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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, December 4, 2003

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #931

December 4, 2003

Council Members Present: Ellen Neuhaus (for Cynthia Coulter), Alvaro Villavicencio, John Fecik, Kristin Mack, Sue Pettit, Ben Schafer, Lauren Nelson, K.N. Rajendran, Richard Utz, Kim MacLin, Frank Thompson, Sue Joslyn.

Guests: Carol Cooper, UNI Faculty Senate; Sherry Gable, COE Faculty Senate; Patti Rust, Associate Registrar; Pam MacKay, Registrar's Office; Diane Wallace, Registrar's Office.

Ex Officio: John Somervill, Jackie McGlade, David Walker.

1. Minutes of the Graduate Council (GC) meeting of November 20, 2003

Nelson moved to accept the minutes, Utz seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Graduate Dean's Report

Dean Somervill had very kind comments for the Distinguished Scholar Award winner, Dr. Sue Joslyn.

Associate Dean Walker: no report.

Associate Dean McGlade: no report

3. Announcements

No announcements.

4. Update/Action on Continuing Registration for MA students

Registrar Phil Patton was unable to attend the GC meeting. Patti Rust, Pam MacKay, and Diane Wallace were in attendance on his behalf. Dean Somervill provided an update on the continuing registration fee. He reminded the GC that the Registrar was proposing a modest fee for UNI masters' students who have completed all coursework and/or comprehensive exams but had not yet completed the thesis or research paper requirements. If students are not enrolled at UNI currently, they do not have access to e-mail and can not communicate with their thesis chairs easily as private e-mail addresses often change. He noted that Patton proposed a moderate fee of \$50, which is much less than the ~\$600 fee charged by The University of Iowa.

Somervill indicated that students would be granted e-mail and library access, but didn't know about access to the WRC. Rust thought Kathy Gulick needed to be consulted on the WRC issue.

Pettit reported the Graduate College Student Advisory Group felt the \$50 fee was very reasonable.

Somervill indicated departments would notify the registrar's office regarding students who would be eligible for the fee. MacKay noted that using the guideline of post-coursework would be preferable to using post-comprehensive exams as some departments do not require comprehensive exams.

Rajendran asked if there would be a limit on the number of semesters that a student would pay this fee. Utz replied that the seven-year recency requirement would still be in place for the degree.

Pettit stated that students wondered whether access to the health center would be allowed with the degree, but reiterated that students felt the \$50 was reasonable. Somervill indicated he was not sure about health center access.

Rajendran made a motion to support the fee of \$50/semester for masters' students who are post-coursework. Utz seconded the motion. With one abstention (Schafer), the motion carried. Somervill added the clarification that any new fee has to be approved by the Board of Regents, so the vote did not put the fee in place.

5. Drop Audiology; 6. Drop Theater; 7. Drop Physics Education.

MacLin asked that a GC member move to alter the agenda to address the programs that are part of the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) packet rather than the three listed on the agenda (above), since Physics Education was not included in the packet, and Political Science was. Nelson moved to address dropping the graduate programs that are part of the GCC packet, Schafer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Somervill provided background for the three graduate programs proposed to be dropped. He noted that the Political Science department experienced problems recruiting students and coordinating the program with senior faculty. Somervill met with Dean Jill Wallace and the Political Science department, who determined that maintaining the program would require greater effort than they were able to provide. The department first decided to suspend admissions to the program, then voted to drop the degree.

Somervill stated that faculty members in the Theater department had mixed feelings about dropping the graduate degree. He noted that enrollment has been small traditionally. Somervill met with the department faculty on several occasions. The department first decided to suspend admissions to the program, then voted to drop the degree.

Regarding the Audiology master's degree program, Somervill noted that the terminal degree in the field is now the doctorate degree, not the master's degree. To meet this additional requirement, the department would have had to recruit new faculty and allocate considerable resources. The department and dean (with Somervill's approval) decided to no longer offer the MA.

MacLin asked if the faculty in each of these departments supported the proposed changes. Somervill replied that faculty members in Political Science and Theater made their own decision to drop the programs, and that those in Audiology made the decision in conjunction with their dean. Nelson added that faculty members in Audiology would certainly prefer to keep the program, but that they understood why the cut was needed.

