

University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate
Linda Shea, Chair
2007-2008

Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, March 5, 2008
Goodell 508

Twenty two (22) individuals attended the meeting. Attending were Michael Alderman, Jane Baran, Ann Cary, James L. Craig, David Dudek, Nigar Khan, Arthur Kinney, Kevin Klement, David Kotz, Sylvia Langford, Anne C. Moore, John Mullin, Jeff Napolitano, Natalie Neubert, Linus Nyiwul, Arslan Razmi, Stephen Rich, Linda Shea, Howard D. Stidham, Pat Stowell, Nate Therien, and H. Martin Wobst.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Linda Shea called the meeting to order at 12:06 PM. Congratulations were extended to H. Martin Wobst who received the Chancellors Medal earlier this week.

II. Approval of Minutes

Kevin Klement asked that the minutes from February 20 be corrected concerning travel grant committee report and the GPD support letter. Also, a correction noting that Nigar Khan is a member of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates was suggested. The minutes from the February 20 as corrected were then approved unanimously.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean Mullin noted several "Hot Bottom Issues"

a. Climate of fear on campus

There is a climate of fear on campus due to recent violence and threats of violence on campus. The Crisis Action Committee is working to address this problem. David LaFond is the Graduate School representative.

b. Strategic Planning

The entire University is embarking on a strategic planning exercise. The University will undergo accreditation review in 2009. We are planning to ask members of the Graduate Council to participate in the process and will ask the Graduate Council to provide critique of the strategic plan for the Graduate School.

c. Grateful Dead Follow-up

We are still getting calls about the Grateful Dead event we had in the fall. We are considering holding a national event about Native American Culture & Learning next Spring. The committee is now being assembled. H. Martin Wobst from the Graduate Council is on the committee. The Dean has met with Native American representatives.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

d. Springfield Initiative

We have had discussions about the need to make a big difference in Springfield. They are

looking for a physical presence with the UMASS logo. Also, the Governor has said the Alternative Energy Center should be located in Springfield.

e. GEO contract negotiation

There is no news on contract negotiation. We went back to the bargaining table yesterday.

f. Independent Masters Degree

We are not sure what direction this initiative will take. We are just looking into what others are doing now.

g. Certificate Programs

UMASS has the fewest of any major university. It was noted that the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates met for the first time. Several issues previously noted were raised again, such as double dipping (earning a certificate and matriculated degree) and ensuring the quality of both the regular and certificate programs. Nigar Khan noted that undergraduate certificate programs have their own issues. However, it was also noted that graduate certificate program issues should be similar. Brian Harvey has reviewed the three pending graduate certificate program proposals and has provided a critique. The Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates will provide a progress report by April 24. Arthur predicted that we will have some recommendation by September. A brief discussion followed concerning how to possibly get the three pending graduate certificate programs reviewed and through before the fall.

h. Interdisciplinary Courses

Ann Cary led this discussion. She noted that this topic must address the proportion of revenues allocated to and expenses incurred by different schools within the UMASS Amherst. This is an issue with crosslisting courses.

Also, there is an online course issue and an administration issue concerning cross listed courses because administration of courses within SPIRE is a manual process. Continuing and Professional Education enters their registrations manually into SPIRE.

There are four types of interdisciplinary courses - traditional, online certificate, integrative studies, and other future possibilities. We must decide how we go forward. Arthur Kinney and the ASCC agreed to discuss this topic.

i. Statute of Limitation Committee (SOL)

Pat Stowell said the SOL was on hold right now. However, the committee will get back into action over the next month.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

j. Diversity Grants

Michael Alderman said that 10-15 fellowships are available with about \$93,000 of funding available. The decisions about the grants will be made and issued this coming week.

IV. Old Business

A. Graduate Faculty Status Review

Arthur Kinney distributed a one page Proposal for Defining and Reviewing Graduate Faculty which establishes and identifies three (3) categories of Graduate Faculty Status. Ann Cary noted that there is an issue about the length of temporary appointments and what the criteria should be for these types of appointments. There were also comments about whether we really wanted to address this issue. The Dean said that if we pass something, we will enforce it. Nate Therien asked whether Five College Faculty were considered special situations. Stephen Rich stated that he thought the review process would need to evolve. He also asked whether we would need to review the Graduate Faculty every year or would there be a 2 or 3 year term.

The objectives of changing and enforcing this policy were discussed. It was noted that we are trying to maintain quality and consistency across the University. Jane Baran noted a concern about the first category of graduate faculty. Stephen Rich reiterated that a detailed review may be necessary initially but not every year. Pat Stowell noted that we needed to state the duration of the appointment.

There was a question about whether it would be beneficial to make this a formal personnel action. It was also noted that teaching appointments are used for part-time instructors at off-campus location but now there are more and more people.

Noting all the issues about the topic, the Dean said we should give this policy review one more chance. He also asked Arthur to follow-up and meet with Pat Stowell before the next meeting.

V. New Business

A. Course and Program Approvals from the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee

Arthur Kinney brought one item before the Graduate Council. The Green Building Masters Degree Option program was noted as an innovative program that was the first in the nation. It was also noted that 36 individuals have already expressed interest in this program. It was recommended that the Graduate Council review this program after three years to ensure it is sustainable. The program was approved unanimously by the council with little discussion.

V. New Business (continued)**B. Electronic Thesis Submission**

Scholar Works is the software used to electronically process graduate dissertations and theses at the library. This is a Google searchable database that results in graduate dissertations and theses getting more internet search “hits” every month. Marilyn Billings is facilitating the implementation of Scholar Works at the library and has requested that we make electronic submission a mandate so she can ensure the dissertations and theses can get into this database. A brief discussion followed of the special exceptions to his mandate. The policy was approved by the Graduate Council.

VI. Committee Reports

A. ASCC – See “New Business - Item A” above.

B. ALANA – No report

C. Fellowship – Kevin Klement provided the report.

The committee is meeting Monday to review the incoming student fellowship applications. We will have decisions made over the next 2 weeks and will advise the Graduate Council next month. The deadline for submitting applications for existing students is April 25

D. Ethics – Anne C. Moore provided the report. Anne said the committee needed new members. It was mentioned that a student in Anthropology, Jane Martin, might be interested in serving on the committee. It was noted that the committee should contact Julian Tyson of the Chemistry department, and Michael Wright of the Polymer Science department who both have done work on some ethical courses. Howard Stidham also agreed to serve on this Committee

E. Special Admission – No report

F. Student Affairs – No report

G. Mentoring – No report

H. Travel – Anne C. Moore made the report

Anne said that 65 Travel grants have been approved for a total of \$21,000. She said there is not enough money to fund all the approved and allocated items. Dean Mullin asked Anne to send him a list of approved travel grants. He noted this is becoming a major budget item whose funding needs to be specifically identified and addressed.

I. Statute of Limitations (ad-hoc)

See “Deans Comments – Item i” above.

J. Graduate School Course Development (ad-hoc) – No report

K. Bologna Accord Impact Assessment (ad-hoc) - No report

VII. Comments from Administrative Officers and Others

1. Jeff Napolitano made a general announcement. He said there was good news about the proposal by the Chancellor to settle ongoing discussions with the GEO and GSS. He said there would be nine (9) new T/A positions and there would be \$400,000 for Graduate Fellowships. The Graduate Council will have input into managing this fellowship program. Jeff commended and complemented the Chancellor and the working relationships he has established.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Dudek