

Minutes
Graduate Council

Number: 2

Date: September 26, 2003

Present: P. Bonfanti, J. Boyle, Susan Bowers (for K. Brabham), S. Bridges, R. Burrell, Gary Jackson (for S. Byrd), F. Coleman, L. Crittenden, L. D'Abramo, D. Hare, M. Herring, S. Jobe, E. Milam, W. Person, G. Rent, R. Shivaji, C. Sides, B. Spencer, C. Wang, D. Wise, D. Wolfe.

Absent: L. Barrow, G. Dunaway, T. Hosie, J. Pote, L. Reinschmiedt, D. Wise

1. Dr. Barbara Spencer, Vice Chair of the Graduate Council, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. in Room 611 Allen.
2. On motion by Dr. John Boyle and second by Dr. Lou D'Abramo, the Council approved the August 22, 2003 Graduate Council Minutes.
3. Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)
There was no report from UCCC.
4. Dr. William Person presented the report from the Office of Graduate Studies:
 - a. Personnel changes in the office include the hiring of Ms. Molly Herring, Administrative Assistant and AGEM Coordinator, effective September 22, 2003. Ms. Herring has several years of university experience, and we welcome her.
 - b. A memorandum with a letter from NSF regarding the Graduate Research Fellowship Program has been sent to department heads and graduate coordinators. Outstanding graduating seniors and students in master's programs that intend to pursue the doctorate are encouraged to apply. The fellowship provides \$27,500 with \$10,500 for cost of education allowance. Approximately 900 awards will be available for this year's competition. MSU has been successful in acquiring NSF fellowships. Students who have participated in formal research and have been co-authors on published documents have a strong chance of being successful.
 - c. In comparison to Fall 2002, there is an overall increase in on-campus graduate enrollment for Fall 2003. On campus graduate enrollment increased by 117 (4%) for Fall 2003. Mr. Phil Bonfanti noted that there is a decline in international graduate student enrollment for this fall; the decline is reflected in the number of returning international graduate students, while enrollment for new international graduate students is up.

- d. Two hundred and eighteen students attended the General Teaching Assistant Workshop – 184 passed; 34 did not. Next year, we intend to increase our managed enrollment to accommodate 150 international students with six instructors. We are also planning to appoint a Teaching Assistant Advisory Committee that will meet at least twice a year to help with planning, evaluations, etc., allowing us to make more informed decisions.
- e. Summer graduates cleared totaled 375; 331 for the Master's degree, 25 with the Educational Specialist degree and 19 with the Ph.D. The doctoral numbers for summer are in line with where we have been for the past several years. We have averaged around 21-22. We have to maintain at least 100 doctoral graduates for the next three years, consecutively, in the 10 designated CIP areas in order to achieve SREB Doctoral Level I status again. We are currently at Level II. We do currently maintain Carnegie I classification with 50 doctoral students in 15 designated CIP areas.
- f. We are in the process of finalizing our AGEM proposal, which is due to the University of Mississippi, the lead institution, by October 1. Dr. Dwayne Wise, Biology, has agreed to serve as co-principal investigator for this initiative.
- g. On September 19, 2003, Dr. Person participated in the Graduate and Professional Recruitment Program at Tougaloo College. He visited about 30-35 students; most interest was in computer science and clinical psychology. Follow-up letters have been written to the students with copies sent to the respective department heads encouraging them to also contact the students.

Dr. Boyle asked if there would be an international teaching assistant workshop in the spring. Dr. Person responded that resources are needed to carry out this weeklong intensive program in order to compensate the instructors. Dr. Person noted that the best time would be in December after graduation, the last full week before winter holiday. If we could have the international students here at this time, it would be more productive than waiting until January when we start with open registration. OGS is willing to conduct the workshop as long as we have the resources. Mr. Bonfanti will check on the projected number of international graduates for Spring 2004.

Dr. Rent asked how many international students usually enroll for spring. Some students come in without assistantships and cannot attend the workshop until fall. Dr. Person agreed to look into the enrollment figures. A spring workshop would cost \$6-7,000. Also, there is a concern that international students' VISA documentation might not coordinate with the workshop schedule.

- h. Dr. Person also noted the announcement from Ms. Frances Coleman, Dean of Libraries, about the Information Workshop for Graduate Coordinators to be held October 15 at 3:00 p.m. Please encourage participation. The workshop will highlight resources available in the library to graduate students, as well as faculty. Subject areas for the workshop are based on subject areas submitted by the graduate coordinators survey. There is a great deal of interest in electronic submission of theses and dissertations. Ms. Coleman extended an invitation to Graduate Council members.

