

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

Minutes of General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, December 10, 2008
Goodell 528

Seventeen (17) individuals attended the meeting. Michael Alderman and Patrick Sullivan from the Graduate School attended. Also, in attendance were Graduate Council members Maurianne Adams, Jane Baran, James L. Craig, David Dudek, David Kotz, Bill McClure, Augusta Mfuko, John Mullin, Nahir I. Otano-Gracia, Stephen Rich, Linda Shea, Howard Stidham, Patricia Stowell, Judy Van de Geer, and Martin Wobst.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Linda Shea called the meeting to order at 12:05 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with no changes.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean John Mullin reviewed and discussed several items.

a. UMASS Budget Cuts

\$38 million in UMASS budget cuts are coming which represents about a 10% cut. It looks like there may be a reduction in the number of colleges. This may also require personnel cuts and will probably affect all of us in some way. The Dean said that all hiring searches have been stopped except for the Dean of the School of Management and for the Provost position. Chancellor does want faculty input. He is stressing the importance of the Land Grant mission of the University. The Dean emphasized that the Chancellor was welcoming input about solutions. Nana said there is a student effort to contact parents to help lobby the state for better funding for higher education.

Some ideas for savings were mentioned such as \$2 million savings if the new Recreation Center is not opened. It was mentioned there will be a huge impact on teaching. It was also mentioned that about 10% of institutes are not contributing to the university.

b. National Research Council (NRC) Survey

The results of the NRC survey have been pushed out again, and they will not be completed and communicated until February.

c. Graduate Faculty Status

Pat Stowell said that research gathering information from each academic department has been completed. Work will now proceed to analyzing and documenting.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

d. Statute of Limitations (SOL)

Pat Stowell discussed this topic. She said that our six year SOL is low relative to other institutions. We are currently considering a concept of “candidacy” and a statute of limitations of 5 years after candidacy. This will eliminate some of the bureaucracy.

e. Crisis Action Team

This is one of the best things that has been established and implemented over the past year. It has worked well recently.

f. Graduate Certificates

The Dean said he was quite pleased that the Faculty Senate had passed the two (2) certificates, Public History and Film Studies, the Graduate Council passed earlier in the fall.

g. Professional Masters in Science Degree

The Sloan Foundation has met with the UMASS President to discuss the possibility of creating a Professional Masters Degree in Science. The purpose would be to help shift the perception of scientists in society from theoretical to practical as well as helping to increase the power of scientists in decision making within society. The Dean said he is going to a meeting with individuals who manage the STEM program.

IV. Old Business

A. Faculty Senate Ad-hoc Committee on Certificates (ACERT) Report

Maurianne Adams began the discussion. She said it is important that we endorse the ACERT report. She mentioned that the old guidelines did not meet the needs of new and interesting certificates because the old concept required certificates to follow regular degree programs of study. She also said that the new guidelines allow certificates to follow the student not the program. New certificates can be designed for non-matriculated students. Other important aspects of the ACERT report discussed included the 5-year sunset provision and the supplemental guidelines allowed.

There was a motion to approve the ACERT Report. It was seconded and passed.

B. Review of Recommendations by Provost’s Office for changes to Nursing 725/Public Health 725 (approved by GC in November)

Chair Shea began a discussion about Nursing 725 and Public Health 725. The Graduate Council, which approved these courses last month, received notice from the Provost’s office which questioned the reason why these courses were cross-listed. It was then noted that the School of Public Health was planning to make a motion before the next meeting of the Faculty Senate to withdraw their course and make changes to create a new course. The Graduate Council voted to endorse a proposal that the course PH 725 be withdrawn and taken back by the School of Public Health.

V. New Business**A. Report of the ASCC**

Pat Stowell distributed a draft of Graduate Certificate Guidelines which would serve as a supplement to the guidelines enumerated in the ACERT report. After a brief discussion, there was a motion to approve these supplemental guidelines. This motion was seconded and approved.

There was also brief discussion of all the work completed by the ASCC this semester and the possible need to have a co-chair of the committee to assist with the workload.

B. Reactivation of Mentoring Committee

Dean Mullin discussed a meeting he had with Dick Farris, professor emeritus. Dick suggested that we consider the possibility of retired faculty serving the graduate school. He said that we have not treated retirees with the respect they deserve yet they still come to the school.

The Dean said he wanted to reconstitute the mentoring committee with Jim Craig, Jane Baran, and Gary Bernhard focused on how we get people to understand the career potential as a Ph.D. in order to improve Ph.D. student retention and completion rates. It was also mentioned that we should focus on mentoring new faculty members. It was suggested that we should include a peer counseling program. A short discussion followed which noted that NEAGEP has a very comprehensive mentoring program and very high retention rates.

There was a request that Jim Craig set up a Mentoring Committee meeting.

C. Review of Spring Graduate Council Meeting Dates

It was briefly discussed that the meeting dates for the Graduate Council during the spring semester would be February 18, March 11, April 8, and May 13.

D. Invitation to Chancellor Holub to a Graduate Council meeting

There was a discussion about inviting Chancellor Holub to attend a Graduate Council meeting. It was noted that we need to listen to him express his vision and we need to update him on what we are doing. Chair Shea said she would invite the Chancellor to a spring meeting and that we could begin preparation for the meeting at the February 18 Graduate Council meeting.

VI. Committee Reports

- A. ASCC – see New Business, Item A above.
- B. ALANA – No report was made.
- C. Fellowship – No report was made.
- D. Ethics – Dean Mullin said this committee was on hold because there is much activity elsewhere which is using an NSF grant.
- E. Special Admission – No report was made.
- F. Student Affairs – No report was made
- G. Mentoring – See New Business, Item B above

VI. Committee Reports (continued)

H. Travel – There was no report but it was noted that, according to Josh Kroner who makes the grant payment to pays to schools, the process was going pretty smoothly.

I. Statute of Limitations (ad-hoc) – See Dean’s Comments, Item d above .

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

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

VII. Comments from Administrative Officers and Others

1. Bill McClure mentioned that they are currently registering students 20% higher than last year. The Dean mentioned that 25% of Graduate students take courses online.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Dudek