

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

April 4, 2022

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

WEBEX

Council in Attendance:

Mike Wittie (Engineering)
Christopher Livingston (Architecture)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Michael Brody (Faculty Senate)
Jane Mangold (Agriculture)
Wade Hill (Nursing)
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)
Catherine Dunlop (Letters & Science)
Dennis Aig (Arts)
Marc Giullian (Business)

Also in Attendance:

Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)

Absent:

Maureen Kessler (Student Representative)
Math and science representative (Letters & Science)
Dawn Tarabochia (Health & Human Development)
Rachelle McLain (Library)

Meeting started at 10:01 am on WebEx

March 21st, 2022 minutes

- Motion to approve by Aig, 2nd by Livingston, motion passes: 5 pass, 0 oppose, 1 abstain

Announcements

- **Update from the Dean**
 - On track for record graduation this spring; ~470 graduation applications
 - Proposal approved for new position in Career Services (Alan Yarnell Center for Student Success) to focus entirely on graduate careers
 - Approved for new position in graduate admissions to focus on recruitment, especially recruitment from Montana colleges/universities, including tribal colleges and universities
 - Emerging model of partnership with tribal colleges and universities for new faculty who have a master's degree and pursue a PhD with MSU. Increases research connections and provides reciprocal benefits.
 - Graduate Student representative body with ASMSU
 - Students will attend a later meeting to discuss their ideas
- **Faculty Senate update (Brody)**

- Review of administrators; worked with Provost, OPA, and HR to develop a process of reviewing higher administrators; hoping to approve the process and review Deans spring 2022, department heads spring 2023, higher administration spring 2024
 - Should become annual review
- Reviewing/endorsing sabbatical recommendations in Faculty Senate this week
- Office hours: working with Provost to revise expectations for in person, weekly office hours (under faculty responsibilities in faculty handbook)
- Student Code of Conduct; students posting course materials online; trying to address this situation with legal so faculty have copyrights for materials they produce and therefore students could not post online
- Q from Letters member: feedback from colleagues that there is increasing “red tape” on campus to do “anything”—leading to a growing amount of time faculty are spending on red tape rather than research or teaching. Who is setting up these practices? (examples given: travel abroad, Chrome River)
 - Likely not one answer for every situation. General impression is that upper admin likes the distributed work model (HR reps in colleges, Chrome River)
 - Does not think there has been an efficiency study
 - Dean Ogilvie adds: VP Admin & Finance Terry Leist is part of business processes and is receptive to feedback.
 - If you feel there are Grad School processes taking too much time, let us know and we can look at it
 - Agreement from other colleges (Art, Agriculture) about difficulty with travel or paying for student expenses related to professional events, travel
 - Brody shares that have heard similar feedback from faculty but unsure of solution on the horizon
 - Dean Ogilvie will bring it up with VPR Jason Carter and he will bring it up with Terry Leist

Old Business

- Age of courses
 - Revised proposal discussion
 - Film does not support reducing terminal degree time from 6 years to 5 years—not many TT faculty, workload would be a major issue with so few TT, MFA is terminal in field (and is in Art as well). Wants to keep it at 6 years.
 - Agriculture: not common students take longer than 4 years for master’s
 - General feeling from Ag faculty was that age of courses policy is fine the way it is and do not want change
 - Education: students often complete MEd within 2.5 years and all PhD or EdD students are admitted with a conferred master’s degree
 - Worry for our American Indian/Alaska Native students: life events come up and re-enrollment process is arduous
 - Communication of policies and how to navigate them is important
 - Biggest point of attrition is post-comps completion for both doctoral programs (EdD and PhD in Education) due to burn-out
 -

- New proposal also includes age of dissertation credits. Could this have loopholes?—taking 690s over and over again to keep them current (4 years age allowed in policy proposal)
 - Q: Should we consider setting upper-level limits on 690 credits or retaking comps? Admittedly rare events
 - Dean Ogilvie would rather work with advisors one on one if these situations come up
 - Comprehensive exams are also included in new proposal (other time-related policies hand out); new proposal is: students must complete (pass) comps within four years of starting program
 - Q: How will limits be communicated to students and advisors? Is it possible to have a very clear number displayed in DegreeWorks?
 - DW is a bit limited. New tool MSU Navigate is a communication/advisor tool that could help communicate deadlines to specific student populations (e.g. pull student pop that is 3 years from start of doctoral program and tell them they must get moving on a comp, etc)
 - Term and year student took a course is listed in DW (e.g. 2015 fall)
 - Grad School could enter a remark for limit (remark would not change, e.g. would always say “Master’s degree age of courses limit is 5 years counted by term”)
 - Q: When or how would this take effect for current students?
 - We would have to work it out and “grandparent” students in with former policy
 - Initial thought is setting a start date for policy a few years out from now
 - Policies on continuous enrollment status (and allowed leave of absence) should be addressed in a future meeting
- Dean Ogilvie will meet with staff to revise policy again: change terminal master’s (MFA) to 6, define what age from start of degree for comps
- Indigenous Food Systems program
 - No update to proposal in CiM yet; Chair Livingston will send when ready
 - Meeting with proposers, Grad School, grad council leadership, and Registrar next week about course structure (6cr spanning two semesters)
- Certificate in non-profit leadership and administration (revised proposal)
 - Addresses differences between proposed and UMontana program
 - Council members mentioned that UM program is very similar
 - Proposed program might distinguish by being face-to-face (UM is fully online) as well as being a cohort model
 - Q: could proposers leverage the specific interdisciplinary work that could be done at MSU? Strengths that MUS has that UM doesn’t to distinguish program?
 - The difference between programs is not very clear—more details needed
 - Define clear benefits to having two programs
 - Employment data added

- Learning outcomes
 - Chair Livingston will suggest to proposers that some of their courses should be higher in Bloom's taxonomy rather than keeping all of them low due to students coming into program with little training (proposer's explanation why they were lower)
 - Feedback that learning outcomes still need work—vague at this stage
- Sense that Provost Office will not support without very clear and compelling need for a 2nd program within MUS
 - Will request the proposers do more “market work” to find out if non-profits in our local community are interested in a face-to-face experience and see benefit in cohort model. That data could help strengthen proposal
 - Q: Should they request letters of support from area non-profits?
- Adding electives from other colleges might strengthen proposal
- Chair Livingston will give further guidance to proposers

New Business

- Not discussed

Adjourned at 11:15 am

Next scheduled meeting – April 18, 2022