e-mailed. Informational workshops regarding the symposium are coming up. These types of workshops are helpful for students, as they answer questions about presenting at the symposium and the various guidelines. Other helpful information is located on the Symposium website.

Schwieger informed the Council that she and Graduate College graduate assistants are working on a list of myths about the Symposium. One myth she shared was that presenters have to be there for the entire symposium, when they actually need to have their poster there during the symposium time frame or if they are presenting an oral or creative piece they need only be there for their allotted time. The goal of providing these myths is to educate students and provide a refresher for faculty. Based on historical figures, Power asked how many students may participate in the Symposium this year. Schwieger responded that last year there were approximately 50 participants which was down from the previous year. She added that any suggestions to get students interested would be appreciated and noted that there will be prize money in each category; \$200 for first place, \$100 for second place and \$75 for third place. It was noted that the project did not have to be completed, but needs to be in process and near completion. In the poster category, Schwieger noted that there are three categories; Literature Review, Project and Research, so students have a choice. Licari commented that this is helpful if a student is not far enough along to present results from a research project. If the student has perhaps already done the enough background work to do a literature review, that would enable them to participate in the Symposium. He also said that the format of the Symposium is to open it up to most any graduate student.

Power asked if MBA students could participate, although he did not think they had a project to present. Licari responded that they would love to have them participate. Coon added that she had heard their projects were not quite completed in time for the symposium, but there is a project poster category where they could provide a description of the project and what point they are at with it. The team could submit the

Symposium proposal and list the names of the students involved in the work. Coon also noted that an oral presentation would also be an option for these students. Clayton suggested that one of the myths that could be included is that the project has to be completed in order to participate. Schwieger noted that the Symposium is not only good experience, but a good addition to a student's resume.

The CV workshop with Rebecca Anthony and William Coghill Behrends from the career services area of the University of Iowa will take place on Wednesday, January 25 in the CME. Anthony and Coghill Behrends are authors of the book, *CV Handbook: Curriculum Vita Owner's Manual*. The workshop is open to graduate students, undergraduate students, faculty and staff. The book will not be available at the workshop, however, University Book and Supply will help facilitate the ordering of the books for attendees.

On February 20, President Allen will have an open meeting with graduate students which provides a great opportunity to ask questions, share comments, etc. More information will be coming closer to the event.

Schwieger reported that she met with the editor of the Northern Iowan, John Anderson, to arrange for twice monthly graduate student profiles. This will be helpful in educating the campus community about graduate programs and making the graduate students' presence known. There was a question about how students are selected for the profiles. Schwieger responded that she welcomes recommendations for students and she will follow up.

During the Spring semester graduate students will be involved with several community service activities including Volunteer UNI to provide transportation for various agencies. The Graduate College will sponsor a project to take place at Hospitality House in Waterloo, which is a daytime shelter for homeless men.

Nelson had no updates to report. Licari asked about the next Brown Bag Lecture. Nelson responded that would take place on February 28. A title has yet to be provided.

Implementation of the Graduate Education Strategic Plan

Licari said there are many different objectives in the Graduate Education Strategic Plan, one of which is to improve graduate education student outcomes assessment. As it stands now, the development of outcomes assessment plans in graduate programs isn't as far along as it is at the undergraduate level, especially in reporting of the use of those plans. The percentage of graduate programs filing a report is far less than that of undergraduate programs, so there is room for improvement. Licari has been talking to Donna Vinton to see how the Graduate College can be most helpful to graduate programs. One way is to be helpful in terms of developing plans where they have not yet been developed. One benefit of graduate programs is that they have built in checkpoints or milestones that have to be reached. Students all have to pass a particular set of requirements, or a certain class, or a comprehensive exam, get clearance to write a thesis or proposal and then defend their work at the end. As a result, there are many points at which there are opportunities to evaluate what students have learned and then use that information to review the program. He added that this

should not be difficult, but would be a matter of sitting down and actually getting it done. Licari said he did not want this to be a huge burden, he would rather have programs view this as an opportunity to get clarity as to what students are learning in programs and be a little more systematic about using the information that is gathered.

Clayton asked if there is a mechanism for sharing best practices from other departments, as it is sometimes helpful to see what other programs are doing. Licari responded that there is information available throughout the Office of Academic Assessment website however it is dependent on going out to find the information pertinent to graduate education. After some discussion Licari said he could pull out information from the site related to graduate education and then bring it to the Council for review to see if it would be helpful to share with graduate coordinators on campus, as sometimes it is hard to know where to start. Developing a template was mentioned, although it was noted that some programs currently have an elaborate outcomes assessment program in place. It was also noted that a faculty committee is being created to cross-review and comment on SOAs. Licari said selection of this committee is ongoing and he feels it will be beneficial since the members can review the SOA plans and provide feedback. Licari clarified that this committee would be providing feedback regarding the SOA plan itself and not the outcomes. It was mentioned that solicitation for volunteers for the committee has been less than enthusiastic. As part of the committee that is being formed, Pohl commented that not all programs are in the same position, as some departments are not even submitting SOA plans. The committee is also hearing that SOA is important and as a result of the University's last review, it was noted that the University needed to beef up its SOA plan. Wartick has heard from accrediting bodies and people at other schools that time is spent on looking at plans and what they really want programs to do is use the end data to improve the program to close the loop. Licari responded that closing the loop would be part of the purpose of the review; you could have a great looking plan and great outcomes data, but never use it. Coon added that she had seen a prior presentation from Communication Studies that would be an example of how to close the loop. After some additional discussion, it was decided that Licari would reach out to those individual programs that are struggling in this area and if there is something the Council can do to help these programs with the SOA plan, it would do that.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, January 26, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in Lang 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nedrow

Secretary