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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, March 10, 1994

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #829

March 10, 1994

Present: Chao, Decker, Dolgener (for Huddleston), Durham, V. Jackson, Lew, MacArthur, R. Martin, Safford, Simet, Somervill, Walker

Absent: Crew, Gaies, Kirmani, Yohe

Visitors: E. A. Dennis, Mohammed Fahmy (Industrial Technology); Susann Doody (College of Education); Virginia Berg (Biology); Edward Ebert (Grants and Contracts)

Minutes #828 were approved as published.

Somervill addressed some of the concerns and criticisms that have been made of minority recruitment in general and of the New Orleans program in particular. He indicated that there is some feeling that the students who are recruited from New Orleans are "underprepared" and are focused in specific colleges and in the "less difficult" graduate programs. There has also been some questioning of the employability of these students after they receive their graduate degrees. The suggestion has been made that the University allocate funds (e.g. specifically graduate assistantships) for these students so as to not provide financial support for these students at the expense of other graduate students. Somervill distributed information on the New Orleans minority recruitment program. A summary of the information is attached.

Simet said that the committee is still discussing multiple levels of Graduate Faculty. They will report at the next meeting.

Somervill requested that the doctoral dissertation committees be revised from a six-member committee to a five-member committee by dropping the choice between two members designated by the student. Four members would be selected through advisor and student consultation. The fifth member would be the Graduate Dean's appointment from outside the college. Decker moved to accept the Dean's position for a minimum of five members on a doctoral dissertation committee. Motion was seconded. Doody said that she hoped that Somervill's practice of seeking input for his appointee would be continued. Somervill said that his goal would be to pick someone who would contribute to the dissertation process. Decker noted that someone outside the University could still be added as a sixth member. Motion was passed. It was decided that this would become effective immediately.

Walker distributed the current Distinguished Scholar guidelines. Simet distributed proposed modifications. Council members were asked to consider the modifications and contact Walker or Simet by March 18 with their comments. If there are objections or questions, the modifications will be discussed at the next meeting, otherwise they will be implemented with this year's announcement, which will be distributed in early April.

Simet said that some people seeking grant monies, especially in the sciences, would like to request funding for Graduate Assistants at a rate higher than \$6000 and that this is not possible since UNI has an established Graduate Assistant rate. Ebert distributed excerpts from the Federal Grants Management Handbook regarding federal cost principles which are incorporated in any grant. He said that Graduate Assistants are considered employees, and their stipend is compensation for the performance of services. Therefore, there must be consistent treatment in payment between Graduate Assistants paid with grant funds and those paid with University funds. He said that tuition scholarships are funded by grants only if the purpose of the grant is to support the academic performance of students, and so are very seldom funded. Somervill said that since Iowa City and Ames have variable rates for their assistantships, they can request higher funding on some grants in the science areas. One option we have is to vary the rates on stipends offered either within a college and/or the University. He said that the big question is where to get the funds for this--having fewer stipends available at a higher level, from allocations to other colleges, or by receiving additional resources. Berg said that our current policy works against people in the sciences seeking grants. She stated that comments received on grant proposals indicate that UNI must not be serious about graduate education in the sciences with such low stipend levels. It also hurts our competitiveness in attracting students. Somervill said that Iowa and Iowa State have several categories of assistantships, with differing stipends, and that might be an option for us. Ebert said that Graduate Assistants on grant support must be paid at the same rate as other assistants in the same department. After further discussion, it was agreed that Simet would appoint a committee to consider the issues involved and bring recommendations to the April 28 meeting.

Items to be publicized include the Graduate Faculty meeting on April 14, 1994 at 3:30 p.m. in 115 Seerley.

Durham moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Hesse
Secretary

Next meeting will be April 28 at 3:30 p.m. in Seerley 3