Minutes of Graduate Council Meeting

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


I. Approve Minutes of March 6, 2008 meeting
Minutes of the March 6, 2008 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. Old Business
   a. Evaluation of Oral Defense Process
      Council members discussed a data sheet provided on the oral defense survey results. Data is broken into sample characteristics and aggregate scores; and data by the student’s department. The form created by Council is sent to the outside member of a thesis/dissertation committee once the student’s defense date is set. Completion of the form is not required by the outside member, but results are tabulated from the forms that are returned to the Graduate School.
   
   b. Catalog Change - Assigning Incomplete grade
      Council members approved a change to add a statement to the Graduate Catalog clarifying that an incomplete grade is only assigned after instructor and student have communicated and agreed on conditions and time frame for completing the change. It will be included in the printing of the 2009-2010 catalogs.
   
   c. Grading Thesis/Dissertation Hours Every Semester
      Dean Kovar announced she is backing off of the issue of grading Thesis/Dissertation hours every semester, as Graduate School has found that all past semester’s section/CRN numbers can be found on the Banner form SHACRSE. So Graduate School staff will look up section numbers for grade changes that are submitted without sections numbers.

III. New Business
   a. HLC Report to WSU
      Dean Kovar read the following key statements (relative to graduate school) from the HLC report to WSU:
      - The university would benefit from establishing clear enrollment priorities (both graduate and undergraduate) that are well understood and supported by the campus community.
      - Strategic planning initiatives relative to future priorities for the graduate school is strongly encouraged.
      - The graduate school demonstrates a significant effort in recent years organizing/completing bylaws; documenting process and procedure for graduate faculty standards and expectations.
      - The graduate school reports numerous ways in which graduate students and faculty are incentivized in their research efforts.
      - While not unique to Kansas Regents research institutions, GA stipend and fee waiver opportunities constrain the University from fully meeting its potential in offering the highest possible quality experience to its graduate students. WSU leadership is urged to continue to strongly advocate this issue.
      - A focus visit is required following development of the distance learning plan that guides this mode of instructional delivery (spring 2009).
   
   b. Future Grad School Funding of Graduate Students
      Dean Kovar announced that graduate assistantships will no longer be funded through the Graduate School. Monies currently housed in the Graduate School for assistantships will be distributed to the colleges with the FY09 budget. Beginning with FY09, all budget requests for assistantships will be handled through each college dean’s office (except Mill Levy money). Stipend level minimums (set by the Graduate School) are not changing. A copy of the past fiscal year’s assistantship allocations to departments (from the Graduate School) will be provided at the next Council meeting for discussion.
c. Catalog Description for Dual/Accelerated Programs
Dean Kovar provided a handout regarding the catalog description of dual/accelerated programs. Council members approved the addition to the Graduate Catalog, and requested that it be added to the Undergraduate Catalog as well. The addition will be included in the printing of the 2009-2010 catalogs, and will also list what programs offer a dual/accelerated option.

IV. As May Arise
- Dean Kovar provided a handout on the Spring Assessment Symposium which will be held on April 8. The main topic of the event is WSU Assessment Committee – Life after HLC.
- May 1 is scheduled as the last spring Council meeting. If needed, another meeting may be scheduled, in order to complete review of two new program proposals (MS in Computer Networking, and MA in Teaching) that are being put forward. When received, Dean Kovar will send the proposals to members electronically.
- Council members disapproved a student appeal whose Graduate School application was denied. Their bachelor’s degree was not from a regionally accredited institution.
- Dean Kovar noted at the next meeting, Council will look for a date for their end-of-year dinner.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.