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# University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 12, 2002

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# UNI Graduate Council Minutes #916

September 12, 2002

Present: Coon (for Hanson), East (for Schafer), Fogarty, MacLin, Neuhaus (for Coulter), Rajendran, Saiia, Smaldino, Somervill, Utz, Walker

Absent:

Visitors: Seth Brown (psychology), Carol Colburn (theatre), John Williams (psychology)

Review of the 915 minutes will occur at the next Graduate Council meeting.

Somervill discussed the funding changes implemented as a result of the budget cuts. Specifically, he noted that the Graduate Student Travel Budget, while invaluable and unique to the UNI, was eliminated out of necessity. Faculty Research Project Grants were reduced from \$500 to \$250 awards. International Travel Awards for faculty decreased to a maximum award of \$250, same as the Domestic Travel Awards. Summer Research Fellowships will continue to be provided at the same rate, but additional funds to provide research dollars, etc., are no longer available. The Distinguished Scholar funds were reduced dramatically to a \$500 cash prize.

Despite all of the aforementioned cuts, Somervill emphasized that graduate student assistantships remained in tact. Furthermore, graduate assistants will receive cost-of-living increases, unlike the delayed faculty/staff increase. The Graduate College will continue to provide support services, such as the Grants and Contracts Office and personnel.

Walker invited all Council members to a reception for new tenure and tenure-track faculty, scheduled for next Thursday, September 19 in the Georgian Lounge, Commons. Walker also requested council members consider either serving or recommending volunteers to serve on award selection committees (including committees to decide the Distinguished Scholar recipient, Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation award winner, Outstanding Master's Thesis award winners, Outstanding Master's Paper award winners). He sent letters to all advisors who have students who are eligible for the last three awards (those who completed their dissertations, theses or master's papers between 10/1/2001 and 9/30/2002). The deadline for nominations is Monday, October 7th so that award winners' materials can be submitted to the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools before their November deadline.

Somervill discussed the 2002-03 academic year enrollment figures, specifically noting that UNI expected a decrease of about 50 graduate students. For a variety of reasons, he suggested that neither ISU nor UI would experience similar declines. One reason that ISU may not have experienced this decrease may be due to some technological advancements. Thus, Somervill discussed a major objective for this academic year will be to pursue electronic admissions.

Finally, Somervill explained that given the current state of financial affairs, there will likely be a need to re-consider low enrollment UNI graduate programs. Any decisions to eliminate programs will involve full consultation with departments, especially those that are ambivalent about retaining a graduate program. Some expansion of graduate programs is possible, but most of this will likely occur through ICN or distance education.

Rajendran asked for nominations for new chair and vice-chair for Graduate Council. After some discussion about responsibilities of each and three chair nomination declinations, the Council proceeded to vote on the vice-chair position. Smaldino nominated Saiia for vice-chair, and Saiia accepted. Rajendran then moved, seconded by Fogarty, that Saiia be considered for vice-chair. A unanimous decision elected Saiia as the new vice-chair of the Graduate Council.

Discussion ensued regarding the departments who have yet to elect new representation to Graduate Council. Elections will occur in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and the College of Education. Further conversations about the responsibilities of the Graduate Council chair occurred. Smaldino moved, seconded by East, that Fogarty be the new chair. Fogarty was elected the new chair of the Graduate Council.

Council members present agreed that Mohammad Fahmy (industrial technology) should continue in his capacity as representative to the University Curriculum Committee.

Utz explained that UNI may select candidates for the Regents' Award for Faculty Excellence, in teaching, service, and scholarship. Graduate Council was asked, for the first time, to nominate a representative to serve on the award selection committee. Utz explained that responsibilities would primarily involve reviewing nominations, and discussing preferences with other selection committee members. Discussion revolved around whether the representative needed to be a Graduate Council member, or a recommended representative from the graduate faculty. The decision will be made at the next Graduate Council meeting.

Announcements included discussion about the Graduate Council's next meeting agenda. Rajendran explained that Al Hays (public policy) would like to present some potential changes to the MPP program. Somervill suggested that these changes may include the addition of a 5-year degree option within the program.

Other items for the next meeting's agenda include: continued discussion of the minimum GPA requirement for a non-degree graduate students, changes to the curriculum-modification processes - namely the new online system, and revisions to the Graduate Council constitution.

Somervill encouraged council members to attend all Graduate Council meetings, and if this was not possible, to send alternates so that quorum is met.

There were no items for publication.

Rajendran concluded the meeting by thanking Saiia and Fogarty for accepting their respective Graduate Council positions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Sara Granberg-Rademacker  
Program Assistant