

MINUTES
The Graduate Council
November 28, 2007
Johnson Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Li-Shan Chou, Marian Friestad (ex officio), Michael Hames-Garcia, Mark Johnson, Ron Mitchell, Brook Muller, Harry Price, John Russial, Mark Watson (ex officio), Yuan Xu

Members Absent: Val Burris, Christian Cherry, Rich Linton (ex officio), Benedict McWhirter, Wayne Mikkelson, Corbett Upton

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Kassy Fisher, Debra Otley, Marcia Walker

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 p.m. The minutes from October 17, 2007 were approved as distributed.

Announcements

Dean Friestad distributed assignments to the Graduate Council Committees for 2007-08. Dean Friestad announced that the Program Review process is being changed, and that rather than separate committees for each program, the Graduate Council members will review only the graduate program portion of each program's self-study. This change is part of the transition of the administrative responsibility for Program Review from the Graduate School to the Office of Academic Affairs. Dean Friestad will send dates and timelines for Program Review to the Graduate Council Committee members who have been assigned that responsibility.

Old Business

Master's Degree Proposals: Curriculum and Teaching; Curriculum and Teaching Education

Professor Xu expressed concern with the amount of time allocated to the math and science portions of the curriculum, stating that a student within this program could graduate with a Master's degree in Teacher Education having no math or science classes for a span of 1½ years prior to graduation. Professor Xu further stated that skills are lost during this period, and he had heard that this has a negative effect when students go out in the world to teach.

Professor Price noted that the training students receive when obtaining their undergraduate degrees should be sufficient to prepare them to teach these subjects.

Professor Mitchell stated that the Graduate Council's role is to review these proposals and that given such reservations, we have the options of either requesting more information from the College of Education regarding this issue or moving forward with a vote to approve or disapprove the proposal as it currently stands.

Dean Friestad noted there is a nationwide debate as to whether there should be more direct training in undergraduate programs or whether that training should come in an advanced degree.

Professor Xu asked if it would be appropriate to request that the College of Education consider adding a continuing education component to the middle-school/secondary-school track of the Teacher Education Master's Degree. Professor Xu moved that the Graduate Council ask the Department of Educational Studies to reconsider the proposed math and science curriculum portion of the Master's Degree in Curriculum and Teaching.

The motion died for lack of a second.

Professor Russial asked if the Graduate Council should ask for a written response from the College of Education regarding the math and science concerns of the Council. Professor Price responded that the Graduate Council should be clear on what it is asking without getting into specific courses required in light of the longstanding national debate. Professor Mitchell agreed that it was appropriate to ask the question, allowing for a general response.

Professor Price suggested that the Council move forward and allow the College of Education to respond to the math and science questions, tabling the issue until the Council receives that response.

Ron Mitchell moved to table the issue of the Proposal of New Instructional Programs Leading to the Master's Degrees until the next meeting and Harry Price seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Proposal for a waiver of the on-campus residency requirement for the Educational Leadership Metro Doctoral (D.Ed.) Program

Professor Russial asked how dissertation students will be able to connect with other faculty members outside their department. Dean Friestad noted that due to various constraints, many current dissertation students who are located on the Eugene campus are unable to take classes—or infrequently take classes—with faculty members outside their department.

Professor Mitchell asked, “If we approve this proposal, does it mean that under these circumstances, a student could get their degree without ever setting foot on the Eugene campus?” Professor Xu noted that the proposal describes possible times for students to visit Eugene. Professor Mitchell then noted that the distinguishing factor may be that in the D.Ed. degree, students will bring outside experience into the mix and noted that a D.Ed. is different than a Ph.D. A Ph.D. is research-based, with the D.Ed. being clinical/practitioner based and more for curriculum specialists and administrators.

Professor Johnson stated that he would be inclined to support this residency waiver as it has a reasonable purpose in that it allows students who may find it difficult to come to Eugene to obtain their degree. It serves the people of the State of Oregon by training practitioners who would otherwise be unable to obtain an advanced degree.

Professor Russial noted that socialization to the University of Oregon might not be as important to these students as it would be for Ph.D. students.

Professor Xu expressed concern that this program must maintain the same standards and Dean Friestad explained that faculty members move back and forth between Eugene and Portland, so on and off-campus students have the same experience; i.e. each will have classes with the professor in person and with the professor off-site via video conferencing.

Professor Chou noted that if the Graduate Council approves the proposal, there may be requests from other departments to do the same thing. Professor Johnson noted that approval will always have to be on a case-by-case basis.

Professor Xu moved that the Graduate Council approve a waiver of the year of residency on the “Eugene campus” requirement for the D.Ed. Portland Metro program with the condition that this waiver will be reviewed for continuation in three years.

Professor Li-Shan seconded the motion which was approved by a unanimous vote.

New Business

Professional Development Services for Graduate Students

Professor Mitchell noted that it was important to let graduate students know there is funding for them, and asked what is being done to let graduate students know about these resources.

Dean Friestad stated that Mary Fechner will be attending the January meeting of the Graduate Council to explain the grant writing process for graduate students, and introduced Kassy Fisher to describe what has been happening within the Graduate School.

Kassy Fisher updated the Graduate Council on the graduate student workshop series. This fall 209 participants attended nine workshops, topics included Campus Services Showcase, Speed Reading Tips, Using the Library Effectively, Thesis and Dissertation Writing, Diversity-Centered Professional Development and Research, EndNote Bibliography and References, Responsible Graduate Research Policies and Policies, and Setting Expectations and Resolving Conflict.

Ms. Fisher distributed a handout of the schedule for winter term workshops and noted that one of these workshops deals with graduate student grant proposal writing with Mary Fechner.

Professor Mitchell asked if a graduate student needs a grant, where should that student be directed? Ms. Fisher responded that she generally refers graduate students to Mary Fechner. Ms. Fechner expects the graduate student to do the preliminary work of finding the grant, and Ms. Fechner will help that student with writing the proposal.

Ms. Fisher noted that the grant selection database is on the Graduate School web site, along with the workshop schedules.

Ms. Fisher stated the desire that future workshops would be hosted by in-house faculty, especially those workshops dedicated to writing thesis and dissertations. She would like to know of any faculty who may be interested in teaching a workshop.

Accepting three-year undergraduate degrees for admission to graduate programs

Dean Friestad began the discussion noting that the only requirement for admission to the Graduate School is that “a student must be a graduate of an accredited four-year college or university...” Dean Friestad noted that some international students come from a three-year programs and we have allowed them admission, based on a case by case basis.

Dean Friestad seeks the council’s advice on whether to modify the language to read, “must be a graduate of an accredited three- or four-year college or university...”

Professor Xu asked how many requests we receive each year, and Dean Friestad said “a few,” but that this may be the case because of the stated policy. She also noted that this issue is becoming more pressing as the competition for graduate students has become more intense with programs in Europe, Singapore, Australia, and China.

There was no motion presented and this topic will be revisited at a future meeting.’

There were no Deans’ Updates.

The Council adjourned at 4:53.

Respectfully submitted,

Marian Friestad for Li-Shan Chou, Secretary