

**Graduate Council
Mississippi State University**

Number: 1

Date: August 25, 2006

Present: J. Boyle, R. Burrell, F. Coleman, S. Cottrell (for P. Bonfanti), C. Forde, J. Gilbert, T. Hosie, D. Jackson, K. Lee, C. Matherne, S. Nobles, W. Person, P. Rabideau, D. Reynolds, R. Shivaji, F. Sparks, B. Spencer, R. Taylor, J. To, S. Willard, D. Wise, N. Younan

Absent: J. Ainsworth, L. Barrow, M. Binkley, L. Cossman, R. King, C. Scanes

1. Dr. Barbara Spencer called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.
2. Dr. Spencer asked for a brief introduction of the members and guests present.
3. Dr. Spencer asked for any revisions to the minutes (May 12, 2006).

It was determined that the proposed policy modifications for transcripts requirements for admission to graduate school (Old Policy Prior to spring 2003) had not been officially voted on. (Ref: page 4)

Dr. Spencer noted that the changes to the minutes would be discussed later in the meeting under old business, item one and two.

Motion was made by Dr. Dwayne Wise and seconded by Dr. John Boyle to accept the minutes with the noted corrections.

Minutes were approved.

4. No report from the University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC).
5. Report from Graduate Studies

Dr. William Person presented the following report:

- a. There are two additional professional staff members in our office, Ms. Joanne To, Office of Graduate Studies Accountant, and Ms. Karin Lee, Coordinator of Graduate Studies, Admissions and Records. Joanne started in May and Karin joined in July. Karin will be responsible for preparation of the Graduate Council minutes.
- b. A total of 313 master's, 13 educational specialist, and 17 doctoral students graduate this summer. A total of 39 applicants, 27 master's, 5 educational

specialists and 7 doctoral students were redlined. This is the same number of doctoral graduates for 200520. Our goal is to graduate 115 doctoral graduates this academic year.

- c. As of 11:35 a.m. this morning, there was an increase of two in graduate enrollment based on last year's official enrollment of 3,289, bringing our total to 3,291. Registration will remain open until 5:00 p.m. on August 30th which is the deadline for the official enrollment count for this academic year
- d. The AGEM Summer Bridge Program ran from July 5 through August 4, 2006, and was very successful. Five students participated.
- e. The Office of Graduate Studies received an award in May for \$112,000.00 from the Institute of International Education to provide a three-week Fulbright Pre-Academic Program from July 22 through August 11 for 35 extremely bright international students who have received Fulbright Fellowships. The students came from 21 different countries; we had a very good experience working with them. Ms. Rita Burrell, Ms. Pam Sullivan, Ms. Molly Watkins, Dr. Stephen Cottrell, and several others did an outstanding job of making sure that the students had a good experience here at Mississippi State. The provost had the opportunity to speak with them at the closing of the AGEM program. Only one of the scholars will remain at Mississippi State University (Chemistry). Overall, the first Fulbright Pre-Academic Program was extremely successful.
- f. On August 3-9, 2006, 83 students participated in the International Teaching Assistant Workshop; 67 students passed, 16 failed.
- g. Two hundred four students participated in the General Teaching Assistant Workshop on August 10 and 11, 2006; 186 students passed, 18 failed.
- h. One hundred seventy students participated in the new Graduate Student Orientation on August 14, 2006; the event went extremely well.
- i. In addition, OGS hosted a Recruitment and Retention Workshop on July 24, 2006. It was conducted by Dr. Howard Adams; 50 graduate coordinators and academic department heads participated. President Foglesong interacted with workshop participants.
- j. A request for proposals for Recruitment Assistance Grants was distributed electronically on August 22, 2006. The deadline for receipt of proposals is September 8, 2006; however, proposals that come in over the weekend will be considered. Awards will be made by the end of September. This date was set to accommodate a request from the Graduate Coordinators meeting last year to move up the deadline so that the awards could be made earlier. One proposal has been received.

- k. President Foglesong has verbally agreed to implement a \$100 supplement health insurance benefit for graduate assistants starting in January. This has not been finalized, but the initial commitment has been made. This is for graduate assistants who have the Mega-Life Health Insurance. The intent is to increase the benefit by \$100.00 each subsequent year, up to \$400.00. The number of graduate assistants who have purchased the Mega-Life Health Insurance has not been determined.

Discussion followed to clarify the intended health insurance benefit.

6. Report from Graduate Student Association.

Mr. Curtis Matherne presented the following report:

- a. An officer's meeting is planned for September 7, 2006.
- b. The first GSA meeting will be held on September 21, 2006, at 5:30 p.m.; the location has not yet been determined.
- c. Requested that each program's graduate coordinator appoint an individual to serve as representative to the GSA.

7. Old Business

a. **Official transcripts required for graduate admissions consideration**

Dr. Spencer pointed out that she was not present at the previous meeting and asked why the item was not voted on at that time.

Current policy (Graduate Bulletin 2005-06, page 39):

"Applicants should request official transcripts from all institutions where undergraduate or graduate course work has been attempted."

During the May 12 Graduate Council meeting, Dr. Louis D'Abramo had recommended returning to the policy in place prior to Spring 2003, which required: *"Official transcripts from the college which an applicant is attending or has attended and will be receiving or has received a Bachelor's and/or Master's degree."*

Dr. D'Abramo had modified the motion to read:

*"Official transcripts from the college which an applicant is attending or has attended and will be receiving or has received a Bachelor's and/or Master's **and all additional graduate work.**"*

Discussion followed. It was determined that the policy modification was acceptable as discussed on Page 1, Item 3.

