

# 2013-2014 GRADUATE COUNCIL

## Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

### Roll Call

Members Present: Craig Anz, Amanda Barnard (GPSC), Randolph Burnside, Norman Carver, Ryan Ceresolo (GPSC), Scott Collins, Bryan Crow, Judith Davie, Carl Flowers, Chair Graduate Council; Susan Ford; Boyd Goodson, Reza Habib, Constantine Hatziaioniu, Kimberly Kempf-Leonard, Christopher Lant, Derek Lehman (GPSC), Grant Miller, Wanki Moon, Marc Morris, Prema Narayan, Andrew Pardieck, Ratna Sinha, John Stewart (GPSC), Tomas Velasco, and Alison Watts.

Members Absent: Wayne Glass, James MacLean, and Margaret Sullivan (GPSC).

Ex-Officio members in attendance: Chancellor Rita Cheng, John Nicklow, Provost; James Allen, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs; James Garvey, Vice Chancellor for Research

Proxies: Eric Lenz for Andrew Youpa, Michael Eichholz for Jim Garvey, Saran Donahoo for Kathy Hytten; Karita Karan for Katherine Frith

### 1. Minutes

Correction were made to the minutes. John Stewart made a motion to accept the minutes from February 6th meeting with corrections. Mike Eichholz seconded the motion, with no discussion, minutes were approved as corrected.

### 2. Remarks – Chancellor Rita Cheng

**Chancellor Cheng** reported that admission and enrollment efforts are continuing. Teresa Farnum was here and will be back in April. Fall to spring retention rate increased by 3.6%. A lot of work yet to be done – but focus on student success at the freshman level continues. First meeting of the Chancellors Research Advisory Council was held, under J. Garvey's leadership. It was a great meeting, a lot of great topics that could be on the agenda, welcomes any ideas for topics of research support. On March 24th, regional community colleges will be on campus for help in aligning their programs for better outcomes for transfer students. Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m., in Shyrock Auditorium, Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin will be the first presenter of the Distinguished Speaker Series. Several groups have come together to help launch this series. The baseball field project has been hampered by the polar vortex but the ribbon cutting will be on March 13<sup>th</sup> as planned. There is a new Director of Career Services, he was busy with one of the largest Career Days on campus for our students. Matt Whiles has been named interim director of the Cooperative Wildlife Research Lab. March is Women's History Month, there is a full slate of activities to celebrate the month. There have been two awards – Medical School received a \$1.5 million grant from National Cancer Institute and the New Investigator Award by the Society of Reproduction has been awarded to Agashi(?).

### Question for the Chancellor:

**M. Eichholz** asked about the object of the Research Advisory Council. Cheng answered that the group was a reconstituted group from the previous VCR, he felt it was necessary to broaden the scope of the group. It is an advisory group and can bring issues forward but not a policies group.

### 3. Remarks - Provost Nicklow

**Provost Nicklow** followed up on some enrollment items: undergraduate side continues to fluctuate, drives have been extended, applications are down a bit, housing contracts are up about 6%. Chancellor scholarship award letters go out and financial aid packaging begins next week. Teresa Farnum was here, but because of the closure they were pushed back a little, and the 2 year rolling retention plan was pushed back. By the end of the month they are hoping to have the drafts from committees. Deans have been asked for mentoring plans for their colleges and/or departments. We will be bringing in 41 new faculty next fall. Faculty are the most valuable resource and a significant investment for the institution, we want to make sure they have the resources to succeed, therefore mentoring is important. Some colleges have mentoring programs and some do not – so the colleges have been asked to put that together. Hiring plans are due from Deans April 1<sup>st</sup>. There are 2 dean searches continuing; Dean of Science, and Dean of Mass Communications and Media Arts. Last meeting, a junk email issue was brought

forward, Provost has talked with IT, that filter has been dialed back and some key words have been whitelisted. That should solve the problem, but if it continues – let Provost Nicklow know. Lastly, Jim Allen and Provost are looking at performance metrics that would be included in the next round of performance reviews working with the Deans to identify what the criteria are, to make sure they are aligned with performance based funding and other items. List will be completed and Provost will distribute. During the next round of program reviews, there will be different criteria used.

**B. Goodson** asked Provost about the cluster hires and how that would work. J. Nicklow responded – it would be cross-college and the deans would propose it together, if there is a significant research component to it, J. Garvey would like to know about it as well. Garvey could possibly find resources outside the university. Nicklow added the timing is good now to add those to the hiring plans.

