

Graduate Council Minutes
Mississippi State University

NUMBER: 6

DATE: February 15, 2002

PRESENT: J. Boyle, Chair; P. Bonfanti for C. Taylor; G. Dunaway; D. Hare; R. Harkess; T. Hosie; B. Stammerjohan for E. Milam; L. Barron for J. Miller; K. Paul; W. Person; L. Reinschmiedt; G. Rent; C. Sides; B. Spencer; S. Thrower; S. Watson; C. Wang; J. Wesley; M. Williams; and D. Wolf.

ABSENT: R. Altenkirch; S. Bullington; R. Jenkins; T. Schultz; R. Shivaji; D. Welch.

1. Dr. John Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in room 611 Allen Hall.
2. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to adopt the minutes of the Graduate Council meeting held on January 18, 2002.
3. There was no report from the University Committee on Courses and Curricula.
4. In his report from the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS), Dr. William Person stated the following:
 - The Graduate Coordinators' meeting was held on Wednesday, January 23, 2002, from 3:00–4:30 p.m. in the Colvard Union Small Auditorium. Twenty-six of the 48 graduate coordinators and 10 staff assistants attended the meeting. Information packets were distributed at the meeting and sent to those graduate coordinators that were unable to attend and to the academic deans. Dr. Person stated that he received interesting feedback and that the graduate coordinators especially liked the length of the meeting. Graduate Coordinators' Meetings will be held each semester with focus groups as necessary.
 - The Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM) program hosted their annual Winter Scholar Symposium in Hattiesburg on January 24-26, 2002. Approximately 400 people, of which about 300 were students from Mississippi and the contiguous states and several Mississippi State University faculty, were in attendance. Dr. Person is working on a proposal for Mississippi State University to host the 2003 Winter Symposium.
 - OGS is planning two focus workshops. One workshop will focus on the rules and policies for preparing graduate assistantship documents. The other workshop will focus on degree audit and will be for graduate coordinators.

- Ms. Cathy Sides has the new *Bulletin* well underway. OGS is planning to reduce the number of copies printed. The new *Bulletin* will be on 8.5” x 11” paper, and there will be two columns per page.
 - Dr. Person reported that the online graduate application was not up yet, but ITS stated that it will be online soon.
5. Mr. Stevie Watson, President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), made the following report:
- Mr. Watson thanked Ms. Michelle Williams, Secretary of the GSA, for serving in his absence.
 - The GSA Awards Banquet will be April 24, 2002, from 5:00-9:00 p.m. at the M-Club, and Dr. J. Charles Lee, President of Mississippi State University, will be the speaker. Nomination forms for GSA awards have been mailed to academic department heads, directors, and graduate coordinators. March 22, 2002, is the deadline for the nomination forms to be returned to OGS. April 10, 2002 is the deadline for the screening committee to make their selections. Dr. Person stated that OGS would be contacting faculty members to assist with the screening process for the GSA awards.
 - Mr. Watson distributed copies of the GSA newsletter, *The Graduate Voice*, which includes information regarding upcoming events, achievements, and other information. Mr. Watson encouraged Council members to inform their students about the GSA web page.
 - The Mississippi Employment Expo will be held March 19, 2002, from 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. at the Mississippi Trade Mart in Jackson. The companies that will be recruiting are listed on the website. Mr. Watson asked Council members to encourage their students to attend. Mr. Watson, Ms. Williams, or Dr. Luther Epting can be contacted regarding the Expo.

Dr. Person commended the GSA for bringing back *The Graduate Voice* and for their work on the Mississippi Employment Expo.

6. As an item of old business, Dr. Boyle reintroduced the issue of appointing a graduate faculty representative and an alternate to the Academic Review Board. Dr. Tor Schulz has volunteered to be the representative and Dr. Richard Harkess has volunteered to be the alternate. A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the appointments.
7. As an item of old business, Dr. Boyle reintroduced the issue of graduate assistant stipends being too low. Dr. Boyle is still trying to arrange to have a representative from the Office of the Controller to answer questions regarding some of the procedures pertaining to graduate assistant stipends. Dr. Boyle received an advertisement from Baylor University, Waco, TX,

Department of Chemistry/Biochemistry, for teaching assistantships that come with a \$26,424 yearly stipend. This issue will be continued at next month's Graduate Council meeting.

8. As an item of old business, Dr Boyle reintroduced the idea of quality in graduate education. Dr. William Stammerjohan stated that quality graduate education begins with a quality candidate, and he asked what recruiting Mississippi State University does. Dr. Person stated that the Office of Graduate Studies is working on a general brochure and that they also have a Recruitment Assistance Grant program that involves faculty in the process by having departments submit recruitment proposals. Dr. Person stated that the amount of money received is not enough to do high-level recruiting. Dr. Person stated that the university must have something to offer quality students, referring to the level of stipend. Dr. Stammerjohan stated that the GMAT testing organization has a service that will send the name and address of each student that meets that criteria set by the user. The fee for this service is approximately \$300 for a set up and 25 ¢ per name. The GRE testing organization probably offers this service as well. Dr. Boyle stated that he would like the Council to look into using a Recruitment Assistance Grant to acquire the testing organizations' services. Ms. Diane Wolfe stated that Mr. John Dickerson in enrollment services does the same type of thing with lists of undergraduate students. Dr. Boyle stated that as this is a continuing issue, it will be a permanent item of old business. Dr. Boyle requested the Council members to return to next month's meeting with ideas to promote and enhance quality graduate education.

9. As an item of new business, Dr. Boyle distributed a letter from Dr. Philip Oldham, Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences, which included several questions regarding faculty status. Dean Oldham asked if Level II is considered a second class status, and if senior faculty who have not supervised graduate students for some time should be returned to Level II status. Several Council members responded to the questions posed regarding graduate faculty status including Dr. Boyle, Dr. Gregory Dunaway, Dr. Dwight Hare, Dr. Tom Hosie, Dr. Person, and Dr. George Rent. Related issues identified included the following:
 - An appropriate process to determine graduate faculty status for academic deans
 - An appropriate process of differentiating between faculty in compliance with SACS standards
 - Assurance that students will have committee leadership with recent experience
 - Periodic evaluations to assess faculty productivity
 - Decisions by some faculty members not to seek Level I status due to the additional responsibility and time required to work with doctoral students
 - The perception by some faculty that Level II is second class status
 - One set of criteria to address two areas: (1) a method for the university to determine who teaches graduate courses and (2) a method to differentiate those faculty that can direct doctoral committees from those that cannot.
 - The approval process for graduate faculty level appointments
 - How those faculty with no graduate programs should be considered
 - Appropriate criteria to consider in making re-appointments to Level I status
 - Related factors considered by deans such as workload, staffing needs, etc. when making reappointment decisions
 - Significant accomplishments in the past versus more recent achievements

Following a lengthy discussion of the graduate faculty status item, Dr. Boyle stated that he will prepare two written statements and distribute them for the Council's consideration and vote at the March Meeting.

10. Dr. Rent encouraged the Council members to attend the SACS Town Hall Meeting on graduate education chaired by Dr. Marty Levin on February 26, 2002 at 3:45-5:00 p.m. in the Mitchell Memorial Library Auditorium.
11. Dr. Reinschmiedt told Council members to encourage graduate students to attend the Student Support Services meeting on February 28, 2002.
12. The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.