

**Graduate Council
Mississippi State University**

Number: 2

Date: October 26, 2007

Present: J. Ainsworth, L. Barrow, B. Brazzeal (for F. Coleman), T. Chamblee, J. Chromiak, P. Cinnella (for R. Burrell and R. King), R. Conerly, L. Cossman, N. Filipov, J. Gilbert, J. Goodin, C. Hill (for S. Nobles), T. Hosie, K. Lee, A. Lowe (for M. Binkley), S. Minchew, P. Rabideau, D. Reynolds, R. Shivaji, F. Sparks, B. Spencer, P. Sullivan, W. Taylor, T. Tietjen (for D. Jackson), J. To, M. Thomas, D. Wise

Absent: W. Batchelor, P. Bonfanti, G. Dunaway, R. Kaminski, S. Morris, W. Person, K. Schulz, J. West, S. Willard, N. Younan,

Guests: A. Rankins, N. Ponder-Lueg

1. Dr. Barbara Spencer called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.
2. Dr. Spencer asked that everyone introduce themselves.
3. Dr. Spencer asked for any revisions to the minutes (May 14, 2007).

Mr. Mark Thomas asked that the third sentence in the last paragraph be stricken.

Motion was made by Mr. Thomas and seconded by Dr. Tom Hosie to accept the minutes with the above change.

Minutes were approved.

4. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC) Report

Dr. Timothy Chamblee gave the following report:

Three items have been forwarded to Graduate Council by UCCC: two certificate programs and a program modification for the Masters in Business Administration.

a) Certificate in Business Administration

Graduate Studies in Business proposes to add a 12-hour graduate certificate program in Business Administration to the on-campus and online program. The program must be completed with at least a 3.0 GPA and at least six hours must be from MSU.

Dr. Hosie moved to accept the proposed addition of the Certificate in Business Administration, and Dr. Ratnasingham Shivaji seconded the motion.

The Certificate in Business Administration was approved by acclamation.

b) Certificate in Economics of Development

The Department of Finance and Economics proposes the addition of a 12-hour graduate certificate program in Economics of Development to the on-campus and online program. The program must be completed with at least a 3.0 GPA and at least nine hours must be from MSU.

Dr. Lynne Cossman moved to accept the proposed addition of the Certificate in Economics of Development, and Mr. Thomas seconded the motion.

The certificate in Economics of Development was approved by acclamation.

c) Master in Business Administration

The Division of Business and Industry at the Meridian Campus is proposing the inclusion of a concentration in Accounting by keeping twenty-one hours of the MBA core and adding twelve hours of existing graduate accounting classes to create the concentration in accounting. This proposed modification is very similar to the Project Management concentration which is already offered.

Dr. Dwayne Wise moved to accept the proposed modification to the Meridian Campus Master of Business Administration degree, and Dr. Nick Filipov seconded the motion.

The modification to the Meridian Campus Master of Business Administration degree was approved by acclamation.

5. Report from Graduate Studies (OGS) (Handout)

Dr. William Person was not present. In his absence, Dr. Spencer distributed a written report submitted by Dr. Person with the following information:

- a) Recruitment Assistance Grant (RAG) awards were recently made to thirteen graduate programs in five of the eight colleges totaling \$7,275.
- b) Over 100 potential graduate students have been contacted at Graduate and Professional School Fairs at Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo University, Tuskegee University, and Mississippi State University during September and October. We will also be visiting Alabama State University on November 1, 2007 for their Graduate and Professional School Fair.
- c) To date, we have a total of 1,092 graduate assistants for Fall 2007 (626 GRAs; 148 GSAs; and 318 GTAs). The average monthly stipend for Fall 2007 is \$1,271.52.