#### **4. Remarks – Jim Garvey, Vice Chancellor for Research**

**J. Garvey** congratulated all the folks that have gotten awards, from peer groups or from major conferences, etc. Fisheries group just got the best sub-unit award on a national level. McLafferty Annex is moving forward, Open House will be March 31<sup>st</sup>. On April 7<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon, Undergraduate Research Forum will be having a poster session in the Student Center, go and give these students a pat on the back. The next morning on April 8<sup>th</sup>, there will be a small version of a Research Town Meeting. There will be 5 or 6 talks on what interdisciplinary research should be here on campus. March 28<sup>th</sup> will be a Speed Dating event at Dunn-Richmond. This will be an opportunity to get junior and senior faculty interacting with each other. OSPA will be undergoing some retirements and will be reorganizing. Would like constructive comments on how they can improve performance of the group. Garvey visited Argon National Lab in Chicago and is now an affiliate. He represents SIU as an affiliate and would welcome opportunities from here to work up there. Talk to Garvey about the opportunities. Cheng added that SIU is part of the \$320 million consortium for industry and universities that will be located in Chicago. There are 2 areas included in the proposal – one is materials technology center and the other is embedded systems. SIU worked with U of I on the proposal with some aspects still to be determined.

**A. Barnard** asked Garvey why the format was changed on the Research Town Meetings and what opportunities are there going to be for grad students to present their research? Garvey answered they are trying to come up with a new format for the meetings. The new format will be a day or two, but right now this is happening at different places and times all over campus. Garvey is hopeful that the new format will be ready in the fall.

#### **5. Remarks – Susan Ford, Graduate School Dean**

**S. Ford** reported that the Fellowships are moving forward. The Masters, Doctoral and Morris awards have all gone out and there has been a lot of acceptance. There is a Native American Scholarship that is both undergraduate and graduate that hasn't been given in several years. That competition will be run again this year. It is a foundation fund which is not an endowment fund, so when the money is gone, it will no longer be available. Great news on applications on graduate level, Masters are up 15%, Doctoral applications are up by 40%. Next part is sorting through, making funding offers, departments are moving forward with this. Almost all the growth is in international applications. Recruiting efforts are paying off. A number of trips are planned in the next couple months. Chancellor Cheng will be go to Malaysia, S. Ford to Europe, and other trips to Brazil, Dubai, western China and the United Arab Emirates are also planned. S. Ford announced that Grad Council Elections are coming up and will be electronic through D2L. There has been staff changes in the Graduate School and Jesse Wilhelm in the VCR's office has been helping with some of the issues. Nominations will be made this month, with the election in April, with new members ready to be seated at the May meeting. S. Ford gave a shout out to Ratna Sinha, the admission supervisor and one of her students, for their unusual professional steps made at national levels, which reflect the excellence of the staff in the graduate school.

**E. Lenz** asked how the number of Graduate Assistantships compare to last year. Ford replied they are the same. College deans can choose how to allocate the use of those funds. Teaching Assistantships are lower this year by a small amount, depending on the college.

**J. Stewart** asked Ford about the 75% GAs and where that money goes, is it being saved, or are there new positions being established? Ford answered, that money is just reallocated, given to the units. The units decide how to distribute the money and 99% of GAs are 25 or 50%. Only about 1% are over 50%. GA contract limits the allocations to 25% increments and it's up to the units.

**N. Carver** mentioned that there are 33% assistantships being given in Electrical Engineering as an advantage to bring in international students. Ford replied that it would not be endorsed by her office. Those contracts would come under scrutiny and would not be approved. That was part of the union negotiations. It is more confusing now that two offices are separate. The graduate school administers everything in graduate student's lives, and the Vice Chancellor's office has the money. Funds come from different places. Garvey added that the TAA process was set up by a previous Chancellor to distribute money in a flexible way across colleges for graduate support. It was meant to stimulate graduate productivity within a college. The VCR and Chancellor are working on a new format for the TAAs. Hopefully in the future, there will be a more transparent and clearer process for distribution.

## **6. Remarks - Jim Allen, Associate Provost for Academic Programs**

**Dr. Allen** briefly remarked about program changes and the process that they go through before they go to the IBHE. Out of conversations and meetings came the idea to create a more detailed and accurate flow chart of the process that is more readable. This could be posted for everyone to see. This will show where the program changes are in the process, and where the hold-up is. The flow chart will be brought to the council for input when finished. Comments and input would be much appreciated. New season of program reviews, graduate programs in the coming year are Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, History, Geography and Environmental Resources, Art History, Criminology and Criminal Justice, and others. It will be a busy year for program review and will need help to get this done. Dr. Allen is taking a more proactive role in accreditations for the coming year.

## **7. Remarks – Chair Flowers**

**Dr. Flowers** reported on last month's Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Senate after indefinitely suspending their discussion of the COEHS RME, chose to untable it and vote on it. The resolution was voted down 3-4-15 against. Board of Trustees has named Randy Dunn as President of the University, he should be onboard before August 1. The next Board of Trustees meeting will be here in April. Flowers attended the Chancellor's Leadership Conference. The Chancellor's Budget and Planning meeting discussed the tuition rate increases, due to the governor's lack of budget, no tuition rates have been set. Dr. Flowers reported that he will be going to Taiwan in April to do presentations on how services are provided for persons with disabilities and to establish a relationship with the University of Education in Shanghai.

