

University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate
D. Anthony Butterfield, Chair
2005-2006

Minutes of General Membership Meeting (Revised)
Wednesday, October 12, 2005
Goodell 508

Eighteen (18) individuals attended the meeting. In attendance were Maurianne Adams, Thomas Heydt-Benjamin, Julia Beyer, Tony Butterfield, James L. Craig, David Dudek, Arthur Kinney, Josh Kroner, Bill McClure, Lori Moss, John Mullin, Arslan Razmi, Margara Russotto, Linda Shea, Patricia Stowell, Peter Tamas, H. Martin Wobst, and Juan C. Zamora

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Butterfield called the meeting to order at 12:08.

II. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the last meeting on September 14, 2005 were briefly discussed. A change was suggested for “New Business” Item B, Paragraph 2 to clarify the discussion. The change was agreed to and the minutes were then approved unanimously.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean Mullin reviewed the same eight (8) Graduate School priority topics he brought to the Council’s attention at the last meeting, items “a-h” below, as well as bringing five (5) additional items to the attention of the Council, items “i-m” below.

- a. “Thesis-on-a-disk” - up and running. Later discussion seemed to conclude that this technology does not accept documents in Latex format. Tom Heydt-Benjamin indicated that there is protocol to convert Latex format documents to acceptable formats and this protocol was available in his academic department.
- b. Paperless Application Initiative – continues to move forward.
- c. Graduate Student Monitoring/Tracking System – system has been put in place and is being tested in a sample of academic departments, including Anthropology.
- d. Application Status – Application trend is positive. It seems that declines in applications from India and China have bottomed-out.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

e. Summer Graduate Programs – Chancellor has made improving the deficit of summer graduate programs a priority since our study determined that UMASS has one of the lowest levels of offering of major Universities. A brief discussion followed about possible causes of the current lack of programs, which included the lack of state funding in summer, science research and grant writing priorities in summer, and different academic schedules- such as trimesters- at other schools.

f. Students from New Orleans Colleges - There currently are three (3) graduate students coming to UMASS because of the hurricane damage to Louisiana. There are also two (2) Undergraduate Students and two (2) On-line students.

g. Monitoring Graduate School Yield – This issue was discussed as part of the Travel Grant and Fellowship Funding Dean Mullin announced. Although we gave fellowships funding to many Graduate School accepted applicants, approximately 40 of those accepted students went to other schools. It was noted that we do not know the reason those students did not accept our offer and that we should attempt to specifically research those 40 at this time. It seemed the Dean accepted responsibility to get that research completed. There was no discussion of a more comprehensive initiative to monitor all Graduate School rejections.

h. Minority Graduate Student Recruitment – The Graduate School has enrolled seven (7) additional students from our efforts as part of the Northeast Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate. (NEAGEP). NEAGEP is a minority student recruitment initiative by schools in the Northeast part of the United States funded by the NSF. UMASS is the lead school in this NSF program. The program is focused on the math, science, and technology disciplines. Currently we have 57 students on campus funded by this NSF program.

We are looking to expand our efforts in the Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP), which is also funded by NSF, to include non-science academic disciplines. UMASS is also the lead school in this program. There are currently five (5) schools now part of this program, including the University of California, Iowa State University and University of Iowa, and Syracuse University. We are looking for volunteers to assist with this initiative.

i. India Universities' Consortia - There is a consortia of universities in India who are interested in having an exchange program with faculty interested in teaching and completing research in India. Currently five (5) schools are involved in this program, including University of California at Berkeley, State University of New York at Buffalo, Case Western University, and UMASS.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

j. Certificate Program Development - According to the Sloan Study on graduate education, Certificate Programs have experienced the greatest growth in recent years. The Dean noted the manner in which Certificate Programs are a source of growth at a University. New programs at the University can first be developed as Certificate Programs. With increased interest and growth, these Certificate Programs can become Institutes. With further growth, the Institute can become a complete University Academic Department. Currently there are three (3) Certificate Programs at the UMASS Graduate School: Women Studies, Latin Studies, and Cognitive Studies. There are three more in development and imminent: Medieval Studies (English), Islamic Studies, and Film Studies. The Dean indicated that the Graduate School will fund other Certificate Program initiatives. A Certificate Program needs to consist of five (5) courses and 15 credits.

