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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, March 25, 2010

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #992

The Graduate Council

UNI Graduate Council Minutes No. 992

March 25, 2010

Present: Bybee, Buckholz, Clayton, Coon, Coulter, Etscheidt, Harton, Heinzl (alternate for Czarnetzki), Joseph, Pohl, , Schuchart, Stalp, Waldron, Zhang (alternate for Fecik)

Guests: Gibson, Gotera, Hays, Husband, Irons, Sandstrom, Schwieger

Waldron called the meeting to order. Motion by Pohl to approve the minutes, motion seconded by Etscheidt. Motion approved.

Graduate College Reports – Coon reported the current catalog is being edited; most of the editing involves the front portion of the catalog which contains policies and procedures. Changes in catalog will be effective summer 2010. An e-mail has been received from Kopper stating curriculum package was approved by Board of Regents.

Provost Gibson arrived at the meeting. Waldron asked that agenda items be reordered to allow Gibson to speak to Graduate Council.

Gibson thanked the Graduate Council for the invitation. She informed the Council Beverly Kopper would officially end her position at UNI this week. The Dean of the Graduate College for the past three years has been an interim position. There have been two factors that impacted Gibson's decisions regarding the Graduate College. The Cost Containment Task Forces included in their report the functions of the Graduate College should be moved to various colleges and close the Graduate College. Gibson has also been in discussions with the college deans and Academic Affairs Council. Some of the deans have stated they would still like to see the Graduate College closed for various reasons; however Gibson stated she does not support this viewpoint. She has decided to move the administration of the Graduate College to the Provost Office where it previously resided. There are financial considerations guiding her decision; it will not be huge salary savings, but there will be a savings. The greatest motivating factor is the opportunity to provide greater collaboration and synergy between the Graduate College, Office of Sponsored Programs and interdisciplinary programs. Strengthening interdisciplinary programs is a stated goal on the Strategic Plan. She is getting the search committee approved by Human Resources; she has not contacted anyone. Gibson is looking at various job descriptions; Joseph and Kopper have each submitted their individual job descriptions. Gibson is looking to forge greater collaboration between the departments and colleges. Kopper told Gibson perhaps 10 – 25% of her time the past one and one-half years has been spent working on the HLC self study. Gibson sees the new position as being dean of the Graduate College and associate Provost. Joseph's current position as interim Graduate Dean is a ¾ position. She does see some activities of the Graduate College moving to college deans but has not made the decision which ones will be moved yet.

In referencing the Strategic Plan, Gibson stated there has been much discussion on where the Graduate College fits into the new Strategic Plan. It has been moved from

several different goals. It originally was with Goal #1 but was removed from Goal #1 at the request of President Allen. In the current version of the Strategic Plan, the Graduate College stands as its own goal. Gibson stated she feels very positive about this development. She believes there is still work to be done with graduate programs in addition to APA. When looking at signature undergraduate programs; she believes signature graduate programs should also be evaluated. There needs to be decisions made regarding which programs are considered signature programs and how to disperse resources. Gibson stated she sees UNI as having more signature programs than envisioned by President Allen. Criteria for signature programs will be developed this summer and will not be based solely on enrollment. Resources for signature programs will come from the Provost's office, President's Office and reallocation of funds. Graduate programs need to be looked at critically and decide if the programs are rigorous enough. AAC and the college deans have a meeting scheduled later this month to discuss the reorganization plan. All reorganization plans have been submitted to provost. She is excited about possibilities; excited about the Graduate College being closer to the Provost's Office. She believes having the position in her office will give her a better feel for the Graduate College. Gibson commended Joseph for the great job she has done the past three years. Gibson feels people need to be moved out of interim position; get people into positions where they feel confident

Pohl talked about the Task Force report that was completed two years ago that evaluated graduate programming. Gibson was offered the opportunity to read the report. Waldron stated it was available on the Graduate College website. Much of the criteria mirrors the APA. Pohl feels the task force recommendations are more rigorous; the report contains criteria and indicators. Joseph said the Graduate Council would appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the development. Waldron stated graduate faculty would also like to be part of the conversation when setting program criteria. Gibson felt it would be helpful if everyone gave some thought to the criteria needed to be considered a signature program. Pohl stated we have criteria for past signature programs. Waldron stated she doesn't know complete history. Joseph believed in 1993 English, Communication Disorders and Communication Studies were labeled as premier programs and received additional funding. Gibson thought the Graduate Council should look at criteria developed in 1993 and perhaps update the information. Clayton asked if a program was designated as a signature program would it always remain a signature program. Gibson replied programs would be given a five-year designation as a signature program but would be evaluated annually. The five year designation is a suggestion from Gibson and could possibly be changed. Harton asked if programs will be changed. Gibson answered of course they would; programs will need to be in line with the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning process has been ongoing since October 2009. Currently there are seven goals (some include objectives) in the Strategic Plan. Gibson stressed the need to use the Strategic Plan but added it can be tweaked if needed. If a new program is developed; it needs to align with strategic priorities and strengths of UNI. There will be an investment of new dollars but there will also be re-allocation of dollars. This will be a constant process, evaluated annually and looking at reorganization plans. Most of these will be strong, but if not the deans and department heads will be asked to rework reorganization plan. If enrollments drop or things are not happening as expected; perhaps the program should be suspended.