## **8. Dean's Council**

**Dean Leonard** wanted to add that the deans have been contemplating priorities for fundraising, check with your Deans.

## **9. Faculty Senate**

No report.

## **10. Nominations to Committees/Announcements – Professor Craig Anz**

**Dr. Anz** reported the Scholar Excellence Committee still needs a volunteer to serve. Anz remarked that the team is still working on *Innovation and Economic Prosperity University Designation and Awards Program*. The surveys are going out. The information from the surveys will be vital and a real important tool to understanding the programs. A lot of things done through community service and economic generation are not recorded. Tying these things together, recording it and then communicate to the various parts. Encourage your deans to fill out the surveys thoroughly when they get them. Cheng added this is connected to getting the word out about the great research that is being done here. Sister institutions have done this really well. It is hard to push through and get recognition and this is a way to use the information in different areas, show what we do and why it's important and the impact.

## **11. Report of New Programs Committee**

**Dr. Habib** read the resolution for Non-Thesis MS Degree option in Physics. This was the second reading. After discussion on transcript questions, the resolution was unanimously approved. The resolution on the Concentration in Ecological Urban Landscape was read. This was the second reading, without any questions the resolution was unanimously approved. Resolution on STEM Education and Research Center was read for the first time. This will be brought back in April for second reading. The final Resolution for a MS in Agribusiness Economics was read for the first time. Questions concerning double counting the courses were discussed. Ford replied that this has been approved for the graduate level. Transcripts will be labeled accordingly so that it is clear. N. Carver said this practice would really help in the computer science area. Ford added that the

national movement is to shorter and very defined masters programs because we are competing with the European market that now have a standard one year masters. The 9 credit hours can be whatever is in your graduate program already. Ford added that graduate students cannot take 500 level courses until their last semester per the university rules. There will be more discussion and considerations on this and administration approves of moving forward with programs like these. The resolution will come back for second reading in April.

## **12. Report of Research Committee**

**Dr. Davie** reported that the Research committee continues to work on revising Post Doc Policy.

## **13. Report of Ed. Policies Committee**

**S. Collins** introduced a resolution for Plus/Minus Grading as an option for the graduate students. The Ed Policy Committee received a study by the Advisory Board Company, Washington DC on Implementation and Evaluation of Grade Modifier Systems. That study looked at six different universities. All of them used the plus/minus grading system. Highlights of the study were: on the average, those that used the grading system saw higher performing students see a little decrease in their overall GPA and lower performing students saw an increase in overall GPA. The committee looked at 11 peer institutions from a URL list. Nine of the institutions used the system, 1 did not use it and one used a partial system. S. Collins read the resolution. Discussion included: Why is there an A+ and an A that are both 4.0? One peer institution had an A+ as 4.33, all others were both 4.0. Some students that had been in programs like this, complain that if they got an A- instead of an A their GPA would be lower and there is no way to get an A+ to counteract that, can we have an A+? Not sure if our system could handle a 4.33. There is concern that some students who do well will be hurt and those that aren't doing well will be rewarded. Chancellor Cheng added from an employer's standpoint, an A versus an A- doesn't mean much but a B- versus a C at graduate level does. Employers won't care about 3.97 versus a 4.0, but someone who has a B- versus a C, could get kicked out of school. These are issues that should be looked at when considering this. Other concerns include when the use of the grading system is voluntary, that would create inconsistencies across the campus. Why complicate a simple system? Why we would lower our standards? Positive points would be students would have a chance to raise their GPAs with the plus/minus system easier. S. Collins added that Faculty Senate is discussing this for undergraduate students. Chancellor Cheng added that retention specialist Teresa Farnum pointed out that our institution has a very high number of students on academic probation compared to our peers. Collins wanted to know the consensus of the group for the instructor to be able to use it or not use it. C. Flowers asked that any comments go to S. Collins before the next meeting.

## **14. Report of Program Review Committee**

**W. Moon** reported that the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies review was completed last month. Some program reviews were postponed. Nine programs are to be reviewed next year.

## **15. GPSC Report – John Stewart**

**J. Stewart** read a resolution expressing the rationale of the FY15 Student Fee Increases. The GPSC voted against some of the fee increases that included: Athletics, Mass Transit, Student Center, Student Insurance, Student Housing Fee, Student Media Fee. The ones they voted in favor of are: Information Technology Fee, Facility Maintenance Fee, Student Health Center Fee and Student Activity Fee. This resolution was read for the Graduate Council information and cannot be acted on.

## **16. Old Business**

No old business.

## **17. New Business**

No new business.

The motion was made by R. Habib to adjourn and seconded by N. Carver. The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 a.m.