

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

Minutes of General Membership Meeting (Revised)
Wednesday, December 14, 2005
Goodell 508

Twelve (12) individuals attended the meeting. In attendance were Tobias Baskin, Julia Beyer, Tony Butterfield, James L. Craig, David Dudek, Nigar Khan, Anne Moore, John Mullin, Peter Tamas, Nate Therien, H. Martin Wobst, and Juan C. Zamora

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Butterfield called the meeting to order at 12:10.

II. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the last meeting on November 9, 2005 were approved unanimously without discussion.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean

Dean Mullin updated the council concerning six (6) Graduate School priority topics he has previously brought to the Council's attention.

- a. 'Thesis-on-a-disk' - up and running. There have now been twelve (12) dissertations submitted with this new technology. Students have experienced no problems.
- b. Paperless Application Initiative – continues to move forward. There have been no complaints. It seems to be working even though pink sheets have been discontinued.
- c. Graduate Student Monitoring/Tracking System – Person has been hired to work with IT to finish developing and putting the monitoring system completely in place.
- d. Diversity Fellowship
Dean Mullin restated the situation concerning Diversity Fellowships. He explained that the Diversity Fellowships were annually funded by \$300,000 originally designated for NEAGEP (Northeast Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate), which is a National Science Foundation (NSF) program.

In the past, NEAGEP has not needed this funding because the funding from the NSF was sufficient. Therefore the \$300,000 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.

Deans must now fund the Diversity Fellowships and this has been discussed with them. The Graduate School will help fund the second year of the fellowships if needed.

III. Comments by the Graduate Dean (continued)

e. Indo-U.S. Consortia of Higher Education - Dean Mullin reiterated that six months ago UMASS was approached by consortia of universities in India. This is an exciting opportunity that is primarily funded by Microsoft. Representatives from India have been on campus to discuss this program. Currently, any faculty member, including librarians, who want to go and teach and do research at one of these India universities can go. The program will fund all expenses, including travel and accommodations. The stipend is \$15,000 for teaching one course. One faculty member from Electrical Engineering, who is on sabbatical, is currently teaching in India as part of this program.

At the beginning of December, Dean Mullin, Associate Dean Nigar Khan, and Vice Provost for Research Paul KostECKI went to India and met with the Prime Minister of India. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed concerning this program. The Dean also mentioned that there are trips currently scheduled to China in January and to Pakistan in February to work on developing similar types of programs.

f. Certificate Program Development - The Dean noted that UMASS Graduate School is behind other quality schools in developing certificate programs. 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, Film Studies, Qualitative Research, and Historical Writing. The first meeting to assess interest in the Islamic Studies Certificate Program was held. There is significant interest in putting together a program to start in the Fall 2006. It was discussed that Certificate Programs should not be considered the final stage in program development; rather these Certificate Programs should be developed into Centers.

IV. Old Business

A. Kinesiology Program and Degree Name Change

Chair Butterfield confirmed that the vote conducted through e-mail unanimously approved the program and degree name changes for Exercise Science to Kinesiology.

B. "Statute of Limitations" Committee

The committee is complete with 10 members, Patricia Stowell is the Chairperson. Julia Beyer distributed notes recorded from the committee's first meeting on December 2.

Currently the committee is gathering data on student progress. It was discussed that the committee needs to get at the reasons (the why) for specific degree progress trends. In order to get this information a survey will be sent to graduate students. Julia Beyer and Peter Tamas of the committee will document a job description for a T/A so the committee can get funding to get the survey work done quickly.

There was a question about getting information from the Graduate Program Directors (GPD's). Julia noted that she had already surveyed the GPD's and would later bring the data to the Graduate Council for review.

Lastly, there was a discussion about the proper focus of the committee and how the Graduate Council could help. Chair Butterfield indicated that the committee could rename itself should it determine that action would

help better define its focus.

IV. Old Business (continued)

C. Graduate Fellowships

Tobias Baskin began the discussion by noting the Fellowship Committee's proposal was good for the most part. The exception was Part D. From his perspective, the fellowships should be focused on the student and not on the department. He noted the concern about fellowship funding going unused because fellowship students decide to go elsewhere after they are accepted at UMASS, but he felt these rejections occurred because the individual fellowship amounts were too small.

There was a brief discussion of this point. Others asserted that 70% of fellowship nominees would not come to UMASS no matter what the amount of the fellowship.

An idea was proposed that instead of allocating fellowship funds between new and current students, all fellowship funds would be allocated to new students in order to grant two-year fellowships, and not the current one year fellowships. Any funds not used would be allocated to current students. It was mentioned that there would be some transition problems implementing this ideas because additional funds would be needed to help some current students finish-up.

The Dean acknowledged that there are rich parts of campus and poor parts of campus relative to getting funding for graduate students. He indicated this was an issue that is part of this topic which needs to be addressed.

The Dean also mentioned he has discussed the possibility of hiring a development assistant focused on funding the Graduate School and these fellowships. He has been turned down at this time, but he indicated he will keep trying.

The Dean mentioned he wanted to continue this discussion at the next Graduate Council meeting. He also wanted to send the Fellowship Committee's proposal to all the GPD's in order to get their response.

V. New Business

A. Course Approvals

No course approvals to consider. However, Chair Butterfield did note that he had recently received a new program application that he was going to distribute to the ASCC committee today. The program proposal was for a Dual Degree – Masters in Business Administration/Public Policy Administration.

B. Differential Weighting of Graduate Courses for Faculty

The office of Associate Provost Bryan Harvey is looking into this issue. A suggestion was made to ask Bryan to attend the next GC meeting. It was noted that the Graduate Council has the opportunity to frame the debate on this topic. Discussing the topic with Bryan at the next meeting would help us do this. Chair Butterfield agreed.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. ASCC – None

B. ALANA - None

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

D. Ethics – Tobias Baskin provided the report

1. Currently April 14 is the date the Anthropology Department has chosen for an ethics conference. This conference is being initiated and coordinated by the Anthropology Department and funded by the Graduate School.
2. Committee is reviewing changes in human experimental research rules.

E. Mentoring - James Craig provided the report

1. About 100 people attended the Mentoring Conference on Friday, November 18. The need for mentoring training for new faculty orientation was discussed. The Dean had created a survey for the GPD's to complete concerning the topic of mentoring. However, he noted that he has not yet seen the results from this survey, so he really cannot firmly establish or justify appropriate priorities in this area at this time.

F. Travel – Anne Moore provided the report

1. Committee received 82 Travel Grant applications for a total of \$19,783. Eight (8) were denied for being out of scope
2. The process seems to be working well. The committee will send out a report to Graduate Program Directors (GPD's) concerning the status of grants approved and grants available for the next round. It was mentioned the grants followed typical patterns by department.

G. Student Affairs - Julia Beyer provided the Report

1. The Graduate Lounge is continuing to experience steady business, estimated at about \$600 per day. This is enough to generate a profit.
2. There was a discussion that the Graduate Lounge space probably needs some better decorating to make it more enjoyable. There was a suggestion to contact the Fine Arts and Interior Design Departments to establish a project to re-design the Graduate Lounge space. The Dean mentioned that the Graduate School will fund a \$500 prize to the winning design team.

H. Special Admission – report provide by Chair Butterfield

1. Committee is currently discussing one case from the music department.

VII. Comments by Administrative Officers, et al.

None

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Dudek