Minutes of Graduate Council Meeting

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, September 4, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. in Devlin Hall 2nd floor conference room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dean D. McDonald, Associate Dean A. Masud, Assistant Dean M. Alagic, C. Claycomb, S. Coats, S. Farmer, R. Hull for K. Coufal, C. Ma, J. Price, G. Rimmington, K. Rokhsaz, M. Schommer-Aikins and D. Wright.

Dean McDonald and Associate Dean Masud introduced themselves to Council and welcomed members to the new academic year. Dean McDonald announced he will attend Council meetings whenever his schedule allows, but plans for Associate Dean Masud to chair Council meetings since he will not always be able to be present. Members introduced themselves and indicated the area they represent on the Council. An updated list of the 2008-09 members was also distributed.

I. Approve Minutes of May 13, 2008 meeting
Minutes of the May 13, 2008 meeting were approved as distributed.

II. New Business
a. Elect Council Reps to other committees
The following Council members were approved to serve as the Council’s representative to other committees:
- Chunsheng Ma will serve on the Doctoral Program Subcouncil.
- Glyn Rimmington will serve on the Grad School Awards Committee.
- Jay Price will serve as the representative on the University Library Committee.

b. KBOR Review
Council members reviewed the following list of Graduate programs due for KBOR review in the fall 2008 semester:

Accounting (Masters)  Computer Science (Masters)
Business Administration (Masters)  Engineering Management (Masters)
Economics (Masters)  Aerospace (Masters & Doctoral)
EMBA (Masters)  Electrical (Masters & Doctoral)
Sport Admin (Masters)  Industrial (Masters & Doctoral)
PE, Exercise Science (Masters)  Mechanical (Masters & Doctoral)

With 16 program reports due to the Provost’s office by December 12th, Council agreed to divide members into three sub-groups. Associate Dean Masud will create the sub-groups (each group will review 5 or 6 programs), and will email program review documents to each group once received. Associate Dean Masud also noted that he will review the following Triggered programs: Doctoral programs in Ed Leadership, and CSD; and Masters program in Creative Writing and Spanish. Additional Council meetings may need to be set on the November calendar to complete all reviews by the deadline.

c. Graduate Assistantships
Associate Dean Masud provided a handout on Work Dates and Minimum Stipends for GA appointments. He highlighted the following points for Council members to review with their program areas:
- Start and end dates for appointments (appointments can only be made between the dates indicated; no back-dating is allowed)
- Appointments can only be made by semester (Graduate School cannot hold future semester paperwork)
- Appointment forms should be sent in as early as possible (paperwork will be returned to departments if submitted prior to 30 days before the start of the semester)
- If a GTA teaches two sections/CRNs, stipends are based on total credit hours of instruction
- Stipend levels listed are minimum levels (encourage paying higher rates when possible)
Associate Dean Masud stressed that the above points are even more imperative now that the Kansas Board of Regents requires background checks on any new hire (including GA appointments) at .5 FTE or more. The requirement is being waived for the fall 2008 semester, but is scheduled to begin with new hires for spring 2009 and beyond. Viable employment offers will be contingent on the completed background check, so paperwork must be submitted as early as possible to allow time to complete the check. A release form signed by potential employees will be sent to the Graduate School, which then will be sent to HR, where a private firm will do the check and return a report. If a negative report is generated, departments will be allowed to still hire applicant or rescind the offer of employment. Associate Dean Masud indicated that continuous reappointments will not need background checks after the first one.

d. Thesis/Dissertation Copyright Issues
Council members discussed issues regarding copyrights, and student ownership of thesis/dissertation research. At a future meeting, Council plans to review the current University procedures manual and other related documents to determine if guidelines should be developed as a tool for faculty to use when having discussions with their students related to research work.

III. As May Arise
Dr. Rokhsaz requested that Council discuss a change to the final semester enrollment requirement for graduate students. More specifically, to waive the enrollment requirement (1 hour for masters/2 hours for doctoral) on students who have completed all degree requirements, and have all thesis/dissertation documents approved by degree audit in the Graduate School (without having to file an exception). Item is tabled for the next Council meeting on September 18th.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.