5. Ms. Susan Bowers, Secretary, GSA, gave the Graduate Student Association report.
 - a. The association had its first meeting September 9, 2003, with 30-35 in attendance. Topics discussed were the proposed budget (\$10,000) and activities for the year. Mr. Bill Broyles, Student Health Center, was the guest speaker.
 - b. Next meeting will be October 14, 2003.
6. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Dr. Boyle gave an update on the subcommittee report on the Appeal of Academic Status (carryover from February 2003, request by the Robert Holland Faculty Senate for the Graduate Council to review recommendations made by the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee relative to "Change of Academic Status Policy"). The Graduate Council subcommittee concluded that the current process is not flawed and should cover all eventualities. As indicated by Dr. Boyle, the response to the Faculty Senate is that their request has been reviewed and that the Graduate Council does not find the process flawed.

There is a separate recommendation relative to instances of academic misconduct currently under review by university administration. The subcommittee recommended a change to No. 18 Appeal of Academic Status as currently listed in the 2002-2003 Graduate Bulletin on page 30. The subcommittee recommended that, "if the appeal at the **[departmental] program** level is unsuccessful, a student may then appeal to the college dean." Dr. Spencer called for comments/questions. There were no comments or questions. Dr. Spencer called for a motion to accept the Graduate Council subcommittee report. On motion by Dr. Dwight Hare and second by Dr. Chinling Wang, the Council voted to accept the subcommittee report; one member abstained.

- b. As another item of Old Business, the Council discussed multiple applications to different departments/programs by graduate students enrolled at MSU.

Questions regarding multiple application inquiries were posed by Drs. Sylvia Byrd, Dwayne Wise, and Larry Barrow.

Dr. Person reported on his inquiry to MSU Legal Counsel about whether a graduate coordinator could work with another department to review student records in the evaluation process. Mr. Johnnie Haley suggested that he discuss the issue with Mr. Butch Stokes, University FERPA representative. Mr. Stokes advised caution in making a decision on this basis, although there is no restriction in working with student records, we should follow due process. Based upon the department's admission criteria, there should not be selective review of some student records, i.e. internationals applying for admission to 2nd program, the student may consent in writing to have his records reviewed. There is concern by the Council that students admitted to one program are transferring to another based on poor performance. Information should be obtained by contacting the graduate coordinator in the department where the students are seeking to transfer or professor of record for the student.

Ms. Diane Wolfe gave the report on admission policy relative to multiple applications/multiple departments.

1. She presented a four-page report with a narrative of the application process. A student is allowed two applications simultaneously. The application fee is valid for one year (fall to fall). The procedure for academically dismissed students was discussed, as well as the form letter issued when a student is academically dismissed. This form requires the appropriate dean's signature and is attached to the screening packet, which becomes part of the student's academic record.
2. Information was gathered on multiple application/fees from other institutions: University of Mississippi; University of Southern Mississippi; Louisiana State University; Auburn University; University of Georgia; and the University of Alabama. The Council discussed the information regarding the university application fees charged to non-residential applicants.

Ms. Wolfe also distributed a table showing applications received between Spring 2002 and Spring 2004, reflecting projected income if MSU had a policy in place for charging a fee each time someone made application to graduate school.

The council agreed that there is a problem with multiple application and processing fees and discussed authority regarding approval of fees.

Dr. Spencer proposed that a subcommittee look into fees and assessment for students applying to multiple disciplines. Dr. Boyle recommended Drs. Byrd; Wise; Dr. Susan Bridges agreed to serve as well. Dr. Person and Ms. Wolfe would like to meet with the subcommittee.

Dr. Wang inquired whether or not the Admissions office could list the previous departments that a student has applied for on the green sheet that is sent to the department. The council discussed the ramifications of checking records including the amount of time required.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Dr. Person informed the Council of a student who was denied admission to a department because of a low GPA; BANNER generated "Grad not Good Standing" on the student's official transcript. The student in question shows a 2.92 GPA on transcript and a 3.18 GPA on Program of Study. Discussion was initiated regarding the information in the Graduate Bulletin relative to the overall grade point average versus grade point average on the Program of Study– Plan of study – no grade below C. Dr. Spencer requested Ms. Rita Burrell to obtain information for discussion at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.