- d) The Graduate School is proud to announce a new recruitment initiative which allows graduate faculty to travel to regional institutions within a 250 mile radius of MSU to present research seminars to potential graduate students, particularly in the STEM areas. Requests for proposals will be sent to graduate coordinators and academic department heads next week and will be due no later than November 30, 2007.
- e) In collaboration with the Department of Biological Sciences, the Graduate School will co-sponsor a visit to MSU by Dr. Brenda Mills from North Carolina State University November 15-17, 2007. Dr. Mills will serve as guest speaker at our First Friday's Luncheon on November 16, 2007 at 11:45 am in the M-Club. Faculty members from the STEM areas are strongly encouraged to attend.
- f) To date, 42 applications have been sent electronically using our Workflow procedures to the College of Business and Industry. Of that number, 25 admission decisions have been made and communicated to the potential students.
- g) A total of 325 graduate students have applied for December 2007 graduation. Of that number, 256 are master's students; 14 are educational specialist students; and 55 are doctoral students.
- h) Dr. Person and Shlynn Morris are attending the 14th Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring in Arlington, Virginia, sponsored by the Compact for Faculty Diversity and the Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB). Also in attendance are seven MSU doctoral students and Dr. Barbara Patrick who was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at MSU. Dr. Patrick is being recognized as a recent SREB Fellowship graduate.

6. Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Mr. Thomas, GSA president, presented the following report:

Mr. Thomas stated the GSA had its first meeting on October 4, 2007. He stated that several committees were set up to look into some issues which will be discussed at a later date.

7. Old Business

a) Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses (Handout)

Dr. Spencer asked Mr. Anthony Lowe from the Division of Academic Outreach and Continuing Education to speak to the issue of whether MSU should allow undergraduate students from other institutions to enroll in graduate classes.

Mr. Lowe explained that several provosts of historically black colleges approached him regarding the possibility of early enrollment in graduate programs at Mississippi State

University for their undergraduates. He stated that seniors often have difficulty to find classes they are interested in if they are lacking only a few hours for the completion of the undergraduate degree.

Dr. Spencer explained that MSU graduate recruiting efforts can be enhanced by extending our current policy to outstanding seniors at other institutions with whom MSU has a written agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Our current policy allows MSU seniors who are within 12 hours of completing their undergraduate degree to enroll in up to 9 hours of graduate classes.

Dr. Spencer distributed a draft of the proposed change in the policy for Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses:

8. Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses

An undergraduate student at Mississippi State University **or any MOU university** who lacks 12 or fewer hours of undergraduate credit to complete the undergraduate degree requirements may seek approval for enrolling in courses for graduate credit in the semester or term he/she is graduating. The undergraduate student should meet the grade point average requirement for regular admission to the particular graduate program. Prior to enrollment, the head of the department of the undergraduate student's major must seek approval of the college dean by written request endorsed by the instructor or appropriate administrator of the unit in which graduate courses are to be taken. An undergraduate student may take up to nine graduate credit hours. The combination of undergraduate and graduate credit hours may not exceed 13 hours. Any exception to the stated criteria must be approved by the Associate Provost. (Per Graduate Council, effective May 2004.)

Discussion followed. It was established that the first sentence required clarification and was amended as follows:

An undergraduate student at Mississippi State University **or any university with which Mississippi State University has agreements**, who lacks 12 or fewer hours of undergraduate credit to complete the undergraduate degree requirements may seek approval for enrolling in courses for graduate credit in the semester or term he/she is graduating.

Dr. Hosie made a motion to accept the proposed amended change in policy for undergraduate enrollment in graduate courses. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion.

Motion carried by acclamation.

b) Clarification on policies for transfer to graduate credit

Dr. Spencer explained that the subcommittee of Dr. Shivaji, Ms. Rita Burrell, Mr. Thomas and Dr. Hosie had been unable to meet and requested to move this item under Old Business on the agenda for next month's meeting.

c) Graduate Council Faculty subcommittee report

Dr. Spencer stated that the letter to President Foglesong regarding the organizational structure of the Office of the Graduate School had been sent. The letter proposes a return to a more decentralized model with an Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies under the leadership of the Vice President for Research and Development (ORED). To date, Dr. Foglesong has only acknowledged receipt of the letter.

