

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

Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, November 9, 2005
Goodell 508

Twenty (20) individuals attended the meeting. In attendance were Maurianne Adams, Jane Baran, Tobias Baskin, Thomas Heydt-Benjamin, Julia Beyer, Tony Butterfield, James L. Craig, David Dudek, Nigar Khan, Arthur Kinney, Anne Moore, John Mullin, Jose Ornelas, Carol Picard, Arslan Razmi, Linda Shea, Patricia Stowell, Uri Strauss, Nate Therien, 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 October 12, 2005 were briefly discussed. A change was suggested for the discussion concerning the chairperson of the Mentoring Sub-committee to clarify the discussion, Item VI (E). The change was agreed to and the minutes were then approved unanimously.

A suggestion was also made concerning altering the typeface of the minutes in order to reduce the number of pages required to print the minutes and save paper.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean Mullin reviewed seven (7) Graduate School priority topics he brought to the Council's attention at the last meeting, items "a-g" below, as well as bringing one (1) additional item to the attention of the Council, item "h" below.

- a. "Thesis-on-a-disk" - up and running. There have now been two (2) dissertations submitted with this new technology.
- b. Paperless Application Initiative – continues to move forward. Pink sheets have now been discontinued. Sometimes the best manner to implement a new process is to simply discontinue the old way of doing things.
- c. Graduate Student Monitoring/Tracking System – system has been put in place, is being tested in a sample of academic departments, and it seems to be working.
- d. Enrollment - There are 5699 graduate students of which 498 are On-line students. Over 12% (12.2%) of graduate students have minority status, including 201 (4.3%) Hispanic, 178 (3.8%) African American, 176 (3.8%) Asian, and 14 (0.3%) Native American. There are also 1280 International students. Over 50% (52.8%) of graduate students have RA/TA positions.

Uri Strauss asked if he could get access to this information from the graduate school. Dean Mullin and Pat Stowell indicated that he could.

e. Record Keeping - All historical academic transcript records back to 1880 have been scanned and are now on microfiche.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

f. Indo-U.S. Consortia of Higher Education - This is an exciting opportunity that is sponsored by Bill Gates. There is a consortia of universities in India who are interested in inviting U.S. scholars to teach and complete research in India. Currently six (6) schools are involved in this program, including University of California at Berkeley, State University of New York at Buffalo, Princeton, Cornell, Carnegie Mellon, and UMASS. UMASS has a presentation scheduled for December 7 to Bill Gates and the Prime Minister of India in New Delhi concerning this program.

g. Certificate Program Development - The Dean noted the manner in which Certificate Programs are a source of knowledge creation, growth, and development 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 five more in development and imminent: Medieval Studies (English), Islamic Studies, and Film Studies, Qualitative Research, and Historical Writing. 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.

Associate Dean Nigar Khan briefly discussed the upcoming meeting with Islamic faculty on campus. The purpose of this meeting is to assess the interest in and possibilities of starting an Islamic Studies Certificate Program.

h. TOEFL – Pat Stowell discussed this topic. She provided a two page (double-sided) document which documented the changes that TOEFL was making to their scoring method. She noted that, as a result of these changes by TOEFL, UMASS should also change their current TOEFL acceptance standards. A brief discussion followed in which the figures that Pat provided were reviewed.

The Dean asked Chair Butterfield if the Graduate Council should approve any changes to the Graduate School changing its TOEFL acceptance standards. Chair Butterfield noted that, to his knowledge, the Graduate Council has never been involved in establishing or approving Graduate School acceptance standards for TOEFL, or for other testing such as GRE's, GMAT, etc. It was then determined that the Graduate School is not in the process of changing its TOEFL acceptance standards, the School was simply adjusting its criteria to account for TOEFL's scoring changes.

It was determined that the Graduate School will continue with its work to change its TOEFL acceptance criteria without Graduate Council involvement.

IV. Old Business

A. Special Committee on Student Plagiarism

Chair Butterfield noted that the Faculty Senate has formed a Special Committee on Student Plagiarism and is looking for a representative from the Graduate Council. Chair Butterfield asked for a volunteer and Jane Baran volunteered.

