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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, February 24, 2005

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #941

February 24, 2005
The Graduate Council

UNI Graduate Council Minutes No. 941

Thursday, February 24, 2005, 3:30 P.M., Lang 115

Present: Bozylinsky, Etscheidt, Fecik, Joslyn, Koch, Mack, MacLin, McGlade, Moore, Nelson, Petersen, Rajendran, Walker

Absent: Jurgenson, Kirmani, Pohl, Thompson

Guests: Carl Thurman (Biology), Jerry Ridenour (Math), Aaron Podolefsky (Provost), Robert Koob (President)

1. Minutes from February 10, 2005:

Rajendran moved to accept the minutes as published. Motion was seconded and passed.

2. Graduate College Reports:

Koch reported that planning continues for the celebration of 50 years of graduate education.

McGlade reported the following:

- 41 people attended the Brown Bag presentation featuring Dr. Sue Joselyn.
- a meeting will be scheduled during March to discuss the possibility of holding a plagiarism forum.
- as of fall 2005, a GF-1 will automatically be available for new graduate students via MyUniverse.

3. Report from the Chair of the Graduate Faculty:

Kirmani asked MacLin to express his apology for not being in attendance.

4. Announcements:

MacLin reported that Dr. John Downey, former Dean of the Graduate College, had passed away. The Council expressed condolences to Dr. Downey's family and friends.

MacLin thanked all those who supported the Brown Bag initiative.

5. Discussion:

President Koob invited Dr. Podolefsky to discuss a proposal with the Council.

Podolefsky feels the title of Interim Dean of the Graduate College creates a sense of impermanence. He reported that Koch's title will be changed to Dean of the Graduate College with a two-year term appointment. Podolefsky indicated the title of Interim Dean gives the impression that a search is currently being conducted to fill the position. President Koob does not feel it is appropriate to search for a Graduate College dean while there is an Interim Provost in place.

MacLin asked the Council for comments regarding Podolefsky's announcement. With general consensus, Podolefsky indicated he will move forward with the title change.

President Koob has appointed Dr. James Lubker as Interim Vice-President and Provost, pending approval by the Board of Regents.

Koob discussed reactions he received to his presentation to the Graduate Faculty last fall. He said that not all faculty should fit a single mold in order to have a balanced university. He is not asking all professors to be alike because diversity is good for the sum to be balanced.

Rajendran asked Koob about diminished resources for the Graduate College. Koob responded that the university has lost 9% overall during the past several years and if the Graduate College has lost proportionally, the other deans will not be sympathetic since they have lost, also. Koch indicated that the cuts have been made equally across the colleges but graduate enrollment has gradually increased while undergraduate enrollment has decreased as funding has decreased.

Rajendran asked where the Board of Regents wants the balance between tuition and appropriated dollars. Koob indicated the balance point has been shifting more toward the individual and away from taxes.

Walker asked about the issue of differential tuition rates. Koob indicated that the issue is gone for now but could come back if UNI does not receive enough appropriated dollars to fund salary increases. Koob believes that some other campuses may choose to make a case for differential tuition.

Nelson discussed the difficulty in responding to supply and demand issues. In her department (Communicative Disorders), advanced degrees are necessary in order to be employed in the field. She asked if there is a way to develop a mechanism to minimize the supply and demand problems. Koob indicated that a department can make the decision to shift resources from the undergraduate to graduate program and raise admission requirements for undergraduates, if desired. The Provost is also able to shift resources due to enrollments, etc.

Koob indicated that the Office of Sponsored Programs has been implemented to encourage faculty to secure external funding.

Koch stated that she has been in touch with the Foundation to find out how the Graduate College can benefit from giving. Fundraising is becoming more important to public institutions.

McGlade hears from UNI graduate programs that there is tremendous pressure from other institutions that offer lower tuitions.

Koob indicated that UNI discounts tuition by 18 percent; for every dollar that comes in, 18 cents is set aside for those students who need financial assistance. Continuing Education and the Graduate College have the freedom to follow this model. Koch stated that Continuing Education has been aware of the lower tuition costs at competing institutions and started a new program this year that could be used as a model.

Thurman raised the issue of number of hours graduate students teach. Koob reiterated that departments have a great deal of discretion in terms of how they run their graduate programs, and that changes can be made at the department level, starting with discussions with faculty, department head and graduate coordinator.

McGlade indicated that graduate students have the right to complain if a teaching load is too time consuming. Most departments place graduate students in a research capacity and not in a teaching role so that their schedule is more flexible.

Mack indicated that the Sociology department is considering a smaller, high quality program and asked Koob if this is a good choice. He indicated that it is a department choice. The department has the right to alter the program to increase the quality.

Fecik asked the President what he perceived to be the strong points of graduate education at UNI. Koob responded that UNI is more flexible to meet the needs of the society that we serve. UNI graduate students are more well-rounded and not narrowly taught. Thurman asked if professional master's programs are too specialized? Koob responded that the market is also looking for students in specialized fields.

Nelson asked what the role of faculty should be to assure a healthy future for UNI. Koob indicated that when faculty believe in the organization, the entire university is more successful.

Fecik indicated that Koob is the only president to acknowledge graduate education at UNI. Koob stated there has never been any reason not to acknowledge graduate education.

MacLin thanked President Koob for meeting with the Council.

6. Items for Publication:

None.

7. Other Business:

None.

8. Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Uehle
Secretary