McGlade noted that GCC discussion on this issue was included in the minutes she circulated.

Thompson asked if UNI considered a joint Audiology degree with The University of Iowa or Iowa State University. Nelson indicated that SUI was not interested, and ISU doesn't have a program.

Utz motioned to drop the programs as stipulated in the GCC proposal packet (Audiology, Political Science, and Theater master's degrees). Mack seconded the motion. The motion carried.

8. Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) proposal part II

McGlade described actions proposed in the packet were to finish the curricular package, and that no major issues were present from the GCC standpoint. Thompson asked if the Philosophy department provided consultation or discussion for the Business Ethics course. Diane Wallace indicated the Philosophy department had not responded by the time the issue passed the UCC. McGlade added that the full GCC discussion was on page 6, that a consultation had occurred but there was no response by the Philosophy department. Thompson asked whose responsibility was it to see that the departments involved have responded. McGlade replied that the department who is proposing the change has the responsibility to make sure appropriate consultations are obtained. Thompson asked if it was normal for a department involved in a consultation does not respond. McGlade stated that the "Kaparathi system" of curricular development shows consultations that are conducted, but that the actual consultations are not available unless requested through Coleen Wagner. She suggested changes for the next curricular cycle where more a complete tracking system would show each level of approval, but noted the current system relies on departments making sure all approvals are obtained. Sherry Gable stated that sometimes forms go forward with only the signature of the department heads, and that outstanding objections to a proposal require it to go back to the appropriate parties for further consultation. Utz responded to Thompson's initial question by stating that the department of Philosophy and Religion may not want to respond to the graduate curriculum proposal due to losing their graduate program. Thompson asked if it were possible to send a notice saying that if a department does not respond to a consultation request, it will be assumed that the department has no objections to the proposal. McGlade stated that departments are responsible for the consultations, but the vote does not have to be delayed. Carol Cooper added that the University Faculty Senate has the opportunity to return the proposal for further consultations. McGlade indicated the GCC did not see any reason not to go forward with the proposal.

Thompson made the motion to accept the GCC package, Utz seconded the motion.

Discussion: Gable indicated the COE senate had not approved the proposals for the new C&I course 250:302, or for 220:293 Qualitative Research in Special Education title change. She indicated these proposals were never taken through the COE curricular channels. McGlade stated that the COE should have a system to check that all curricular proposals go through the appropriate channels.

Thompson made a motion for an amendment to the original motion, that the proposals for 250:302 and 220:293 be remanded back to the COE until the courses have been approved appropriately. Utz seconded the amendment to the motion. Vote on the amendment to the motion carried. Vote on the motion to accept the GCC package

without the proposals for 250:302 or 220:293, which would be sent back to the COE for appropriate approval, carried.

9. Release time for graduate coordinators

Utz reminded the GC about a memo from the Provost which regulates University-wide release time for graduate coordinators. The memo indicated departmental graduate coordinators are allowed one class release in the fall semester. Utz noted that many departments, including English, allowed one class release time from both fall and spring semesters for graduate coordinators, and that some of his constituents thought this cut in release time was discussed in the GC, when in fact it was not. Somervill explained the need for the memo, indicating inconsistencies in release time across campus. He noted that the policy states that programs with fewer than 15 graduate students do not allow release time for graduate coordinators. He stated that the policy change was unanimously supported by all deans, and was considered a policy decision by the Provost. Utz was concerned that the issue had not been discussed by the GC, and, while agreeing that the policy should be equitable across campus, felt that each department should have a say in how important graduate program is to each department's mission. He noted examples of departments with more than 50 graduate students (which would require more release time), or those with 10 full time and 20 part time students (which may not qualify for release time but should), and wondered how these release time issue would be addressed. Utz asked if the GC should prepare a proposal to support departmental input. Somervill noted that if a department makes a special request, the respective dean could make exceptions, as the policy is a guideline, not a rule.

Utz indicated he thought the GC should have an opinion on this issue, and that if the GC wants to act on this, he would craft a proposal. Nelson reminded council members that the purview of the GC is in curriculum usually, not in faculty load assignments, but that the GC would be acting within its mission to express an opinion on the issue. Utz agreed, but noted that graduate coordinators fear that there are no exceptions to this policy, and to publicize the GC's position would be helpful.

