Minutes of Graduate Council Meeting

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, October 2, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. in RSC 305.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean D. McDonald, Associate Dean A. Masud, Assistant Dean M. Alagic, S. Coats, K. Coufal, S. Farmer, Z. Jin, C. Ma, J. Price, M. Schommer-Aikins, D. Wright and student representative Cora Duerksen.

I. Approve Minutes of September 18, 2008 meeting
Minutes of the September 18, 2008 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. New Business
a. Implementation of Plus/Minus Grading
Associate Dean Masud noted that with the implementation of the Plus/Minus grading system, Provost Miller’s office has defined a “B” grade as including a “B-/B/B+”, and a “C” grade as C-/C/C+” with these definitions applying to both graduate and undergraduate. As a B- grade (equal to 2.7 on the GPA scale) is below the 3.0 GPA required for graduate students, he also noted that faculty members should be sure to consider how a B- grade will impact probationary status for some graduate students.

b. Fall 08 Enrollment Statistics
Associate Dean Masud reviewed the Fall 2008 enrollment statistics from Donna Hawley, Director of Institutional Research.

c. Catalog Statements about Essential Equal Review for Student Credentials (domestic vs. international)
Associate Dean Masud indicated that statements will be added to the Graduate Catalog to clarify that the admission criteria for reviewing student credential’s (i.e. student’s last 60 hours of coursework) is equivalent for both domestic and international students.

III. Old Business
a. Hooding Ceremony
Council members continued discussion on whether or not to continue hosting the Graduate School Hooding Ceremony each December for master’s students. It was agreed that Council members should go back to their graduate faculty and student groups for their thoughts on the value of the ceremony (i.e. do they participate, do they feel the event is repetitive, how they fell about keeping the event, etc.). This topic will be discussed further at future Council meetings.

IV. As May Arise
• There will be no Council meeting on October 16th due to fall break.
• Members requested more review of the requirements regarding criminal background checks when hiring new employees here at WSU. Associate Dean Masud noted that all new full or part-time employees hired for a term over six (6) months will be required to go through the process. Current employees are being grandfathered in, but if they change employment on campus will be required to be checked. Students will not be grandfathered, and will be required to go through the check with the exception of first-time international students who, having already been through the homeland security background check, are ready for hire. If those international students leave their employment and return later for other employment at the university, they may have to go through the process at that time. The question was raised whether or not Health Professions students who already do background checks for clinical requirements will also be required to do the HR background check. AD Masud will continue to update Council as the new policy is clarified through university administrators.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.