k. Travel Grant Funding – The \$40,000 budgeted amount has been fully funded

l. Fellowship Funding - \$300,000 has been funded for Graduate Fellowships. Including the funding for medical insurance, the current Graduate Fellowship funding by the University is \$320,000. The Provost has also committed to \$30,000 additional funding in Fall, 2006. A discussion followed that since 75% of applicants who receive fellowships decide to go to another school, much of this current funding will probably not be used unless we change our fellowship practices. The Dean re-affirmed his willingness to implement any new policy the Graduate Council recommends.

m. R/A and T/A Funding (and Statute of Limitations) for Current Graduate Students - The Dean referred this discussion to Chair Butterfield. Chair Butterfield indicated an interest in establishing a task force to study this problem. He suggested this task force be comprised of student, GPD's and members of the GC. The Dean is looking for results of the Task Force analysis and recommendations by the end of this academic year.

It was discussed that the Statute of Limitation was a directly related issue and needed to be included in this work.

Chair Butterfield asked for volunteers. Peter Tamas volunteered and Chair Butterfield thanked him and assigned him to this task force.

IV. Old Business

A. Travel Committee Report

The Travel Committee Report was provided by Juan C. Zamora. He reviewed the “Memo to GPD’s”, dated September 26, 2005 from the website. The major point discussed was that a sliding scale for the number of student travel grant nominations has been developed and approved by the Travel Committee. The annual number of total travel grant nominations by size of program is listed below:

Number of Students in Program	1-20	21-40	41-80	81-120	121-160	161+
Maximum # of Nominations	2	3	4	5	6	7

Chair Butterfield reminded the GC that this is a change from the fixed number of six student nominations for each program that existed last year.

He also discussed a current proposal to change the Maximum Number of Nominations for programs that are 1-20 students from 2 to 4 and for programs that are 21-40 students from 3-4. A brief discussion followed concerning the fairness of this current proposal that the Travel Committee is considering. Chair Butterfield then took an informal poll of the meeting attendees which unanimously recommended to the Travel Committee that the small-sized graduate programs maintain the current 2 and 3 maximum nomination limits.

B. Fellowship Committee Report

H. Martin Wobst provided this report. He indicated that a 4-page document had been sent to Dean Mullin and Chair Butterfield with the Fellowship Committee’s recommendations and funding requests. There are six (6) recommendations:

1. Level of Graduate Fellowship funding be doubled from \$250,000 to \$500,000
2. One-half of the funding be directed at recruiting new student while the other half be used for current outstanding graduate students
3. Change Recruiting Fellowship Grants from being allocated for individual students to being allocated to individual departments that could use the grant for whatever new students those departments wished.
4. Each department could only apply for a \$15,000 Recruiting Fellowship Grant every other year
5. Individual students could not receive a Fellowship Grant more than once.
6. There should be a dedicated administrative person to manage fund drives for Graduate Fellowships with the goal to have \$1 million of annual endowed

Graduate Fellowship grants available.

B. Fellowship Committee Report (continued)

Chair Butterfield indicated that these recommendations concerning the allocation procedures for Graduate Fellowship Grants is similar to the manner by which Diversity Fellowships are granted – the departments ask for the grant before they know the individual applicant to whom they wish to direct the grant.

Dean Mullin indicated that Graduate Fellowships were his #1 new funding issue and priority. He indicated that he has previously discussed the possibility of staffing a dedicated graduate school fundraiser, and the school is now assessing if donors target their giving specifically to Graduate School education.