IV. Old Business (continued)

B. “Statute of Limitations” Committee

Chair Butterfield discussed that this committee is still in the process of establishing its complete membership. He noted that Pat Stowell is the Chairperson of the committee. He suggested that the members of that committee decide on their charge or objective, rather than the entire Graduate Council providing them.

The Dean suggested that this be a “study” committee, meaning that they focus on documenting the current state of the matter. Chair Butterfield agreed that this was a major part of their focus, but he also noted that he expected the committee would probably make some recommendations based on their work.

Chair Butterfield asked for additional volunteers. Jose Ornelas and James L. Craig volunteered for the committee.

C. Off-campus Internship

The Dean has mentioned that he has pulled this policy proposal off the table because of

D. Fellowship Report

Tobias Baskin began the discussion noting his concern that the proposal made by the fellowship committee seems to make Departments compete against each other for fellowship money rather than focusing the funding on outstanding students. He suggested that students be the focus of fellowships and not academic departments.

A brief discussion of the pros and cons of the proposal followed. Chair Butterfield noted that the Fellowship Committee had given this proposal a great deal of thought and because no representatives from the Fellowship Committee were at today’s meeting, he postponed further discussion until the December Graduate Council meeting.

V. New Business

A. Course Approvals

Linda Shea, co-chair of the Academic Standards/Curriculum Sub-committee, noted that the sub-committee has approved and recommended for Council approval both CE-ENGIN 778 and POLSCI 750. Each course was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council.

B. Course Approval Guidelines – The first part of the discussion focused on the formal relationship or official status of the Graduate Council Course Approval Guidelines relative to the Faculty Senate. It was determined that because these are “guidelines” and not official rules or regulations, the Faculty Senate does not need to approve the Graduate Council Course Approval Guidelines.

There was a suggestion to supply a “model” course approval application for use by faculty wishing some

additional guidance. It was agreed that a model would be completed based on a composite of previously submitted applications.

The Course Approval Guidelines were approved unanimously with no changes. It was suggested that a copy of the guidelines be sent to every Academic Department Chairperson and that they be posted to both the Faculty Senate website and the Graduate School website.

V. New Business (continued)**C. Diversity Fellowship**

Dean Mullin informed the Council that there is a change to the funding of the Diversity Fellowship Program this year. He explained that this program was annually funded by \$300,000 originally designated for NEAGEP (Northeast Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate). In the past, NEAGEP has not needed this funding so it was available for Diversity Fellowships. However, currently NEAGEP does require \$250,000 of this funding. The \$50,000 remaining will be available to fund minority recruiting efforts by university faculty and staff.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

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

B. ALANA - none

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

D. Ethics – Jane Baran provided the report.

1. The committee is currently determining its focus for the year. They are currently expecting to have a competition.
2. Jane is working with the Research Ethics Sub-committee of the University Research Council. Chair Butterfield noted that he is the Graduate Council representative on the Research Council.

E. Mentoring

1. The Mentoring Conference on Friday, November 18 was briefly discussed. Currently there are 75 individuals registered for the conference. It was noted that efforts to videotape and record the keynote address are being made so that individuals who cannot attend the conference will be able to have access to some conference activities.

F. Travel – Anne Moore provided the report

1. Reminder that November 16 is the deadline for students to submit Travel Grants applications to Graduate Program Directors (GPD's).
2. Reminder that November 30 is the deadline for GPD's to submit their department's applications to the Dean's Office.

Dean Mullin asked that the Travel Sub-committee maintain sufficient records to document the quantity and quality of Travel Grant applications that are not able to be funded. The Dean asked for this effort so that he could potentially justify an increase in the budget funding for this Graduate Student Travel Grant Program.

G. Student Affairs - Julia Beyer provided the Report

The Graduate Lounge is experiencing steady business and the management is planning to keep it open. She noted that music groups will continue to be sought out in order to provide volunteer performances at the Graduate Lounge.

VII. Comments by Administrative Officers, et al.

None

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Dudek