

University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate
Linda Shea, Chair
2006-2007

Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, April 18, 2007
Goodell 508

Twenty (20) individuals attended the meeting, including one guest, Michael Alderman from the Graduate School Office. Also in attendance were Maurianne Adams, Jane Baran, Tony Butterfield, James E. Cathey, James L. Craig, Banessa Defend, David Dudek, Nigar Khan, Arthur Kinney, Anne C. Moore, John Mullin, Jeff Napolitano, Jose Ornelas, Rushika Patel, Arslan Razmi, Linda Shea, Howard D. Stidham, Nate Therien, and Juan C. Zamora

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Linda Shea called the meeting to order at 12:03 PM. The meeting began with a moment of silence for the students, school, and administration of Virginia Tech.

II. Approval of Minutes

James E. Cathey made the point that the discussion about graduate degree residency requirement, noted under "Item VII. 1" in the March 14 minutes, did not resolve the issue. A brief discussion about the need for a residency requirement then followed in which it was noted that there was no residency requirement for certain Masters Degrees. The point was made that it might be wise to wait until the Joint Task Force on Online Learning completed its report this summer before addressing this issue.

The minutes were then approved unanimously without modification.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean Mullin reviewed several items.

a. Special Complements to Faculty for their work

- 1) Jane Baran received unsolicited complements from students at an event the Dean attended
- 2) Arthur Kinney was celebrated at Library dinner and gave very interesting remarks
- 3) James Cathey was honored by the Finnish Government for promoting all thing Finnish
- 4) The Dean also congratulated English department faculty member Sabina Murray, a 2007 Guggenheim Fellowship Award winner and Natasha Trethewey, winner of the 2007 Pulitzer prize in poetry and former UMASS graduate student.

b. Electronic Submission for Masters Degree Theses is now operational

The electronic submission is now operating and is currently optional for Masters students.

c. Online Data Collection for Accepted Students Declining Admission

We now have an online system working to get information on why students have declined our offer of admission into a Graduate Program. The system does have the ability to allow and capture comments. We will report back with data gained from this system.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)**d. Announcement about Distinguished Teaching Award for Graduate Students**

A special separate award banquet will be held for Graduate Students who have won distinguished Teaching Awards this year. These students will still be recognized at Commencement with the Faculty Distinguished Teachers.

e. Bologna Process Preparation

The Graduate School may not yet be prepared to react to implementation of the Bologna Agreements in Europe when they are fully implemented in 2009. Pat Stowell has been asked to document the impact on the UMASS Graduate School. The main impact of this implementation will be that Europe will confer 3 year Bachelor degrees requiring 90 credits. General education requirements are mainly impacted in this change in that they are removed from the requirements for a Bachelor degree. It is said that European students get these general education requirements in high school while we in the U.S. do not. Therefore, studies in Bachelor degree programs in Europe after Bologna implementation will be more narrowly focused.

f. Graduate Certificate Programs

The Graduate School is receiving more requests to begin Graduate Certificate Programs. Recently received were programs in Public History, Social Justice, and Peace.

A discussion began in which the uncertainty concerning online course administration was an major issue. It was noted that Joint Task Force on Online Learning was still working on the issues of working with UMASS Online and the funding of faculty. This committee will finish its work at the end of this semester.

It was noted that currently faculty earns extra income for online work, and now that motivation is in the process of being removed. Maurianne Adams said there was a broader question about Continuing and Professional Education Programs. It was also said that the cost sharing was insulting. It was said these issues will be addressed by the Joint Task Force on Online Learning before it completes its work in June or July.

The Dean expressed concern about how these disagreements will impact our future. He said that we need to be part of any new developments in education. He mentioned the future possibility of the multi-institution online graduate degree by which students take courses from several universities and accumulate the credits on a "graduate degree" card, just like a bank card.

A question was posed that asked "what happened to faculty-student relationships?"

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)**g. Graduate Housing**

The Dean said that it was important for the Graduate Council to now get involved in issues concerning Graduate Housing. He mentioned that three different groups of students have come to him with complaints to make him aware of the situation. Prince is especially an issue. These issues have been discussed with Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Joyce Hatch.

The Dean reiterated that it is time to take this up as an issue and that he would like support from the faculty in addressing Graduate Housing issues.

It was mentioned that it is possible the Butterfield House could be modified to become graduate housing because it has certain desirable features such as nearby parking, it has a kitchen and common room, and it is isolated and away from the center of campus. However, freshman are currently housed in Butterfield House.

Jeff Napolitano mentioned that there are two issues. The first is that students are housed two to a room and that one student per room is more appropriate. The bigger issue is that UMASS is willing to build new Graduate Housing but it would cost \$800 a month. For Prince currently, students are being charge \$525 per person for a double occupancy room. This results is that UMASS charging \$1050 a month for a Prince room. The Dean noted that the conditions at Prince are not good also that the configuration of the building is not that good.

The affordability issue was confirmed when it was noted that, from information gained on the Graduate Student Housing Survey, most students spent over 50% of their wages on housing. It was then requested that the Graduate Council obtain the results of the Graduate Student Housing Survey for its review prior to the next meeting.