Dr. Spencer asked Dr. Wise to speak regarding an email that was sent in his behalf to graduate coordinators. The email asked for their feedback about the impediments (if any) to the growth of and the maintenance of high quality of the graduate programs they administer. Graduate coordinators were asked to list the most important changes that could be made to assist them in growing their graduate programs and attracting high quality graduate students. Dr. Wise stated that the responses he received so far all addressed the same issues: the need for more faculty and increasing the number and the amount of stipends. Dr. Spencer stated that this email survey represents an effort to open up communication with graduate coordinators and will continue.

d) Graduate Council by-laws and membership issues

Dr. Spencer welcomed the 14 new ex-officio members listed on the membership roster and stated that a new venue may be needed to accommodate everyone. The Templeton Music Room in the Mitchell Memorial Library was suggested as a possible new venue.

8. New Business

a) Making MSU more military friendly (Handouts)

Dr. Spencer raised the issue of admission deferment for new graduate students serving in the military who are deployed and thus unable to begin their graduate programs in the semester for which they were admitted. Currently, these students must submit a new application when they return. She distributed a handout with information regarding policies on military deployment at four peer institutions and a copy of our current Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) dealing with this issue.

Dr. Spencer noted that our AOP is very difficult to read and distributed a draft of a proposed military deployment policy for Mississippi State University. She stressed the need to make all information pertaining to military deployment more easily accessible, especially for distance students.

Discussion followed. It was determined that students and prospective students who need to defer should start with the Center for American Veterans, a unit that has been established to advocate for military veterans. It was suggested that a prominent icon such as “Veterans, click here” be placed on the “Apply Online” page which can be accessed from the Mississippi State University main page. To make navigation easy, any relevant information for veterans can be linked from there. Dr. Gilbert asked Graduate Council to identify the exact location for placing the link so a proper request can be made by the Office of the Provost to the Office of University Relations who maintains the site.

Dr. Rabideau suggested that a link for veteran information also be placed on the OGS website. Dr. Wise expressed frustration with the current OGS website and suggested that the website of the Office of the Graduate School be redone professionally. Several members suggested that ITS be consulted; however, Dr. Cossman pointed out that ITS will charge for this service. Dr. Barrow stated that designing a really good website also takes a lot of dialogue as far as content is concerned. He offered to assist with designing a more student-friendly web page for OGS and help with some of the more immediate issues. Dr. Spencer suggested a meeting with OGS to discuss the website and what can be done to make it more student-friendly.

Dr. Filipov stated that the Graduate Bulletin should include a specific policy regarding deferment of admission for new students who are deployed more than one year. Dr. Spencer asked the existing subcommittee of Dr. Shivaji, Ms. Burrell, Mr. Thomas and Dr. Hosie to look into this issue and report back to Graduate Council in order to make the policy as flexible as possible.

b) Minors at the Graduate Level (Handout)

Dr. Spencer stated that she included this item on the agenda to get a better understanding regarding minors. Dr. Gilbert distributed a draft of a revised AOP on Academic Minors and Certificate Programs (AOP 12.08) and asked Graduate Council members for input. Dr. Wise raised a question regarding the third bullet item on page 2, which reads:

“The establishment of all minors must be approved by the University Committee on Courses and Curricula and by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.”

Discussion followed. It was determined that graduate programs have committees who decide on the courses that will constitute a minor. The graduate policy in the Graduate Bulletin on page 56 will be clarified regarding the configuration for the establishment of a minor but the revised AOP should not include graduate minors. It was suggested to amend the statement as follows:

“The establishment of all **undergraduate** minors must be approved by the University Committee on Courses and Curricula and by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.”

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

The next Graduate Council meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on November 16, 2007, at 611 Allen Hall.