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Graduate Council Minutes No. 1005

October 13, 2011

Present: Bartlett, Bauman, Botzum, Caswell, Clayton, Coon, Etscheidt, Hays, Husband, Iqbal, Licari, Nelson, Pohl, Schuchart

Absent: Hays, Power, Waldron on PDA

Guests: Pam MacKay, Record Analyst II, Phil Patton, Registrar, Diane Wallace, Assistant Registrar and Susie Schwieger

The meeting was called to order by Chair Clayton. Nelson noted minor wording changes to the minutes from the last meeting. Motion by Bauman to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2011 meeting with those changes; seconded by Pohl. Motion approved

Schwieger reported that the TAGS (Thinking About Graduate School) meeting held yesterday was very successful with 60 undergraduate students in attendance. There was a presentation by Coon, along with a panel discussion. New at this year's meeting was a graduate program fair, in which 14 departments were represented. Schwieger added that the fair was well received and there was traffic at all the tables. There were positive comments, including a suggestion that another TAGS meeting take place in the Spring.

The Graduate Student Social Network is inviting graduate students to attend Blackhawks Hockey Night on Friday, October 21 at 7:00 p.m. On December 3, a group of graduate students and guests will attend the Varsity Men's Glee Club Holiday Show. A workshop conducted by Deanne Gute, entitled "APA Formatting: What You Need to Know" will take place on Wednesday, November 2. The location will be in the ITTC, so distance learners will have an opportunity to take advantage of the workshop. The "How to Create an Effective Writing Group" workshop presented by Marybeth Stalp and Carissa Froyum will take place on Wednesday, October 26; space will be limited. William Coghill-Behrends and Rebecca Anthony, authors of the book, *CV Handbook: A curriculum vitae owner's manual*, will be on campus on Wednesday, November 30 at 4:00 p.m.; location to be determined.

Schwieger announced that the 2012 Graduate Student Research Symposium is being planned for Tuesday, March 27. The symposium will be a one-day event with poster and oral presentations during the day and creative performances in the evening. Publicizing for the event will take place sooner in order to generate interest and enthusiasm from faculty and students early on.

Licari informed Council members that in addition to TAGS, Schwieger and Coon did some recruiting of their own by participating in various career fairs. They came back with information cards from students who have interest in certain programs. Licari has personally e-mailed 135 students and has received many positive responses. He added that Schwieger is also following up with these students. Licari would encourage

department heads and graduate coordinators to follow with these people as well and said that the personal touch can move a prospective student from just applying, to actually developing interest in a program. Licari said he is willing to personally communicate and hopefully graduate coordinators and department heads are as well.

Coon said the modifications to the student request system to get data from the new SIS are in testing and she anticipates it will go live next week.

Related to applications for student awards, Coon noted that there are six submissions for Outstanding Master's Thesis; three for Outstanding Dissertation; three for Outstanding Master's Research; and two for Creative Master's Thesis. The first place paper for the Outstanding Master's Research Paper Award will need to be submitted to the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools in electronic format by November 1, in order to be considered for its national competition.

Clayton, Husband and Iqbal volunteered to review submissions for the thesis awards and Etscheidt had previously indicated that she would be willing to review submissions for the Outstanding Dissertation award.

Coon announced that the application for graduation is live in the SIS. All students who want to graduate in December will need to apply for graduation through the new SIS. Students who applied to graduate when they registered for Summer classes or applied through the old SIS or on paper, will need to apply again in the new SIS. Any Fall 2011 graduation fee already charged will be credited. Students will not have to pay twice for Fall graduation. MacKay will be communicating with students that she already had graduation applications from.

Nelson informed the Council that Chris Kliewer, from the department of Special Education will be the third person presenting a Brown Bag. Chris Larimer's session will take place in late November; Nelson is waiting for responses from two other faculty members.