It was discussed that we must get Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life Mike Gargano involved. It was mentioned that is was thought that he is primarily responsible for undergraduate matters. However, it was confirmed that he is responsible for the quality of all student life on the campus and that he needs to understand that this Graduate Housing issue is now becoming a faculty issue. Linda Shea said she would call Vice Chancellor Gargano and invite him to the May meeting of the Graduate Council to discuss this housing issue.

h. Employment of Graduate Students as Research Assistants

The issue of the increasing trend of employing post-doctorate graduates as research assistants (R/A's) rather than graduate students has been confirmed and charted. The issue for the Graduate Council is "Is this having an impact on the quality of students and graduate education." The Dean mentioned that the Graduate School is gathering data concerning this issue. He mentioned that there is no decline yet in graduate acceptances.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

h. Employment of Graduate Students as Research Assistants (continued)

Tony Butterfield, who also serves on the Research Council, noted that that the Research Council has been studying the Curriculum Fee and has identified it as the source of the problem. He noted they have concluded this is a big problem which drives up the cost of employing graduate students as research assistants. It was also noted, though, that faculty like the additional freedom they have concerning the work schedule of post-doctorate individuals.

Jeff Napolitano said there is currently a campaign with the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) and the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP) to address this curriculum fee issue.

IV. Old Business

A. Graduate Council By-Laws

Chair Shea began the discussion on his topic noting that we made a couple changes to the membership section of the Graduate Council by-laws at the February meeting. One of those changes altered the Five College representative requirements and included the requirement that the representative be a faculty member. She noted that the Graduate Council needed to address this change another time, and she asked Nate Therien, the current Five College representative on the Graduate Council, to explain the situation.

Nate Therien described the history of the Five College representation on the Graduate Council. He noted that he was not a current faculty member of any of the five colleges. He asked that the Council change their requirement that a current faculty member must represent the five colleges. A motion was made to change the phrase "faculty member" to "representative" in the membership section of the Graduate Council by-laws, Item B. This motion was seconded and the change was approved unanimously.

B. ALANA Committee

Jose Ornelas, chair of the ALANA committee, said that the ALANA committee decided to postpone the vote on the Diversity Recruiting Program until the next meeting in May. Dean Mullin emphasized that the #1 goal of the program is to fund R/A's to help in recruiting and that we need to recognize this is a first step. Maurianne Adams mentioned, though, that she was concerned that the next step may not happen. The Dean confirmed that he could not guarantee that next step. However, he said that although there is no guarantee of continuing funding from the Graduate School that is the spirit of the program.

III. Old Business (continued)

B. ALANA Committee (continued)

He said he has \$100,000 is soft money available for this fall that he wants to effective use. The departments can apply after the Graduate School issues a RFP (request for proposal) to the departments to obtain funding for an R/A. Tony Butterfield asked if the money could be used for associated expenses, and not just for R/A funding. The Dean said the money could be used for those purposes.

Jeff Napolitano mentioned his concern about funding individuals in this manner. He said that he knew of a program at the University of Michigan that does diversity recruitment. Michael Alderman said the Graduate School has looked at what other schools are doing and that many schools have discontinued their formal diversity programs. He said we at UMASS Amherst are currently “par for the course” nationally.

Maurianne Adams, noting Jeff Napolitano’s knowledge about this topic, asked him if he could join the ALANA committee and help in the deliberation on this topic.

The Dean confirmed that his vision for the program is that it is going to be powered at the lower levels, not centrally from the Graduate School. He said responsibility belongs at those lower department levels. Jeff Napolitano made the point that the Diversity Commission said that this should be a high priority of the entire institution of UMASS and therefore driving the program from the Graduate School and not just from lower levels is an appropriate policy.

V. New Business

A. Course and Program Approvals

Maurianne Adams said the listing of five (5) Education courses on the agenda were recommended for approval by the ASCC. She noted that there was no name change required for Education 646 as was noted on the agenda. These courses are as follows:

EDUC 628, EDUC 637, EDUC 638, EDUC 646, EDUC 678

A motion was made to approve these courses. The motion was seconded and the courses were approved unanimously.

Maurianne Adams then briefly discussed the Ed.D. Special Education program proposal. She mentioned this was a reinstatement of an earlier doctorate program. She confirmed that the program was reviewed carefully and a strong faculty infrastructure was confirmed.

A motion to approve this program was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

VI. Committee Reports

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

B. ALANA – See “Old Business – Item B” above.

C. Fellowship –No report was made. However, Tony Butterfield thanked Dean Mullin for extending the deadline to submit fellowship applications for current graduate students.

D. Ethics – No report

E. Special Admission – No report

F. Student Affairs – No report

G. Mentoring – No report

H. Travel – Anne C. Moore provided the report. She mentioned that there were 72 Travel Grants awarded in the fall for a total of \$21,000. She mentioned there are 75-80 current travel grant applications received this spring. She indicated the Travel Committee will be meeting this week make decisions about these applications. The Dean asked for a report of the amount of those items turned down. Tony Butterfield mentioned that there are many more potential travel grants that the Travel Committee never sees because the GPD’s are limited in the number of travel grant application that each can submit. Therefore, the potential amount of travel grants not funded certainly exceeds the amount the Travel Committee will report.

I. Statute of Limitations (ad-hoc) – No report

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

VII. Comments from Administrative Officers and Others

None

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Dudek