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University of Northern Iowa Graduate Council Minutes, September 23, 1993

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UNI Graduate Council Minutes #821

September 23, 1993

Present: Chao, Crew, Decker, Durham, East (for Kirmani), Gaies, Huddleston, V. Jackson, Lew, MacArthur, R. Martin, Safford, Simet, Somervill, Walker, Yohe

Visitors: Nancy Marlin (Vice President and Provost); Abolghassem Tolu Honary, E. A. Dennis (Industrial Technology); Glenn Hansen, Jim Bodensteiner, Kent Johnson (Continuing Education & Special Programs)

Minutes #820 were approved as published.

Walker said that the grant workshops have been scheduled.

Somervill said that five years ago, 11 programs had been identified for enhancement but could not be meaningfully enhanced due to the large number involved. Therefore, he has formed a Committee on Graduate Programs consisting of the Graduate Council Chair, the Graduate Council Vice Chair, the Graduate Faculty Chair, and the Faculty Senate Chair to determine three programs which will be identified as high quality, premier programs and targeted for enhancement. The Committee will be seeking information from Department Heads and Graduate Coordinators regarding the quality of their programs, faculty and students which will be used in making the selections. Enhanced programs will each receive a minimum of three additional assistantships and faculty in these programs will receive special consideration for travel and research funds. Somervill will be speaking with Erwin Richter about possible priority support for graduate students from these programs when traveling to present papers. After five years, programs will be re-evaluated. The Committee is planning on having information gathered by the end of October so that the programs can be identified before the end of the semester. Programs which have received a set level of support for development (EdD, DIT, MPP, Environmental Science, and Women's Studies) will be excluded from this process. Somervill stressed that this is a review for excellence, that the Committee will establish the criteria involved, and that this is aimed at graduate programs, not departments. It is hoped that the increased support will improve the selected programs and help them become more visible.

Simet said that the purpose of this consultative session on fiber optics and its impact on graduate education is to help Council members gather information so that when policy decisions are needed, they will have some background. Hansen said that there are now 126 end points in the state, that this is a two-way interactive communication, and that the capacity is almost unlimited. We should view this as another way to present our programs, letting us access a number of areas in the state at once, and cutting down on the amount of travel necessary. Bodensteiner said that this fall UNI is offering three courses over the system to a total of 39 students at 9 different sites. He said that the Library Science masters is being offered using the system where the students take

courses off campus for three academic years and come to campus for courses during the intervening summers. They currently have 25 students enrolled in the program. Somervill noted that students have access to instructors outside of class via E-mail and NOTES. He said one question would be that of residence--would these courses be considered the same as campus courses? Bodensteiner said that he would hope so. Hansen noted that faculty can travel the circuit, broadcasting from other locations so that Cedar Falls would then become one of the remote sites. Somervill noted that one advantage to this over a TV course is that this is live and interactive so that the instructor can immediately respond to student questions. He encourages everyone to take Robert Hardman's training conference for using the system. Safford questioned how pedagogy would be affected by access to library facilities--what will be delivered to the remote students and at what cost--because it cannot be assumed that everyone can come to campus to use the facilities. Somervill said that he did not feel that this system would reduce on-campus attendance and that program quality and resources will be monitored. Hansen noted that these issues are not new to continuing education. Safford said that the problems which arise may be new simply because of the scale. Somervill said that he felt that there would be more impact on graduate rather than undergraduate education. He also said that courses involving specialized equipment and labs would not be amenable to the system. Yohe noted that the system can also be used for data, to increase the volume and speed of information accessed. Safford said that it is a big step from where we are now to getting to full text transmission because currently students can only get bibliographic citations on-line but must come to the library to get the text. Dennis said that consideration needs to be given to whether the staffing of these courses will be done as an overload or as part of the regular faculty load. Hansen said that this could be a means for the three Regents institutions to share faculty. Bodensteiner said that this will enable us to serve a smaller number of students at a given site and so increase the opportunities in this very competitive area. Somervill noted that international speakers could also be brought to campus through this technology. Simet said that this was the first of many discussions on this topic.

Simet announced that the letter regarding the UNI Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Awards has been distributed. Nominations are due by October 8. He also said that the following have agreed to serve on committees: Kirmani as chair of the Graduate College Curriculum Committee; Martin and Gaies on the Distinguished Scholar Committee; Fahmy as the Graduate Council representative on the University Committee on Curricula; and Decker on the Regent's Excellence Award Committee. Simet will send a letter to Augusta Schurrer thanking her for her past service as the Graduate Council representative on the University Committee on Curricula.

Following is a listing of designated alternates:

Graduate Council Member Alternate
John MacArthur Steve Jakubowski
Paul Chao Mike Klassen
Ira Simet Virginia Berg
Syed Kirmani Phil East

Sharon Huddleston Forrest Dolgener
Robert Decker Stephen Gaies
William Lew JoAnn Schnabel
Robert Martin Carol Weisenberger
Keith Crew Ron Roberts
Norris Durham Julie Lowell

Durham moved to adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Hesse
Secretary

Next meeting will be October 14 at 3:30 p.m. in 3 SEERLEY