Clayton had asked by email for volunteers to serve on the committee for the Regents Award for Faculty Excellence and noted that this committee also considers nominees for the University Book & Supply Outstanding Teaching Award. She thanked Pohl and Hays for agreeing to serve on that committee. Pohl was selected and has been attending the meetings.

Proposal to Create a Common Application Deadline for Graduate Programs, as well as a Common Date for Responding to Prospective Students
Clayton introduced a proposal for a common application deadline in order to provide students with fair and consistent feedback; to let them know what to expect and when to expect it.

Licari said he would like Council members to consider if it would be less confusing for prospective students and students who have already applied to keep informed. He added that if someone is interested in more than one program, it is hard to determine which program to apply for when. Also, the dates would be clearer internally and students would have a better idea as to when a decision regarding their application would be made.

Bauman noted that a down side to a universal deadline would be for those programs, such as the Accounting program, that have rolling admission. It was suggested that there may be a separate policy for those programs, although most programs do have a deadline and for those programs there should be a common deadline. Husband added that her department's graduate programs have a deadline for consideration for financial support, and a rolling admission process after that.

Bauman informed the Council that the SIS has the ability to generate a list of those applicants who still need to provide information and if it isn't submitted by a certain time, the system generates a letter saying the applicant is no longer being considered for admission. This is a step that the graduate coordinator would not have to take care of. She added that if this is taken care of up front, then the application will not be set aside.

During the conversation there was concern as to whether or not the Office of Admissions would be able to keep up with the flow of applications if there were a common deadline, considering some programs may have between 80-100 students for Fall admission. There was also some concern regarding the routing of the admission recommendation forms, to which Coon responded that this is currently a paper process where the form can be faxed for signature in order to expedite the process if needed.

Bartlett added that it would be helpful to have a date by when students should be notified regarding the status of their application. Licari agreed that we want to be responsive to students' applications.

Licari said he was not looking for a definite answer at this particular meeting although he wanted to see if there would be merit in moving to a common application deadline. He concluded by thanking council members and stating that a proposal would be drafted for their consideration.

<u>Transcript Language in the New SIS – Should Cumulative Statistics (GPA, credits, etc.) be Reset Each Time a Student Starts a New Degree?</u>
Clayton asked Council members if they thought it would be useful for GPA, etc. to be reset each time a student starts a new degree, as it currently defaults to reset after the Bachelor's degree. It was noted that in the old SIS, there was one cumulative GPA for all graduate work.

Iqbal asked if when a student is pursuing a second master's degree some hours can be used on both degrees and how will that affect the GPA. MacKay replied that 8 hours can be applied to two Master's degrees and the courses would be in the Cumulative GPA for the first degree only, but they would be in the Plan GPA for both degrees. Coon responded with the question, "Shouldn't it be in the Cumulative GPA for the second degree also? Can we set it up so that the course counts in the cumulative GPA without adding to the cumulative hours?" MacKay didn't think that was possible.

Schuchart commented that the overlap in the GPA between degrees is and odd and irritating, because not all students have graduate degrees that are related to each other. Patton wanted confirmation that if a student just changes their program, that the cumulative GPA is not reset; an actual graduation would need to take place. All agreed that this would be the case--there must be a graduation in order to have the cumulative

statistics reset. There was a question about if a student were switching from graduate to undergraduate whether or not the GPA would stay cumulative. MacKay said that in the new SIS, each career has a GPA, so the undergraduate career would not affect the graduate GPA.

Iqbal asked if it would complicate issues for transfer students. It was noted that if the transfer courses count toward the student's plan, there wouldn't be a problem.

Coon asked MacKay if resetting statistics could cause a problem for School Psychology students. MacKay answered that she didn't think so.

Etscheidt made a motion that cumulative statistics should be reset in the new SIS each time a student starts a new degree; seconded by Bartlett. Motion passed.

