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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 10, 2009

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #983

The Graduate Council

UNI Graduate Council Minutes No. 983

September 10, 2009

Present: Buckholz, Clayton, Coon, Etscheidt, Fecik, Harton, Joseph, Moore (for Coulter), Pohl, Stalp, Thompson, Waldron

Guests: Herring, MacKay, Patton

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. Waldron asked everyone to introduce themselves since new Council members were present and guests.

1. Motion by Thompson to approve April 9, 2009 minutes; seconded by Pohl. Motion approved.

2. Thompson nominated Waldron to serve as chair of Graduate Council for 2009-10. Jennifer accepted nomination. Motion passed.

3. Graduate College Reports: Sue announced Graduate Faculty Annual meeting was successful and thanked Frank for being parliamentarian. Marybeth Stalp was awarded Outstanding Graduate Faculty Award. Roy Behrens has been named UNI Distinguished Scholar. Joseph just received final fall enrollment count; there has been a slight decline. Decline is not significant as last fall 100 summer enrollments were included in the fall count. The Graduate College has a meeting with the President and Provost Gloria Gibson on Monday. Members of the Graduate Council are invited to attend the meeting. There are currently 1,786 graduate students enrolled at UNI. Joseph distributed a flyer to members of the Graduate Council that was given to graduate students attending New Graduate Student Orientation on August 25, 2009. The flyer is intended to help students navigate MyUniverse. The Legislative luncheon is scheduled for September 18; four students will present their research. Joseph introduced Shoshanna Coon. Coon is the new Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Licari has been named Interim Department Head for Political Science. Coon stated the Graduate College Curriculum Committee will start meeting on Friday, September 18, 2009. Coon announced she will be contacting faculty to serve on student award committees. Coon informed everyone the new Graduate Coordinator handbook was now available on the Graduate College's website; she thanked Licari for a great job. Professional Development Assignment applications are due in the Graduate College by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 25, 2009. Thompson questioned if faculty realized the money was still available. Coon said she had not received any questions regarding availability of funds and that 18 are still available

4. Chair of Graduate Faculty report: Clayton reported Roy Behrens presented in September and there was a diverse crowd from across campus in attendance. Marybeth Stalp will be presenting in October and Ana Donaldson is scheduled for November 11, 2009.

5. New Business

a. The Graduate Council needs to appoint two at-large members to service on the GCCC. Joseph explained the duties and reported on current members. Coon wants the GCCC to finish by the end of October. Fecik and Thompson volunteered to serve. Coon said another member was needed for Student Outcomes; Gayle Pohl volunteered.

b. Coon stated a member of the Graduate Council needed to be appointed as a member of the Student Outcomes Committee; Pohl volunteered.

c. Residency requirement: Joseph told Graduate Council that UNI's catalog states requirements for master's degree and has not been a problem. Joseph talked about the different graduate programs, online degrees, Hong Kong programs and students coming to campus to complete degree. Clayton felt the location was not as important as the fact students are taking a UNI class. Fecik stated access to library could be an issue for distance education students and asked if the library will be available to off campus students for research. Moore told Graduate Council that Rod Library has a distance education coordinator; materials are mailed to students. The issue is how the residency requirement is stated in the catalog. Thompson suggested language stating on campus class should say UNI class. Some on campus course for students may be 10 weeks and the same course offered internationally to students is only 10 days. Patton said some faculty believes online courses are not as rigorous as the on campus classes; felt UNI must decide to provide equal quality to online courses as on campus courses. Stated if courses are seen as being equal then residency requirements become a dinosaur. Patton felt online courses come down to the instructor's expectations of students. Joseph stated a revision would be worked up and brought to the next meeting for review. Fecik explained why DIT residence reads as it does; many of their students work full time and may not be able to come to campus for all classes.

d. Recency requirement: Coon first asked for volunteers to serve on the Distinguished Scholar selection committee. Harton and Etscheidt will serve on committee. Recency issue has become more of an issue lately; during the period from July 5 – August 18 there were five requests. Since August 18 five more requests have been received in the Graduate College. Issues stated on requests include health issues, employment in the field, and family issues. A request that included coursework that was 14+ years old was denied. Coon feels graduates should be current in their field when they graduate. Currently students have 7 years to finish their degree. Joseph stated these requirements were included in the catalog and also on each student's Program of Study. Coon stated usually she would approve someone working steadily part-time toward degree. She is concerned about students that finish coursework but not

remainder of requirements and wanted to come back after recency has expired to finish paper. Students may want to transfer courses that are too old. Joseph thought perhaps the student request form should be revised. Joseph told the Graduate Council some institutions do not give extensions. Etscheidt thought economy was driving return of students to finish degree. Waldron stated faculty in her program feel waivers will automatically be approved and give misinformation to students. Pohl suggested re-entrance exam. Coon says she never sees the student requests that are denied by the student's advisor or coordinator. The student requests Coon is seeing have support from department. Fecik asked what happened to courses when a student receives an I or RC. If the student is denied an extension, an I turns to an F after 6 months and an RC after one year. Thompson felt if the Graduate College continued to grant waivers of recency, the seven year rule will not be taken seriously. Etscheidt talked about advisor who told a student that was active in the profession, inactive in their degree that they would be allowed to finish their degree. Granting waivers can become very evaluative. Stalp suggested looking at requirements in place at other institutions. At UNI after 7 years courses start to drop off Program of Study. Joseph stated a student needs to have extension approved before they return to classes. Coon stated with some students she has given them a specific time frame in which to finish their degree with the understanding that a second waiver will not be granted. The Graduate Council will research possible changes for recency; perhaps a tiered plan. Fecik felt Graduate Council would have to specify any changes. Committee members are: Coon, Waldron, Etscheidt, and Fecik. Clayton asked about recency requirement for undergraduates. Undergraduates have five years to declare program; otherwise they must meet the requirements in the new catalog. EdD program gives candidates 14 years to finish degree. The average length is 19-22 years. Clayton wondered about credit for life experience toward graduate degree. Etscheidt made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Stalp.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Machelle Stickler

Secretary