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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, January 12, 1998

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #872

January 12, 1998

Present: Bruess, Chao, Dedrick, Hays, Jackson, Kirmani, Manfredi (for Hanson), Osman, Roberts (for Thomas), Safford, Smaldino, Somervill, Walker

Absent: Bankston, Bozylinsky, Kalkwarf, Raiklin

Visitors: Shoshanna Coon (Chemistry)

Minutes #871 were approved as published.

Somervill stated that he did not anticipate an increase or decrease in next year's budget for graduate tuition scholarships, assistantships, or research accounts.

Somervill began discussion on the subject of XXX:299 research credit requirements, considering the maximum number of hours allowed and the limit of three hours per semester. There was a concern that there may be legitimate reasons for extending the number of research hours permitted. Issues discussed included the idea that research hours may lose their credibility if they are used to inflate grades and the reasoning behind limiting students to three research credits a semester is for the students' benefit. Smaldino suggested using student request forms if there are individual concerns, and Somervill added that this wouldn't be a routine practice, but a means for exceptions. Hays said that a three hour limit each semester seemed restrictive and would support raising the limit to six hours with proper advising. Somervill suggested that Graduate Council delay action until others with concerns or inquiry are able to voice their ideas and opinions at a Council meeting held at a later date.

Somervill addressed the policy for forming the Graduate College Curriculum Committee. Currently, there is no procedure approved by the Graduate Council describing how the committee should be formed or the duration of each term. The practice is that the dean of the college appoints a person to be on the Graduate College Curriculum Committee for two years. Hays suggested that an election by each college faculty would parallel the process of the University Curriculum Committee. Bruess, prior member of the Graduate College Curriculum Committee, suggested that the term would have to go three years staggered, as there is no meeting in the off year, if the goal is to retain experienced committee members for the busy year. Smaldino added that it is necessary the chair be experienced and that it is helpful to have experienced members. Somervill suggested forming a sub-committee of persons who have served on the Graduate College Curriculum Committee. Hays made a motion for the chair to appoint a five person committee to prepare a proposal to present to the Graduate Council this semester. The motion was seconded and it passed.

Somervill discussed forming a committee to assess the desirability of having variable

graduate assistant stipends in different programs. Several departments in the College of Natural Sciences have voiced frustration when applying for grants, because they are unable to apply for more than the prevailing rate for graduate assistantships at the University. By making the rate variable, assistantships would vary by program (not by department). Basically, the same amount of funding would be allocated to each department, but the department would choose how many assistantships they want to offer and at what level. Somervill suggested that a committee be formed to make recommendations this semester concerning variable stipends. The committee may be formed from representatives from each college, so all programs are included. Hays moved that the Chair be instructed to form a committee with one representative from each college, with consultation with the dean of the college, which will report back to Graduate Council by the end of the semester. Chao seconded the motion and it passed.

The Annual Graduate Faculty meeting will be held on Thursday, April 9 at 3:30 p.m. The master's thesis awards will be presented at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Stejskal
Secretary

Next meeting will be February 26, 1998 at 3:30 p.m. in Seerly 3.