

University of Massachusetts at Amherst  
Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate  
Linda Shea, Chair  
2008-2009

Minutes of General Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, April 8, 2009  
Goodell 528

Twenty (20) individuals attended the meeting. Michael Alderman, David LaFond, and Patrick Sullivan from the Graduate School attended. Chancellor Robert C. Holub was an invited guest. Also, in attendance were Graduate Council members Jane Baran, James E. Cathey, James L. Craig, David Dudek, Iza Hussin, Arthur Kinney, David Kotz, Ernie May, Bill McClure, Augusta Mfuko, John Mullin, Linda Shea, Howard Stidham, Patricia Stowell, Nate Therien, and Judy Van de Geer.

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Linda Shea called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM and especially welcomed Chancellor Robert C. Holub

**II. Discussion of Graduate School with Chancellor Robert C. Holub**

Chairperson Linda Shea provided Chancellor Holub with a one page summary which highlighted activities of the Graduate Council. Chair Shea briefly reviewed these highlights and concluded by saying that we appreciated this opportunity to meet him and ask him some questions.

The Chancellor began by asking the individuals at the assembled meeting to introduce themselves. Going around the room, each individual then briefly introduced himself or herself.

The Chancellor began his comments by saying that graduate education is a high priority for him but that we must find ways to fund it during these new times. He said there were two challenges:

1. Funding – UMASS Amherst is below the level of our peer institutions. This is a simple problem but it is hard to solve.
2. Creativity of Faculty – We must develop good programs to attract attention and students. We must enable creative initiatives. We must not look at traditional programs to determine funding. It will probably be necessary to reallocate resources. This is not easy but it must be done. It is imperative to be competitive and to be creative.

He said that the current economic crisis has resulted in cutting \$20 million in base budgeting. He mentioned that stipulations in the federal economic stimulus money stated that federal economic stimulus funding cannot be used for ordinary and ongoing expenses that will continue for more than 2 years. We will need to eliminate millions of dollars from our budget.

In addressing the topic of graduate stipends, the Chancellor said we must survey our peers and find out how different schools and different departments are addressing this need. Dean Mullin mentioned that he had already done some analysis and that we are near the bottom in the dollar amount of graduate stipends among our peers. He said that we will need about \$2.5 million to get UMASS Amherst up to the middle compared to our peer institutions.

**II. Discussion of Graduate School with Chancellor Robert C. Holub (continued)**

The Chancellor said he will leave it to the new Provost to phase-in some type of new resource allocation program. He said that any program must be based on gaining some type of return for resources provided. What is expected will be different from department to department. He continued with further explanation. If we raise funding, then what are the measurements that measure expectations for performance. Departments need to have an ownership mentality. We must justify what we have at all times. He said it will probably take 5-10 years to remedy the current situation, but departments cannot think about their funding as a handout. The Chancellor then opened the discussion to questions.

Dean Mullin asked about the expectations for the size of the Graduate student population. The Chancellor said there is great variability in good institutions. 25-30% Graduate students could be set as a long term target but this is a rather large increase from the current situation.

Bill McClure said that 12% of Graduate students are through Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) and CPE provides \$2 million in teaching stipends to Graduate students. The Chancellor said that CPE is revenue generating and the programs are not usually associated with losses. He said that CPE provides an important service to adult populations but that the reputations of schools are enhanced by resident graduate programs.

David Kotz asked about the method of evaluating performance. He said that it is important to create an educated workforce and an educated citizenry. All knowledge should not be associated just with work. It is also hard to find the correct factors in evaluating academic department performance. The method through which you allocate resources should create and maintain strong programs in many disciplines. This would require that we allocate additional resources to departments that are not as strong as they could be. We need to make all programs strong.

The Chancellor responded that he agrees with the ideal of an educated citizenry. However, the Massachusetts State Legislature does not agree with this. That is the reality. They simply want an educated workforce. Education that is not work focused does not impress them and it does not make a favorable impression on them about us. We will need different criteria to measure performance but you must have some measurement for success.

David Kotz made the point that there are alternatives when responding to underperforming departments. It does not seem appropriate to take resources away. If a department does not measure up, we need to determine what changes could be made so it will succeed. Dean Mullin explained that the Graduate Council has been introduced to the Ohio State study of its departments' performance (from February, 2009). He confirmed that we must evaluate the performance on a department by department basis.

