Minutes of Graduate Council Meeting

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in RSC 207.


I. Approve Minutes of October 1, 2009 meeting

Minutes of the October 1, 2009 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. New Business

a. Review/Revision of Graduate Faculty Categories/Qualifications

The following changes were proposed and approved:

**Graduate Faculty Affiliate**

Responsibilities include graduate teaching, serving as member on thesis and dissertation committees, and graduate student mentoring [may chair specific thesis committees (when authorized by the Graduate Dean) and may co-chair specific dissertation committees in their area of research (when authorized by the Doctoral Program Subcouncil and the Graduate Dean)]

Criteria for awarding standing:

- Adjunct faculty or faculty (not eligible for tenure) employed full-time by the University OR tenured/tenure-track faculty (or equivalent) in another accredited university (US or abroad) OR a professional with nationally recognized research/scholarly/creative achievement (documentation required).
- Terminal degree or its equivalent in training or experience (documentation required when equivalency is claimed)
- Significant scholarly/creative achievement over the last five to seven years
- Qualified to bear all relevant academic responsibilities
- Substantial interest in graduate education
- Demonstrable departmental or program need

Length of Standing:

- Appointment is for three or six years, renewable as needed when criteria are met

**Practicing Professional**

Responsibilities may include graduate teaching, serving as member on thesis and dissertation committees, and graduate student mentoring

Criteria for awarding standings:

- Adjunct faculty or faculty (not eligible for tenure) employed full-time by the University
- Terminal degree or its equivalent in training or experience (documentation required when equivalency is claimed)
- Substantial interest in graduate education
- Demonstrable departmental or program need
- Practicing professional in program degree area

Length of Standing:

- Appointment is for six years, renewable as needed when criteria are met

b. Role/Selection of Outside Member in Thesis/Dissertation Committees

The following changes were proposed and approved:

**Responsibilities of the Outside Committee Member**

Although the outside member's area of expertise may not directly pertain to the defense topic, his or her role is very important. The outside member will chair the meeting for the oral defense.

The primary responsibility of the outside member is one of oversight on behalf of the Graduate
School, assuring that the thesis or dissertation meets the standards of graduate scholarship, that committee members and the student abide by Graduate School regulations, and that the committee treats the student appropriately during the oral defense (e.g., asking questions only germane to the topic, treating the student professionally). Therefore the outside member evaluates the candidate's performance and casts a vote just as other committee members do.

In addition, the outside member completes a formal evaluation of the oral defense process by completing an Oral Defense Evaluation form on which the following elements are evaluated:

1. The final exam was conducted in an orderly manner;
2. The oral examination process was fair and reasonable; and
3. The quality of the student's work was consistent with institution-wide expectations and standards.

The completed evaluation form is returned to the Graduate School within three weeks after the oral defense.

This change in the responsibilities of outside committee member has some consequences on other sections in the catalog – “Responsibilities of the Committee Chair” (p.24). Graduate Council suggested that Graduate School Deans align documents and necessary changes in the spirit of the above decision and with intent of making procedures as simple as possible.

A suggestion was made, to include a sentence “Revisions underway for this section, see graduate school WebPages for updates” under the section titled “Responsibilities of the Committee Chair”.

III. As May Arise

Prioritize future meeting topics according to the need, keeping in mind admission deadlines. For example, assistantships for conditionally accepted students, etc.

Future meeting topics – for FY 2010

1. Should we give assistantship to conditionally accepted students? They do not qualify for financial assistance.
2. Recruiting a Diverse Graduate Student Body
3. Graduate Education Support in Academic Colleges
   a. Support of Graduate Coordinators
   b. Support for Graduate Students
4. Graduate Assistant Stipend Levels
5. Strategic Planning for Graduate Education at WSU
6. Review of Graduate Program Assessment Reports and Plans

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.