Graduate Council
Meeting Minutes
March 31, 2015
QLCSS 412


Excused: D. Halbert, K. Mossakowski, R. Carroll, B. Kim, H. Pourjalali, A. Wertheimer

Welcome

Approval of Minutes – February meeting
- Minutes were sent ahead of the meeting for review. No discussion or questions.
- Vote: Unanimous approval of Minutes

Announcements
- Research Fellowships in Japan brochure and poster. Dean Aune shared this info for members to take and share with graduate students.
- New OGE web site forthcoming – Dean Aune invited the Graduate Council to share news, accolades, and successes from programs with her as well as for posting to the OGE web site. OGE can help to promote and share all of the great accomplishments in our graduate programs. There was a question about length of time items would be posted. That is yet to be determined, but items can be archived as new articles and information is posted. Contact information in OGE for the submission of items will be shared once it is confirmed.

Old Business
- Procedures for programs to opt to allow remote participation by committee members (partial or whole committee).
  - Current practice allows remote participation (via form) by a committee member, not student, committee chair, or University Representative. If graduate programs would prefer to have more flexibility with regard to the physical or virtual presence of the student and committee, a memo is required outlining what procedures will be followed by the graduate program.
  - It is critical that all committee members and the student, especially the University Representative, be able to clearly see and hear the defense and each other.
  - Graduate programs will decide how they would like to proceed relative to increasing flexibility of how participation by the committee and student will occur in the defense; it is not up to the student. A student cannot also initiate this process independently.
  - Graduate chairs, with support from their graduate faculty, will submit a memo to Dean Aune the procedures they will follow for a doctoral defense. This memo, once approved, would stand until another is submitted to revise it. In other words, all graduate faculty for a program should follow procedures agreed upon in the memo.
If a defense will be held where no members will be physically present at UHM, a physical location on campus at UHM shall also be scheduled and included in the defense announcement. This information should be included in the memo.

- If graduate programs want to continue following current practice, no memo is necessary.
- For extenuating circumstances, memos requesting an exception will still be considered.

New Business

- Awards – process to determine groups were based on workloads of each committee.
  - Dean Aune expressed her appreciation and thanks to each of the groups for their work to evaluate and determine awardees for this year.
  - Program committee members assigned to Frances Davis Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching – Graduate Teaching Assistant: Gurdal Arslan, Kathryn Braun, Henrjeta Dulaiova, Bum Jung Kim, Christine Sorensen, Andrew Wertheimer
    - A committee chair wasn’t designated for this committee. Members were asked if they independently reviewed all of the applications and a volunteer was requested to be the chair. C. Sorensen Irvine created a matrix and provided an overview of the process she used to review and evaluate the 29 applications. Other members agreed with C. Sorensen Irvine with regard to the number of items to review for each applicant made the process challenging, especially since it was not clear whether or not applicants were a current TA in Fall 2014. Additionally, it was unclear to members how they could or not, eliminate applicants due to questionable items (e.g., raw data for evaluations rather than a summary, supervisor evaluation by a retired faculty member). Dean Aune recognized C. Sorensen Irvine as an emergent leader for the group with the work she had put into her evaluation of the applicants, questions she raised about the materials submitted, and creating a matrix to help in evaluating all of the applicants. She asked C. Sorensen Irvine if she’d consider becoming the chair of this group for this process.
    - No screening process to determine eligibility or completeness of application packets occurred this year prior to the committee receiving them. This was determined to be a necessary step and will need to be implemented in the future.
    - C. Sorensen Irvine was asked if she would share the matrix she created with the committee as well as the process she used. She said she’d send everyone a copy of the matrix.
    - M. Babcock shared that she was provided with a rubric when reviewing the undergraduate research projects. She said she would share that with Dean Aune for consideration and future use when reviewing these awards next year.
    - Dean Aune and J. Maeda would check all applicants’ TA status in Fall 2014 to help with the process.
  - J. Reider briefly shared that information for the UH Foundation Scholarships that are awarded by OGE need some revision. Information that should be included, for
example, is that applicants need to include how they will be using the funding. While that type of info may be seemingly implicit when applying for funding, applicants did not clearly enough or specifically include that information in their application. He said he would share other feedback later.

- On-line application and materials submission for admissions process – Discussion RE: this topic has emerged from graduate programs who have inquired with OGE to see if this process could have just one place to which students send materials, rather than two separate processes to submit their materials. Currently, only the application and transcripts are required by and sent to OGE Student Services and graduate program required materials are sent to the program. Files are based on hard copies and the transfer of files between OGE and programs for evaluation is not electronic. It is an antiquated system and may potentially have a greater effect on applicants to UHM. There was a robust discussion on the need to have a more efficient and streamlined system in place. Questions and discussion also included how other institutions have systems in place alongside their use of Banner. Current use of Banner at UHM is controlled by the UH System. Campus control may help to allow more flexibility in with the way Banner is currently used, but campus control has yet to be pursued and approved.
  - A motion was discussed and voted upon to demonstrate strong support by the Graduate Council that a change to the current system needs to occur soon. It was to also provide Dean Aune support from the faculty representatives on the Council.
  - The motion: Pursue a comprehensive admissions system that would allow applications and required materials (e.g., letters of recommendation, statement of purpose, etc) to be submitted, reviewed, and processed electronically in an effective manner.
  - Vote: Unanimous

- The following topics were added to the agenda.
- Use and conversion of more paper forms to become electronic forms. Dean Aune invited Council members to provide her with feedback on all of the forms currently being used, revisions as well as a need to combine or have a new form (e.g., pre-Form II – to have committee approved at the start of research to be done, rather than after the research toward a Thesis or Dissertation may have started and comprehensive exam is done).
  - A suggestion was made to revise forms to also accommodate the diversity of program products (e.g., exhibits, performance, etc in addition to manuscripts)
  - Another suggestion was to see how we might incorporate more electronic signatures and workflows. An example of an online system for doctoral students was shared by C. Sorensen Irvine. All forms and the process for approvals was online. Names of some examples provided were My DR and Taskstream.

- Right to collectively bargain by Graduate Assistants (GA). The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) has been in discussions with members of the Legislature about gaining the right to collectively bargain. Some of the issues shared by M. Tigchelaar related to whether or not GAs were considered labor or not and to gain better pay and benefits. Many GAs have difficulty meeting the cost of living at the lowest step
(currently about $17,500). Additionally, due to a state law, GAs, like prisoners and wards are not allowed to collectively bargain. A bill has crossed over from the Senate to the House to allow GAs the ability to collectively bargain. Some discussion occurred with regard to considerations for the GSO to think about were shared by members. Council members appeared to support GAs ability to be able to collectively bargain, but also wanted to help them to also be aware of other aspects of that process that they may not yet know about.

- Deferring Admission. Current policy does not allow any deferral of admission. D. Sanders requested this be re-visited as a means to still allow high caliber applicants to enroll in a later term than their initial admission. The example he gave was of an applicant who was admitted, but learned of a fellowship he was also awarded that would need to be done in the term of his admission. The applicant requested a deferral to complete the fellowship then enroll at UHM. Funding was promised to the applicant if he attended UHM and would be held for him if deferred admission was approved. There was some discussion on this topic. Dean Aune requested some time to speak with staff in OGE regarding this policy before taking action on any requests. In the discussion, it was suggested that current policy be revised to allow requests from graduate chairs to be submitted for outstanding applicants who have a justified reason to request a deferral for one year.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00p.

Last meeting: **May 5, 2015; Gilmore 212, 2:30-4:00p**