University of Northern Iowa

UNI ScholarWorks

9-11-2003

University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 11, 2003

Graduate Council, University of Northern Iowa.

Recommended Citation

UNI Graduate Council Minutes #926

September 11, 2003

Present: Coulter, Mack, MacLin, McGlade, Nelson, Rajendran, Schafer, Smith, Somervill, Thompson, Utz, Walker

Absent: Bozylinsky, Gallagher, Groves, Pohl, Villavicencio

Visitors: Phil East (Computer Science); Eric Lange (Theatre); Dixon Stuelke (Master's student)

Utz called the meeting to order.

Somervill introduced Jackie McGlade, the new Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs. He said that the Registrar will be releasing the third week report early next week. It will show a modest increase in graduate enrollment and in extension and off-campus courses. He reminded the Council that there are two student members elected from the Dean's Student Advisory Committee, one representing master's programs and one representing doctoral programs, who are full, voting members of the Council. The master's representative will need to be elected at the next meeting of the committee. Thompson asked how the students on this committee were selected and Somervill said there was one master's student appointed by each college plus a student from each of the two doctoral programs. Somervill then introduced Dixon Stuelke, last year's master's representative, who has started a WebCT site for graduate students. Stuelke said that he was in the process of populating the site. There will be an area for feedback to the Council, bulletin boards, and a want ad section. Other things will be added as suggestions are made.

Walker reminded the Council that due to budget reductions, the Faculty Research account has not been funded this year. This means that the Graduate College support for travel, project, and publication activities has been suspended. He is hopeful that at some point the account can be reinstated. However, the Distinguished Scholar and student writing awards have been retained. Nominations are due October 13 for the Distinguished Scholar Award and October 6 for the student writing awards. Thompson asked how much had the travel account been reduced, because that was part of the bargaining agreement. Somervill said that travel is supported by various other places on campus and that the account was never for travel only. It supported various research-related activities, including travel to conferences. There was approximately $170,000 in the account in 2000-2001, when it was at its largest. That has been reduced yearly since then due to reversions and reductions. The Graduate College has also had to reduce the number of assistantships by four. Utz said that international students are having difficulties getting visas.

Minutes #925 from April 24, 2003 were approved as distributed.

Utz asked for nominations for Council Chair. Thompson nominated Rajendran and Coulter nominated MacLin. Rajendran declined his nomination. Thompson moved that nominations cease. MacLin was elected and accepted.

Utz asked for nominations for Council Vice-Chair. MacLin nominated Coulter. Thompson moved nominations cease. Coulter was elected and accepted.

Somervill said that the minutes should be taken by a member of the Council. That person would need to be objective and provide an unbiased reporting of Council discussion and actions. The Chair and Vice-Chair will select someone by the next meeting.

McGlade said that this is the year for catalog and curriculum changes. The first meeting of the Graduate College Curriculum Committee is September 17. Diane Wallace, who makes the catalog changes, will serve as secretary. They will be using the online system for distribution of the materials. Curricular changes will be coming to the Council the first part of November. McGlade and Pam MacKay have been looking at the general graduate areas of the catalog to make sure they are compatible with current policy and are understandable to students. They are making a list of things that need to be clarified.

Eric Lange said that it has been difficult for the Theatre department to consistently offer graduate courses for their degree students due to the resources available and the history of enrollment in the department. The department feels it is unfortunate but necessary to suspend their MA program so they can use available resources for development and enhancement of their undergraduate program. Stuelke asked if the program might be reinstated at a later time. Lange said possibly, if resources permitted in the future. They generally have only two to four students in the major. Somervill stressed that this was a departmental decision and not mandated by the administration. Utz asked if it will influence the recruitment and retention of faculty. Lange said probably not, at least for the immediate future, but possibly later on. Stuelke asked if this would affect other arts programs, but Lange did not believe it would. Somervill reminded Council that this had been approved last spring, but the Council had wanted someone from the department to speak regarding the suspension.

McGlade said that she had been asked to look into the strategic plan but was not sure exactly what the question or problem was. Coulter said that referred back to wording changes in the strategic plan omitting reference to research activities. There was concern that UNI is not recognized as a research institution and that the perception of our research function would be further diminished by the change in language. East said that Reineke had contacted several Council members regarding this and said that the wording suggested at the last Council meeting had been adopted.

Shafer said that there was concern in the Computer Science department about changes in catalog language for their program that had occurred without their approval. McGlade said that a policy passed by the Council had triggered the wording change and that departments had a chance to request that they not be included in the change, but nothing had been received from the Computer Science department. She said that it was her understanding that CS had been given the opportunity to meet to determine catalog

language but had not responded. However, she suggests that in the future the Council should make sure that affected departments are consulted by referring such policies to the Graduate College Curriculum Committee for research into their effects. This would mean delaying final adoption for at least a meeting, but should eliminate these types of problems. East asked how he could propose a change to Council regarding the rule for the number of hours of research credit and have it effective for this curricular cycle. He asked if what he had sent to McGlade could be the policy for the Computer Science department. He then had to leave for class. Schafer said that the problem was in the process of being solved.

Somervill reminded everyone that the Council is the official policy making body for graduate matters. McGlade said that the goal is to make the catalog as clear as possible for the students. Utz said that the catalog language is leagally binding.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Hesse
Secretary Pro-Tem