Gibson felt this would apply more to the undergraduate programs but could also be applied to graduate programs. There needs to be an annual assessment of what does and does not work for UNI

Gibson was asked how the changes would affect the Graduate College. Gibson stated she could not fully answer the questions but felt the biggest change would be the location of the dean in the Provost's Office. The new position will have office space in the Graduate College and in the Provost's office. Gibson told the Graduate Council that people working in her office do not go home at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. or 7 p.m. The new position is not for the faint of heart. There will be a lot of work involved in this position. She feels there are faculty willing to put in those hours for the opportunity and believes even though it will be a very demanding position she will have applicants.

Clayton stated graduate faculty are concerned about the ability of the graduate dean to continue to have the ability to advocate for graduate education and is this voice would be diminished. Gibson stated she does not see things in silos and that was another reason to bring positions together; there will be more continued support for graduate education.

Moving this position back into the Provost's Office should demonstrate the importance of graduate education on the UNI campus; warrants elevated status in Provost's office. Gibson said the mission or vision of the Graduate College will not be diminished. Clayton reminded Gibson that President Allen focuses on undergraduate education and with diminished resources people are worried. Gloria stated graduate education is important to her and that is one of the reasons she is moving this position to her office. She does not deny Allen's stance – it has been clear. It doesn't mean to her that the first goal of the Strategic Plan diminishes graduate education. Programs that are not working need to be fixed or eliminated. Gibson said she was happy to give graduate education its own goal in the Strategic Plan.

Etscheidt stated she believes special education programs complement the K-12 initiative. Gloria sees integration between undergraduate and graduate education. Pohl stated Koch felt strongly about promoting positive image and did a lot for public relations. Gibson stated this person will work very closely with the Office of Sponsored Programs; it is crucial. In going back and looking at past year, some comments about Graduate College have not been positive. People asked to farm out responsibilities and close the Graduate College. There needs to be a positive push for the Graduate College and part of the positive appearance will come from the dean being located in the Provost's Office.

Coon asked if some of the perceived negativity came from Susan Koch doing a demanding job; if some of negativity is due to past events and not the present. Gibson emphasized this is not a reflection on Joseph; she has done a great job. Gibson does not know if negativity is from three years ago or longer; it is in the report but does not include a timeline. Some faculty feel UNI should not offer graduate programs. Pohl stated Lubker was vocal about disbanding Graduate College and perhaps that has permeated other areas of UNI.

The cost containment report is on the website. The Graduate College is listed as a big ticket item. Gibson does not feel a significant amount of money would be saved by closing Graduate College; work would still need to be done. Gibson stated she does not support closing the Graduate College.

Waldron asked if new position would be evaluated and changes made if not working. Gibson said it would be evaluated annually but would need 3-4 years to see if this position is working as intended. Gibson wants someone creative; someone with integrative thinking. She does not want the job to be viewed as three parts but as one position. Waldron stated there is a fear that graduate education will get lost due to the thoughts of the President and his push for undergraduate education. Gibson promised graduate education will remain at UNI. Gibson said she will appreciate assistance from Graduate Council and looks forward to being invited back. Clayton asked if she would be available to attend the Annual Graduate Faculty Meeting scheduled in April.

Sandstrom stated Koch had two separate staffs when in this position and asked if two staff would continue. Gibson replied two staffs will stay. Filling the Associate Dean position will be a charge to the person hired. Gibson was thanked for her time.

Graduate College Reports – Schwieger reported Graduate Student Research Symposium will be held April 12, 2010 and approximately 80 students will be presenting. Joseph will be featured on Sunday morning on KWWL with Ron Steele promoting the Symposium. Susie thanked everyone for their help with the new online orientation.

Graduate education is a goal in the Strategic Plan. Comments are still being accepted on the Strategic Plan. Coon said changes were made in the language to support graduate education. Joseph felt there may be overlap in some areas but graduate education is throughout plan. Waldron reminded Graduate Council that Gibson stated decisions will be made according to the Strategic Plan. As it reads now, if you are not a premier or signature program you are not considered part of the plan.

Meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Machelle Stickler

Secretary