Minutes of Graduate Council Meeting

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, September 2, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. in RSC 305.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean D. McDonald, Associate Dean A. Masud, Assistant Dean M. Alagic, E. Behrman, M. Dawe, S. Farmer, T. Hill, M. Koehn, K. Rokhsaz, G. Scholl, and M. Schommer-Aikins.

Dean McDonald welcomed Council to a new academic year and members introduced themselves. An update list of 2010-11 members was distributed.

I. Approve Minutes of April 15, 2010 meeting
Minutes of the April 15, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. New Business
   a. Can an UG course be retaken for graduate credit?
   Council members discussed and agreed that a statement should be created for the Graduate Catalog to indicate that graduate students cannot retake courses taken while an undergraduate student for graduate credit, with a strong emphasis on appropriate advisement to avoid these situations. Associate Dean Masud will prepare a draft statement for Council review at the next meeting.

   b. How to handle UG students in 700 level course
   Council members were provided a handout of page 19 of the Graduate Catalog regarding Graduate Courses. Council discussed removal of the second sentence in the following paragraph regarding 700 level courses: “Courses numbered 700 to 799 are structured primarily for graduate students, but upper-division undergraduate students may be admitted if they meet course prerequisites. In such mixed classes, a discernibly higher level of performance is expected from graduate students, with the nature of this differential performance set by the professor.” Action on changing the statement will be made at the next Council meeting.

   c. Graduate Enrollment for Fall 2010
   Associate Dean Masud noted that overall Graduate enrollment is down 3.6% from last fall, but in view of the last couple of years the decrease is not too alarming. However, he indicated there is concern with the decrease amongst new international student enrollment, which is down 40-50% (primarily in Engineering). At the urging of Provost Miller, a committee, consisting of the following members, has been formed to look into the decreased international enrollment issue: Dean McDonald, Associate Dean Masud, Kamran Rokhsaz and Preethika Kumar from Engineering, Vince Altum from International Education, and Bobby Gandu from Undergraduate Admissions. An action plan and recommendations put forward by the group will be shared as it develops. Associate Dean Masud is also meeting with a group of students from India to obtain their thoughts as to why they chose to come to WSU as well as their thoughts regarding why fewer students may be enrolling now.

   d. Number of times Exit Exam, Thesis/Dissertation defense can be taken
   Council discussed whether a policy should be defined in the Graduate Catalog regarding a limit to how many times and exit exam can be taken by a graduate student. As some programs have a policy already in place, Council will review possible language regarding limits at the next meeting.

   e. MBA Representative on Graduate Council
   Associate Dean Masud asked long serving Council members if they recall the reason for two, separate Council representatives for Barton School of Business and MBA. Steve Farmer, current rep for Barton School, will discuss with Business faculty if there is a need for two reps, and will bring back for further discussion at the next meeting.
III. As May Arise

- Council agreed that two signatures (advisor and grad coordinator) should be obtained on all Plans of Study before they are put forward to the Graduate School for approval. An email will be sent out to all departments to notify them of the requirement.

- Assistant Dean Alagic requested that departments still sign if disapproving an exception form and allow the student to bring the form forward to the Graduate School for final decision. Students have the right to appeal at the Grad School level, and departments are copied on the decision.

- Also, regarding exceptions, advisors should not be allowed to sign as coordinator or chair unless they hold that position within their department. The form requires two signatures (advisor and coordinator or chair), unless it is the same person.

- Associate Dean Masud encouraged members to talk with their colleagues and bring forward agenda items as they see appropriate for Council review.

- Associate Dean Masud noted that Assessment Plans will be reviewed this academic year by the Assessment Committee.

- Will be reviewing department level qualifications for Graduate Faculty status to determine if they are still relevant.

- Members asked if Council will have any input in policies for “research faculty”, as it involves graduate student research and advising.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.