Graduate School Council Meeting

8-29-17

Members in attendance: Kerri Steele, Michael Kane, Walter Stroupe, Michael Pennington, Debbie Williams, Frank Vaughan, Rob Wallace, Steve Gilliand, Gerald Hankins, Mickey Blackwell, Barbara Ladner, Rich Ford, Provost Jayasuriya (ex-officio member)

12:30pm

1. Electing new members and verifying roster
   1. At-large faculty member needed from graduate faculty. Barbara Ladner’s term expired Spring of 2017. Rich will check on Barbara’s intent to serve again and will follow up with an online vote to fill this slot.
   2. Steve Gilliand’s 2 year term as Media Studies faculty representative also concluded in Spring of 2017. While Steve was in attendance and Dean Wallace expressed interest in having Steve continue to serve in this role, an election will need to be help in the Communications Department to officially vote Steve back into the role.
   3. Dr. Brenda Wilson has retired so there is no faculty representative from the Education Department. Mickey will lead election to elect new education faculty member to the GSC.
   4. Dr. Sherri Shafer is no longer at WVSU so her name will be taken off the roster as a Media Studies graduate faculty member.
2. Minutes of GSC meetings
   1. Meeting minutes are now to be stored by the GSC Chair to ensure that this committee is faculty driven and maintained.
3. Online meetings
   1. No concerns noted with online meeting format. Meetings will be scheduled for face-to-face meetings, but those can be canceled and conducted via online format if GSC members agree prior to each meeting.
4. Graduate Student Association.
   1. A current Biotech grad student is trying to organize a Graduate Student Association. GSC members are encouraged to inform their students about it and the potential benefits of joining
   2. One concern noted is that meeting times in the early afternoons may not be best for grad students who attend classes later in the evenings. Rich will pass this information along to the current members of the GSA so that they can best plan meetings for the coming year.
   3. Additionally, GSA can set a protocol for student representatives to attend GSC meetings.
5. Transcript Evaluation Service
   1. WVSU currently uses a transcript evaluation service for undergraduate transcripts from foreign students. The Provost reports that the service is working well for undergrads.
   2. Members of the GSC discussed if this same service would be beneficial for grad students. Benefits noted are that it could open up a larger pool of students and that it might be a more efficient evaluations as the service can evaluate certified copies of transcripts.
   3. A formal motion was made to use begin using the above mentioned transcript evaluation service with foreign graduate student transcripts. The motion was passed unanimously.
6. Health Insurance
   1. Health Insurance continues to be required for foreign students. The price of the insurance has not changed but a recent policy change means students now have great coverage.
   2. This insurance is currently not available to domestic students. Provost Jayasuriya will send the insurance information to the Coordinator of each Graduate Program to see if there is interest in this policy amongst domestic students.
7. Applicable fees for graduate students
   1. The committee continues to discuss what fees are applicable to grad students and if the grad students should have their own fee structure.
   2. One member expressed concern that the current fees are not transparent and that grad students cannot decipher what some fees are going toward. There is a request to make the better define what the titles of the fees actually include.
   3. One member expressed concern that some resources are needed on campus that are not available (like journals regarding Public Administration). When discussing if grad fees should be structured differently to include additional resources, the Provost noted that Coordinators should send a list of both NEEDED resources and WISH LIST resources directly to his office to see if they can be gained through Academic Affairs before increasing student fees.
   4. A subcommittee was convened last academic year to explore current fees and make recommendations. The subcommittee (Dean Carney, Michael Pennington, Brenda Wamsley) is requested to re-convene this semester to again explore fees from the current structure and to make recommendations. The recommendations will be discussed and approved by the GSC and then sent through Business and Finance.
8. Governance and Administration of the GSC
   1. The committee continues to discuss the need for information about the GSC to be included in the Faculty Handbook. Distinctions need to be made between the GSC and the Faculty Senate through a parallel section of the current handbook.
   2. The committee discussed reviewing the current sections detailing the Faculty Senate and editing these to reflect the purpose and responsibilities of the GSC. These edits can be made via online meetings. Michael Pennington will make initial edits to reflect the governance of the GSC in terms of graduate programs.
9. Form for adding graduate courses to Banner system
   1. Michael Pennington noted that he developed a form based on current EPC forms to use for graduate courses. This form was discussed via on online meeting last semester. He will re-send the form to the GSC for discussion and approval.
10. Graduate office
    1. The committee continues to discuss the importance of a single Graduate Program Office to serve as a central location for policies, procedure, and guidelines for graduate programs as well as a place to house paperwork (applications, GSC meeting minutes, etc), required test scores (GRE, TOEFL, etc). The committee noted the importance of this office in terms of increasing graduate programs. It was also noted that this office should maintain the autonomy of each program in terms of things like recruitment, admission criteria, review of applicants, etc.
    2. A formal motion was made to recommend that WVSU pursue and establish a University Graduate Office including a director or coordinator, support personnel, and up-to-date technology. The motion was passed unanimously.
11. Handbook for starting new grad programs
    1. The committee discussed whether or not a handbook should exist for departments pursuing new graduate programs so that no information is missed. One member noted that the committee may want to establish an Advisory Council of Coordinators who have been through the process that can help new program Coordinators with the process. The Advisory Council could also work on above mentioned handbook. No final decisions made but this issue can continue to be discussed as needed.
12. Staffing/Course Load
    1. The committee requested clarification on what counts as a teaching load for graduate courses. The Provost noted that the faculty handbook finds 12 hours to be the normal course load for undergrad classes. Professors teaching grad courses should have a load of 9 hours (9 hours total, no matter how many graduate courses are included in that 9 hours).
    2. Additional clarification was requested as to whether Graduate Coordinator receive an additional course release. The Provost noted that coordinators may get release time but that no professor should teach less than 6 hours per semester. The committee asks that this be clarified in the handbook specifically. Language suggested is that Graduate Coordinators normally receive release time but may not teach less than 6 hours.
    3. The committee noted a need for a Graduate Coordinator job description including compensation structure. The current Coordinators will draft this for the larger committee.
13. Master’s in Computer Science
    1. The GSC will review the Master’s in Computer Science proposed program via email ASAP.
14. Collaborative MSW program
    1. The WVU/WVSU collaborative Master’s in Social Work program will end following the graduation of the current cohort in August of 2018 and no new applications will be accepted. WVU has withdrawn their support of the program due to budgetary concerns and the closure of WVU’S MSW programs at extended campuses across the state.
15. Thesis Research hours
    1. The committee also discussed how current hours that faculty spend serving as research advisors for Master’s level theses are not reflected currently as part of their compensated and/or recognized teaching load. In particular with Bio-Technology, all thesis research is noted under a single Professor reflecting hours between 1 and 6. The Biology Department and Biotech faculty will work to resolve this issue in Banner. Additionally, the GSC will need to discuss and approve a formula in the future that details how many individual student research or thesis projects will reflect a 3 hour course in a professor’s course load.

Meeting concluded at 1:43

Respectfully submitted

Kerri Steele