Somervill stated he had no objections to the GC stating its opinions on the issue. He emphasized the intent of the Academic Affairs council was to tighten up release time when it is not absolutely essential, especially in these times of severe budget cuts. He indicated his support of the GC requesting clarification and communicating with the Provost.

Thompson asked who advocates for the graduate programs. He noted that each college has a fundraiser, and wondered about the cost of finding funds to endow graduate coordinators. Somervill replied that the job of the college developmental officer was to secure money for scholarships, programs, and departments, but the officer would have a very difficult time getting money to support release time. In the past, Somervill suggested to the deans getting graduate fellowships from donations, but currently most donations go to undergraduate programs.

Fecik noted that since the inception of the Doctorate degree in Industrial Technology (DIT), the graduate coordinator for the program has received 3 semester hours of release time each semester. Somervill agreed that policies differ across campus, even

within larger programs, and that CHFA is the only college that has 2 courses/year release time for each department. He again indicated his support of GC input, but reminded the council that financial circumstances of the university may prevent additional release time, as the administration is prioritizing cuts to protect against terminations. Utz agreed, noting he understands the current priorities, but wondered if the next step would be eliminating the remaining one class release time, and that cuts in release time may negatively influence faculty from being graduate coordinators.

Villavicencio voiced support of graduate coordinators, indicating their crucial role for graduate students. He agreed the GC should provide its opinion to the university. MacLin stated that the cuts may be inevitable, but the GC should make its objections known in anticipation of better budget times. Somervill noted that not enough public clamor was raised regarding damage done by budget cuts. He indicated the public perceives the “fat is being cut” from the system, when in fact cuts will negatively affect graduate education. He felt a public expression of protest from the GC would be appropriate. Thompson suggested a public fact sheet describing effects of the cuts on graduate students. Somervill indicated the information is available from each college dean, and is not sure why it hasn’t been passed on to faculty. He noted cuts from the Graduate College including \$170,000 from the faculty research and travel account, \$30,000 in student travel funds, four graduate assistant stipends. In addition, he stated that the Graduate College is bracing for additional cuts in the spring anticipated at \$44,000, with no place left to cut except personnel. He added that additional cuts will most certainly affect the quality of education.

Fecik suggested a GC subcommittee to develop a response on the budget situation, on a packet of issues including cutting graduate coordinator release time. Utz agreed that expanding the proposal to include other issues was a good idea.

Somervill noted that the Provost gets questions about why UNI has a graduate program if it is considered a premier undergraduate institution, and that anything the GC can do to protect graduate education will help. Utz added that external program reviewers who look at UNI’s website comment on “applied” graduate programs, and do not realize the strong research base for graduate education. Somervill reminded the GC of the Board of Regents’ suggestion to eliminate research from UNI’s mission, and that the GC providing its opinion to the Provost was helpful on that issue.

Cooper noted that ISU is trying to do away with their graduate college, and wondered if that would carry over to UNI. Somervill replied he spoke recently with the dean of ISU’s graduate college, who doesn’t know what will happen. Somervill added that eliminating graduate colleges has happened at other institutions, but after time and chaos, the graduate colleges are restored. Cooper suggested the GC lay a strong foundation at UNI to prevent this happening. Somervill stated that UNI has not had pressure to do this yet, but duplication of programs is also an issue. He noted an upcoming story in the Des Moines Register on enrollment duplication at the Regents’ institutions, which will have a negative impact on the public. He added that the previous audit of programs by Peet Marwick was the result of the assumption that every duplication was inefficient, and the audit did not have input from faculty or deans. Cooper noted that the Board of Regents was looking favorably at shared programs at this time.

MacLin asked for volunteers for a subcommittee to address these issues. GC members Utz, Thompson, Fecik, and Villavicencio volunteered. Sommervil asked for one representative from each college. Utz agreed and noted that the representative did not need to be from the GC. He asked GC members to forward names of nominees to him or Frank Thompson from CSBS and COE.

12. Thompson moved for adjournment, Rajendran seconded the motion, which carried. The Graduate Council meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue A. Joslyn, Ph.D.