

10-10-2002

University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, October 10, 2002

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #918

October 10, 2002

Present: Coulter, East (for Schafer), Fogarty, Granberg-Rademacker, MacLin, Rajendran, Saiia, Smaldino
Absent: Bozylinsky, Dolgener, Hanson, Somervill, Utz, Walker
Visitors: MaryAnn Hesse (Graduate College), Pam Mackay (Registrar), Phil Patton (Registrar)

Rajendran moved, and Smaldino seconded a motion to accept minutes #917.

Granberg-Rademacker announced two upcoming graduate student receptions. On Monday, November 4 at 3PM there will be a reception for graduate students of color in the Georgian Lounge. On Tuesday, November 12 at 3PM there will be a reception for international graduate students in the Georgian Lounge. Graduate Council members were invited, and asked to encourage graduate students and graduate coordinators in their respective colleges to attend.

Granberg-Rademacker explained that the first 2002-03 meeting of the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee (GCCC) occurred on Mon., October 7. Associate Provost Susan Koch, and Professor Kaparathi presented an informational session about the new online curriculum procedures. The GCCC still needs representation from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Fogarty introduced Phil Patton, University Registrar, who discussed the continuing discussion of the 15-week versus the 17-week semester calendars. Patton explained that the current timeframe for these discussions had been extended, as he was hoping to get more feedback from various constituencies before bringing a formal proposal to the Faculty Senate in November. He explained that the two proposals were available in detail on the Registrar's website (www.uni.edu/regist). The 15-week proposal includes 13 weeks of instructional time, one week of vacation, and one week of final exams. The 17-week proposal includes 15 weeks of instructional time, with vacation and final exam time frames remaining the same as the 15-week proposal. A 15-week calendar provides the potential for an abbreviated session in either January or August, but there is no concrete proposal for these currently.

Fogarty explained that he had contacted Carol Cooper, chair of Faculty Senate, for more information about Faculty Senate's actions on the calendar issue. Cooper encouraged Graduate Council members to send their feedback, and suggested that both entities consider holding a joint session to address these. Thus, Fogarty suggested

that council members discuss the calendars with Patton today then return to their constituencies for additional feedback before the next Graduate Council meeting.

Patton explained that possible implementation would occur in January 2004. Rajendran explained that he had informal conversations with constituents, and received divided responses. Some concerns about the 15-week proposal were: winter break, possible problem with class-times starting at 10-minutes after the hour.

Smaldino explained that a 13-week instructional schedule might adversely affect night classes. She referenced the 45-hour Carnegie Rule (rule that each credit hour of study required approximately one hour of seat-time). Patton explained provisions for this, and that these were available on the website. Patton further said that the aforementioned rule was no longer federally mandated, but explained that he believes President Koob still supports this traditional rule. He explained that UNI's sister institutions were at the beginning of exploratory stages of calendar proposals.

Saiia asked about the rationale for exploring these calendar changes. Patton explained that from faculty and students' perspectives, an additional instructional period might be beneficial, perhaps leading to earlier graduation, better use of facilities, and course distribution throughout the day. Saiia mentioned the possibility of additional time for research as another possible outcome.

Smaldino began discussion about the additional responsibility this may place on faculty, and possible compensation issues. Patton explained that this was an important area to consider. Coulter discussed the possible impact on the library and other campus services, particularly how the additional instructional period may stretch some already extended staff. Patton explained that there is currently no concrete proposal for a January or August session. He raised other concerns about how this may affect internship, and/or practicum hour requirements. Rajendran agreed that the proposals do not address the interim period. Smaldino asked whether a January-session would become an extra requirement or part of faculty's salary. East said that this response would have to occur on the President's level. Patton explained that the answers to many questions would occur after a proposal passed. Coulter reminded the council that May session was initially mentioned as a two-year pilot. She questioned whether a report about this session had been completed. Patton said he would revisit the minutes to determine responsibility for that report.

Saiia suggested that any revenue-generation from these sessions should be used for support services. Smaldino explained that if additional sessions led to the termination of July session, this could cause problems for COE students trying to complete master's requirements. Coulter mentioned some potential problems with additional sessions

included less time for maintenance of computers, facilities, and residence halls, among others. Patton agreed that these could become problems if January and/or August terms were mandated, and said that UNI may have to consider other maintenance models.

MacLin shared responses she had received to an email query about graduate students/faculty's perspectives about the calendar proposals. Overall, both students and faculty's responses were split. Some indicated that fewer instructional weeks would allow more time for research/writing. Others indicated concerns about the added workload per week, and difficulty completing tasks. Some students were concerned that less instructional time would be conducive to more time at home or away, thus less research/writing time.

Fogarty suggested similar concerns emerged in Sabin. With regard to graduate education, he wondered about possible changes to the number of hours graduate assistants worked. How would this affect time in the lab? Would individuals be able to attend professional meetings at the expense of missing more classroom time per day at a conference? If the 15-week proposal was accepted, could it begin in the fall of 2004, rather than January? Patton explained that additional classroom time would also require an estimated additional 8-hours of time to the average workweek. He shared concerns about how this might affect students. Fogarty indicated that this discussion should continue at a future meeting. MacLin mentioned colleagues that had a MW and TTH schedules, with no classes held on Fridays. East highlighted the fact that a 15-week semester would make the fall and spring terms seemingly more equal, and that TTH schedules would be similar to MWF schedules.

Saiia began chair responsibilities and recognized Fogarty. Fogarty requested the Graduate Council's permission to test means of communication. He indicated that he wants to send council members email-attachments of varying lengths, to determine whether members can receive and open this information. Fogarty indicated concerns with the format of the current minutes, particularly due to lost text. Saiia explained that paper copies of the minutes and agenda took too much time. MaryAnn Hesse indicated that the current system, a link on UNI online, was in response to similar concerns by faculty last year. Discussion ensued about the extra steps necessary to use that link, and other challenges with the existing system. Fogarty explained that he simply wanted permission to send council members PDF files of varying lengths. Graduate Council members granted permission.

Fogarty explained his concerns with the current definition of quorum, namely the difficulties that result when some membership positions remain vacant. He made the following suggestion: Quorum should include 5 or 6 elected faculty members or alternates, representing at least three of the UNI colleges, or half of the Graduate

Council members (8) or their alternates must be present. East requested clarification about the Faculty Senate representative, and whether or not this individual would count as a college representative. Fogarty indicated that this individual would not, before requesting additional feedback from council members. Coulter indicated that she thought 6 was more appropriate. Saiia mentioned that this would allow the Graduate Council to act when fewer representatives than the traditional quorum attend meetings. Further discussion about quorum will be held at a future Graduate Council meeting.

There were no items for announcement.

There were no items for publication.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Granberg-Rademacker
Program Assistant