Motion was made by Dr. Boyle and seconded by Dr. Wise to accept the corrected policy.

b. Simplifying admissions within degree program levels

Dr. Spencer explained that this item is covered in the minutes of May 12, 2006, on page 6. She explained that the idea is with students changing to different levels within in the same program.

Discussion followed regarding the definition of program and major.

Ms. Burrell noted the importance of having an application drive the change so that a paper trail is available to track the student. She expressed her desire to keep the current process of completing an application when a change occurs to ensure that students are awarded the proper degree.

Discussion followed regarding the application fee.

It was determined that no fee will be charged for changes initiated by the program.

Discussion followed regarding the process of students changing levels within the same major.

It was determined that this does not include students seeking dual degrees, a separate form is still required for that.

Discussion followed regarding the need of completion of an application form for record keeping purposes. Dr. William Person stated that the fee could be waived after departments internally decide that a student will be changing programs.

Dr. Tom Hosie requested that Dr. Person present clarification on the application process from one level to another within the same major at the next Graduate Coordinators meeting.

c. Report on Academic Misconduct of graduate students (Dr. Hosie)

Dr. Spencer noted that several years ago the Graduate Council had formed a subcommittee to recommend a policy to deal with academic misconduct by graduate students. It was passed as a recommendation; however, the policy has never been fully approved. The Graduate Council needs to re-examine the issue. Dr. Spencer asked Dr. Hosie to speak to this issue.

Dr. Hosie explained that two drafts were finalized over a two-year period. The second draft was presented to Student Affairs. At that time, it became clear that Student Affairs was looking for a document to complement the undergraduate program. This has not come to fruition. Undergraduate and graduate programs are significantly dissimilar, e.g., the writing of a companion document is not an easy task. However, Dr. Hosie further stated that the development of an Honor's Code for all students at Mississippi State University is in progress. Dr. Hosie asked Dr. Boyle, who is a member of the Honor Code Committee, to give a report.

Dr. Boyle stated that the current draft of the Honors Code has not been finalized. At this point, there is still discussion, but more than likely, graduate student academic misconduct will come under the fairly stringent Honors Code for all students. The current draft will require a subset of the Honor's Council, consisting of graduate faculty and graduate students, to look at each individual student's case. The process has not been finalized for graduate students.

Discussion followed regarding severity of punishment, punishment after graduation (rescinding of degree), and academic misconduct of faculty.

It was determined that there is presently a gap in the policy covering graduate student academic misconduct that will need to be addressed.

A brief discussion illuminated the need for the continued Dean of Student's involvement to cover legal issues and to keep records.

A recommended Honor Code related to graduate students is forthcoming and will be discussed at a later date.

8. New Business

a. Streamlining the dissertation/thesis process

After a brief discussion and an update on the issue, Dr. Spencer asked for a subcommittee for the development of a streamlining process for dissertations and thesis preparation.

Dr. Don Jackson, Mr. Curtis Matherne, Dr. Scott Willard, Dr. Dan Reynolds and Ms. June Smith (Library Representative) have agreed to serve on the subcommittee for streamlining the dissertation/thesis process.

b. Update on graduate dean search

Dr. Spencer asked Dr. Jerry Gilbert to give a report on the status of the search.

Dr. Gilbert stated that it will be a national search that should begin late fall, early spring, with a target employment date of Summer 2007. The interim dean will be eligible to apply.

Discussion followed regarding time frame.

Dr. Nick Younan asked for clarification regarding a graduate dean versus a director in charge of the graduate office.

Discussion followed regarding various models of having a dean of graduate studies and the advantages of having a graduate dean, especially as it relates to research. Dr. Peter Rabideau explained some of the models.

Dr. Boyle asked what role the Graduate Council might play in the future.

Dr. Rabideau stated that he did not foresee changes to the responsibilities of the Council. He stated that good graduate programs run out of departments.

Dr. Spencer closed the discussion by asking the members for their ideas and input regarding their perception of the role of the Graduate Council.

9. Other Items

Dr. Hosie explained that he was contacted over the summer by Dr. Gilbert who asked his permission to submit a doctoral name change to the IHL Board for approval even though it had not been through the Graduate Council. Dr. Hosie instructed Dr. Gilbert that it would be acceptable to go forward to the Board. The program's previous name was the PhD in Technology Teacher Education/Industrial Arts and Teacher Education (TIAE) and the new name is a PhD in Instructional Systems and Workforce Development (ISWD).

The renaming of the degree program is tied to the 1999 creation of separate PhD degree programs in Education to replace the former PhD in Education. When the 1999 degrees were created, including TIAE, the College of Education did not switch over to using the new degrees and erroneously continued to use the PhD in Education. Neither the IHL Board nor the College of Education realized that this was occurring until November of 2005 when the IHL Board began looking at graduate degree productivity. There were 125 degrees granted under the PhD in Education from 1999 until 2005 that had to be reclassified into the new degree programs. When the Department of Instructional Systems and Workforce Development realized that they were offering a degree in TIAE and not ISWD, they quickly moved to propose a change in the name of the degree. Dr. Gilbert received the proposal in early 2006 and requested that the department wait until the 2006-2007 academic year in order to complete the reclassification of the 125 previous degrees.

In the late spring and early summer of 2006, the administration received at least one complaint and request from a PhD student to have the degree name changed so that students could graduate over the summer with the ISWD degree. Many students in the program think that the TIAE degree name will negatively impact their job prospects, and furthermore stated that they were not aware that their program had the title of TIAE. For these reasons, Dr. Gilbert took the proposal to the IHL Board in July and obtained approval of the ISWD degree name with the understanding that the proposal would proceed through the UCCC and the Graduate Council in the fall of 2006.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

The next Graduate Council meeting will be held on September 22, 2006.