Transcript Language in the New SIS – Should Academic Suspension be Permanently Noted on the Transcript?
Coon distributed information regarding the notations related to academic suspension that appeared on graduate students' transcripts in the old SIS. See below:

Graduate Academic Suspension (for grades) in the old SIS
This is what shows in the top section of the old transcript during the time that a graduate student is suspended. (A similar notation "Academic probation (Grad Deg Prog)" is present when a graduate student is on probation.)

PROBATION STATUS

ACADEMIC SUSPENSION (GRAD DEG PGM)

One problem is that the notation is the same for non-degree students as for degree students.

This notation is removed when a student is readmitted after suspension, and in the old system, there was no code/notation for a graduate student who had been readmitted. The only way to know if a graduate student had ever been suspended was to look through every semester on a particular screen in the mainframe. Undergrads had a code for "readmitted"

This is what shows in the course area on the old transcript when a graduate student is suspended, only if he/she had already registered for the next term.

SPRING 2009-GRADUATE

WITHDREW FROM ALL COURSES

IN RESIDENCE 01/06/2009

EARNED HRS 0.0 GPA 0.00

This notation is the same whether the student withdrew himself/herself or he/she was withdrawn because of suspension. Undergrads have a permanent notation in the course area—something like "Academic Suspension". A voluntary withdrawal is clearly different. It looks like what's above except the classification is Undergraduate.

If the graduate student was not already registered for the next term, then there is no notation in the course section on the old transcript. And if the student is subsequently readmitted, the only clue on the transcript that they may have been suspended is a gap in registration.

<u>Fixes in the new SIS</u>
There will be a status Readmitted After Suspension available for university personnel to see. This will make it easy to identify if a student has been previously suspended. (Because the second suspension is permanent.)

During the conversation that followed, Bartlett gave an example of a university in Texas that gives one warning for violations such as plagiarism and if there is a second incident, the student is permanently suspended. The Council decided to first consider academic suspension and then suspension for ethics violations. Licari mentioned that the undergraduate student transcript notes suspensions at the end of each semester. Clayton said that a student could be on suspension or probation at UNI and could apply elsewhere without the other institution being aware. She added that the suspension issue should be made clearer. Licari added that it could affect UNI's credibility to have a student in that type of situation applying elsewhere.

After additional discussion, it was mentioned that notations for academic suspension, as well as those for academic ethics violations, such as cheating or plagiarism or violation of written departmental policies relating to professional ethics could be combined. The fact that the undergraduate transcript notes violation of a specific section of the code of conduct as a reason for suspension was also mentioned by Patton. Coon mentioned that a code would also be noted for readmission after suspension. There was a question regarding who makes the determination on what code was violated. Coon stated that policy is that there must be a departmental policy on file with the Graduate College in order to suspend a student for violation of professional ethics.

Etschiedt approved a motion for a permanent notation on a student's transcript for academic suspension, as well as for ethics violations or violation of written departmental policies relating to professional ethics; seconded by Bauman. Motion passed.

Coon informed the Council that she is hoping that there is a way, for non-degree students only, if they are readmitted after suspension and maintain their GPA at a 3.0 each semester after readmission that they would not be suspended regardless of their Cumulative GPA. This would not be the case for every student just in cases where there is a clear reason as to why they were suspended and then readmitted and there is a good reason to think they will succeed now. Patton commented that this is currently done at the undergraduate level. There was a question as to whether or not this type of action would require a written policy so that it's not just the proactive student who finds out about it. Coon is investigating to see if it is possible for the system to be programmed to automatically keep the student off suspension so they do not have to be taken off manually. Patton mentioned an academic forgiveness policy that removes a semester from a student's record; Iowa and Iowa State currently have that policy, although only for undergraduates, and he does not recommend it for graduate students. It was noted that there are pros and cons to such a policy. Another suggestion was to handle these cases similar to a repeat policy. It was also noted that

the student request process accomplishes the same thing. The Council was not opposed to the concept although they would want to see a policy for non-degree students. Coon said that this type of concept could possibly be added to the non-degree policy from last year.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, October 27, 2011 at 3:30 p.m. in Lang 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nedrow

Secretary