A point was made about the importance of linking the waiving of \$650 in semester fees to Graduate Fellowship Grants.

Chair Butterfield received approval to distribute the Fellowship Committee 4-page document to the entire Graduate Council, and he indicated that this item will be on next month's agenda after the GC membership has a chance to review the document.

C. Off-campus Internship Policy (Externships)

The conclusion of this discussion resulted in an action item for Dean Mullin and Josh Kroner to draft a formal Externship Policy Statement for consideration by the Graduate Council at a future meeting.

Major highlights of the discussion were:

1. Josh Kroner led the discussion by noting that this was a very important issue because it is a very expensive program because of the tuition and curriculum fee waivers, and, as a result, it is under close scrutiny by the State. Continued State audits which are monitoring the guidelines and accountability of administration for this program require us to develop some specific and formal guidelines now. He asked the GC to separate this issue from those concerning fellowship funding, T/A and R/A funding, and the Statute of Limitations. He noted that if the State begins to question the validity of the program, the entire program could then be jeopardized.
2. A suggestion was made to change the tone of the wording of the policy since it sounds punitive to employers which sponsor externships.
3. A suggestion was made to make the purpose of the program the major point of the policy

and to include the fact that an externship must be part of a program of study that is developed and approved by the student's advisor.

4. It seems only 2% of students are a source of problems or program abuse. But the Dean noted, they are a noisy 2%.

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C. Off-campus Internship Policy (Externships) – (continued)

5. A suggestion was made to establish a policy of a six (6) semester limit with the inclusion of an appeal protocol.

V. New Business

A. Course Approvals

There were no courses to approve. Linda Shea and Arthur Kinney, co-chairs of the ASCC noted that CE-ENGIN 778 is not yet ready.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. ASCC – No additional report to that discussed in **Item V-A** above.

B. ALANA - none

C. Fellowship – Previously discussed – See **Item IV-B** above.

D. Ethics – none

E. Mentoring

1. Chair Butterfield reported that Jane Baran wishes to resign her temporarily assigned chairmanship. A discussion followed in which it was decided that Jim Craig and Gary Bernhard would assume the chair responsibilities as co-chairs.

2. The Mentoring Conference on Friday, November 18 was briefly discussed.

The website is:

http://www.umass.edu/gradschool/files/symposium_flyer_1105.pdf.

The Conference is for faculty and graduate students at all stages. The Dean said he would be grateful if some members of the Graduate Council attend this. He expressed the seemingly mixed messages he is getting about the importance of and interest in mentoring and improving graduate student mentoring by faculty.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports – (continued)

F. Student Affairs - Julia Beyer provided the Report

1. The Graduate Lounge re-opening has been quite successful. She provided an example that one Friday night there were about 70 people there. She has also received excellent feedback. There is also an initiative to get performance music as entertainment on a trial basis at the Lounge.

She confirmed for the Council that the Graduate Lounge is located across from the Blue Wall in the Student Center.

Discussion followed concerning promoting the use of the public facility for meetings. It was suggested the Graduate Student Senate, GEO, or perhaps the Graduate Council could use these facilities. There is no charge for using the facility for meetings.

VIII. Comments

Director of Continuing Education, Bill McClure discussed three (3) items with the Council.

1. Many individuals do not know about the new off-campus location of the Continuing Education offices on 100 Venture Way in Hadley. An informal poll indicated that only three or four of 18 attendees at today's meeting knew of this location.
2. Following up on the Graduate Dean's Comments concerning the Chancellor's high priority on developing a better Summer Session (**Item III-e** above), the Provost has appointed a committee to study the issue. Bill indicated he is hiring a Summer Session Director to facilitate progress on this issue. He clarified that while Continuing Education administers the Summer Session, the courses are those that originate in the academic departments of UMASS.
3. There is a now an initiative to study the Fees and Fiscal Structure of Continuing Education.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Dudek