

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

Minutes of General Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, December 13, 2006  
Goodell 508

Sixteen (16) individuals attended the meeting. In attendance were Tony Butterfield, James L. Craig, Benessa Defend, David Dudek, Ramakrishna Janaswamy, Nigar Khan, Sylvia Langford, Ernie May, Anne C. Moore, Jose Ornelas, Rushika Patel, Carol Picard, Arslan Razmi, Margara Russotto, Linda Shea, and Juan Zamora.

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Linda Shea called the meeting to order at 12:10 PM. New Graduate Council member Rushika Patel, a representative from the Graduate Student Senate, was especially welcomed.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the November 8 meeting were approved unanimously without comment or revision.

**III. Comments by the Graduate Dean**

In Dean Mullin's absence, Associate Dean Nigar Khan provided these comments.

a. National Research Council Academic Department Ranking Survey - This continues a major effort of this semester.

b. Celebrating Fulbright Scholars – This dinner event was held on Wednesday, November 29, and it was very successful. We hope it will become an annual event. There were 65 Faculty and 24 Graduate students representing scholars from all over the world, including the Middle East. A Fulbright representative from New York attended and explained all the different types of Fulbright programs. All faculty members are encouraged to apply.

c. Bologna Accord – The ad-hoc committee evaluating the impact of the Bologna Accord and the three-year European Union Bachelor Degree continues its work.

**IV. Old Business**

None

**V. New Business**

**A. Course and Program Approvals**

1. Four courses were ready to vote on and all four courses were approved unanimously by the Graduate Council.

SCH-MGMT 711 – Applied Mergers and Acquisitions

SCH-MGMT 713 – Services Marketing Management

SCH-MGMT 715 – Sport Marketing

SCH-MGMT 723 – A Coach Approach to Improve Leader Effectiveness

## **V. New Business (continued)**

### **A. Course and Program Approvals (continued)**

2. Many of the new 14 proposals received were part of the online Professional MBA program. Members of the ASCC raised questions about the Graduate Faculty for these courses. There was a concern about who would be teaching the courses. Associated with this concern is the issue, which was raised earlier this semester, about the process of authorizing Graduate School Faculty. Tony Butterfield also made the point that new Graduate Course Proposals should be proposed by a member of Graduate Faculty.

Ernie May noted that the Research Council could do some work on this topic by surveying the faculty on this topic of online programs and teaching resources. Nigar Khan noted that criteria for Graduate Faculty has been decentralized to the different academic departments.

## **VI. Committee Reports**

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

B. ALANA – No report

C. Fellowship - None

D. Ethics – None

E. Special Admission - None

F. Student Affairs - None

G. Mentoring – Associate Dean Khan noted that graduate student mentoring initiatives have been put on hold for now. Mentoring is now focused on faculty development through resources gained through a Mellon Foundation Grant with the Center for Teaching.

H. Travel – The report was provided by Anne C. Moore.

The Committee received 79 applications; probably 70 will be funded for a total of \$25,000. This result is right on budget and “on track.” Some additional guidelines for the dollar amount of the award have been established. First, international travel awards are for \$400 while domestic travel awards are \$300. There is a new \$200 regional travel award designation for conferences in New England. It was explained that the committee is trying to make the travel awards more fair relative to the travel cost incurred by the student. It was also noted that students do not get more reimbursement than whatever the student paid out-of-pocket, net of any reimbursement by the academic department. It was noted, though, that perhaps this policy might encourage academic departments to “game the system” in order to get more travel grant money from the GC program and pay less themselves.

Ernie May noted that networking is very important for our graduate students. This Travel Grant program is such a small amount of money and the returns we and our graduate students could gain by a better funded program could be tremendous. He recommended that we make a presentation to the Provost about this program to remind her of its value and to ask for an increase in funding. It was noted that we should attempt to reimburse the student for as much of the total cost as possible.

**VI. Committee Reports (continued)**

## I. Ad-hoc Statute of Limitations - None

## J. Ad-hoc Graduate School Course Development

Although there was no committee report, a related discussion of online education developed at this time. The point was asserted that the Provost needs to inform faculty of the differences between face-to-face and online education policies because currently there are no different policies for the online learning environment. It was again asserted that there are many questions that need to be addressed.

It was noted that there is an Ad-hoc Committee for Online Learning within the Faculty Senate. It seems, though, that this committee is focused mainly on undergraduates and does not necessarily include graduate study. It was said that the Provost and the Faculty Senate established three (3) principle areas of investigation and policy development for the committee. These are 1) residency definition and requirements, 2) online resources needed and used, and 3) appropriate tuition fee structure (not including other university fees, such as curriculum fee).

The University of Maryland online education policies, which were distributed at October's Graduate Council meeting, were referenced in this discussion. Potential policy considerations were offered, which included that no more than 1/3 of courses be taken online and that there should be a 6 credit transfer-in maximum. It was stated that online advocates want this transfer-in maximum limit eliminated. It was also stated that, currently, different undergraduate majors require differing numbers of face-to-face courses. There seemed to be agreement, though, that graduate faculty needs to think about what they want. Carol Picard noted that nurse practitioner degree candidates have expectations of portability of credits and courses. Because of all these different interests, it was stated that the Graduate Council should take up this issue.

The discussion then moved to the topic of Graduate Certificates, which seem to overlap with this topic of online education because so many graduate certificate courses are online. It was stated that the Faculty Senate currently has an Online Certification Program task force. It was stated that certificate program students should not be automatically accepted into regular graduate programs. There was a concern that there is a lower acceptance criteria to graduate certificate programs than to regular graduate degree programs and that student would use certificate programs as a "back door" method of being accepted into graduate programs. It was stated that this is not a problem now.

This discussion continued and it was noted that there is a significant resource allocation issue concerning on-line education because on-line education is probably more expensive than face-to-face education. Questions were asked if online education will be expanded through program specific efforts or through institutional wide efforts.

It was also noted that there is a task force examining on-line education issues because how the University and faculty respond to the need for graduate online education is a complicated issue. Sharon Fross is on this task force.

**VI. Committee Reports (continued)**

J. Ad-hoc Graduate School Course Development (continued)

Nigar Khan stressed that we need to move now on these issues because we are trying to do fundraising around on-line graduate certificate programs.

Tony Butterfield said that there are several committees working on this on-line education topic. He questioned how many groups do we need to work on this topic? Ernie May volunteered to help coordinate all the different committee and task forces working on this on-line education topic. Lastly, the issue about the nature of the Graduate Council jurisdiction over the academic regulations and policies governing on-line education was raised.

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

None

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
David E. Dudek