Nigar Khan asked the Chancellor about how he feels about international links between universities. The Chancellor briefly answered by saying he agreed that we need more internationalization. To illustrate this point, he gave an example of a discussion that involved the search for the Dean of the Isenberg School of Management.

**II. Discussion of Graduate School with Chancellor Robert C. Holub (continued)**

Iza Hussin asked about the potential for Five College collaboration. There seems to be great potential to combine excellent faculty across all five colleges into programs but this potential has not been tapped at all. Ernie May said there seems to be great reluctance of administrations because the other colleges benefit from our graduate level programs but they do not seem to reciprocate. The Dean mentioned that there is a task force studying these impediments but negotiations seem to break down. The Chancellor confirmed that there are impediments to Five College collaboration. He said there is a lack of facilities at the colleges that contribute to this issue.

Dean Mullin mentioned the graduate research assistant /post doctorate assistant issue. The Chancellor said he agrees with the argument from some faculty. He said it is difficult to tell other faculty how to manage their research costs because of different circumstances. However, we must impress on faculty the importance of training graduate students. This is an issue the new Provost will need to address.

Chair Linda Shea asked the Chancellor about his management philosophy and how it may be related to his study of the philosophy of Nietzsche. The Chancellor said that he did not agree with all of Nietzsche perspectives. He said he wants to put Nietzsche in the context of the late 1800's when he lived. He also said he is not a Nietzsche admirer but that Nietzsche is provocative.

Dean Mullin asked what is the role of the Graduate School in providing mentoring. The Chancellor said that the Graduate School must ensure that graduate students are treated fairly. Part of this is mentoring. Departments, though, have the responsibility for their graduate students. If they are not being responsible, there is something wrong with the department.

The discussion with the Chancellor ended and the Dean left to provide the Chancellor a brief tour of the Graduate School facilities and staff. The meeting continued in a discussion of the points the Chancellor made. When the Dean returned, the meeting resumed with Dean's Comments (Item III).

**III. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were approved with one change suggested by Nate Therien.

**IV. Comments by the Graduate Dean****a. Brief review of Chancellor's Comments & Discussion**

The Dean confirmed that Graduate Education is important to the Chancellor. He wants to grow the undergraduate student body by about 10% and, as he also said, he wants to increase the graduate student body as a percentage of UMASS Amherst total student body. He also understands the importance of increasing funding for graduate students.

The Dean did say that our mission is to educate, not to train. He said it will be a challenge to effectively convince the legislature of the importance of that mission.

**IV. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)****b. Personnel Activities**

Sharon Frost has announced her resignation. Also, Ester Terry and Paul Kostecki are leaving.

**V. Old Business****A. Proposal to Change the Deadline for Graduating Students**

Pat Stowell distributed a revised proposal to change the deadlines for graduate students to submit their graduation paperwork. The changes will be effective for the 2009-2010 academic year. The reason for these requested changes is the impending change to the UMASS academic calendar in 2010. The deadline for spring graduation is being changed to April 15 and for winter graduation to December 15, rather than January 2 as in the original proposal. Pat mentioned that an analysis had been done to determine the number of final dissertation defenses completed between December 15 and January 2. It was determined that only 7 of 61 were completed and filed during that period.

A motion to approve the new Deadline Policy was made and seconded. The motion passed.

**VI. New Business****A. Report of the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee (ASCC)**

Arthur Kinney brought several items before the Graduate Council for its approval:

1. Revision of M.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering
2. Additional Requirement for Speech-Language Pathology Master's Program
3. Communication Disorders 615 - Evaluation Processes in Speech-Language Pathology
4. Computer Science 503: Embedded Computing Systems
5. Education 603 - Computer Mediated Communication

A motion to approve all these items was made, seconded, and was passed unanimously.

**VII. Committee Reports**

A. ASCC – see New Business, Item A above.

B. ALANA – No Report Made

C. Fellowship – It was mentioned that \$450,000 Fellowships were being awarded. \$300,000 to incoming new students and \$150,000 to current graduate students

D. Ethics – No report made

E. Special Admission – Inactive

F. Student Affairs – Inactive

G. Mentoring – No report was made

H. Travel – No report made

I. Statute of Limitations (ad-hoc) – final report made 2/18/09 meeting

J. Graduate School Course Development (ad-hoc) – Inactive

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

**VIII. Comments from Administrative Officers and Others**

None

**IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
David E. Dudek