**Graduate Studies Council**

**meeting of October 20, 2015, 12:30 pm, Hamblin Hall 005**

**minutes**

in attendance: Dr. Bejou, Mr. Echols, Dr. Ford, Mr. Gilliland, Dr. Hankins, Provost Jayasuriya, Dr. Cain, Dr. Ladner, Dr. Pennington, Dr. Stroup, Dr. Zaman

The meeting came to order at 12:35 pm. Dr. Zaman moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting (September 22, 2015). Mr. Gilliland seconded the motion. Dr. Ford pointed out that, at the September 22 meeting, Dr. Ziyati of Media Studies seconded a motion but was not a member of the Council. It was agreed that, for the record, Mr. Echols would substitute his second for Dr. Ziyati's, and that the motion would otherwise stand as approved. All voted in favor of accepting the amended minutes.

The Council discussed who would take minutes, both at the present meeting and in the future. Dr. Ford took minutes for the present meeting, but secretaries in Academic Affairs or in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics were suggested for future meetings. The issue was not resolved.

The Council turned its attention to improving the application process for new admissions to graduate programs at WVSU. Heretofore, application materials have been received in Academic Affairs, Admissions, the Cashier's Office, and in the individual graduate program offices. The consensus of the Council was for all application materials for all programs to be received by a single office yet to be named, perhaps housed in Academic Affairs. The Council engaged in some preliminary discussion about the details. The main point of agreement was that application documents must be readily accessible by the individual programs. Among the unresolved details was the question of who would actually do this work.

The Council discussed problems in the current application process and ways to fix these problems without creating new ones. As a means to deal with international applicants, the Council agreed that each program could establish its own application deadlines, with the stipulations that the dates would be clearly posted and hedged with such language as "... for full consideration, applications are due by X date." As for official issues that affect international applicants (especially I-20 paperwork), Dr. Jayasuriya said that Registrar Hunter is the contact person. However, he said that a nascent International Studies Office (or some other name?) is being established to assist international students in all matters that affect their visa status, housing, and acclimation to WVSU. Dr. Jayasuriya will look into making on-campus housing available for graduate students who arrive on campus before dorms open each semester.

The Council considered a proposal from Dr. Ziyati that graduate faculty be paid for directing theses and student research / independent study. Provost Jayasuriya responded that money is tight at WVSU, and that graduate faculty already are (in effect) rewarded with reduced classroom teaching loads for the purpose of doing just such work. Dr. Hankins and others pointed out that, in practice, not all graduate faculty have reduced classroom teaching loads, and that these reductions don't adequately cover the work done in mentoring graduate students.

Dr. Ford asked members of the Council what issues should have priority in our queue. Council members want a web site for graduate education at WVSU. Additional recommendations will be taken up in the next Graduate Studies Council meeting, set for Tuesday, November 17, 2015.

minutes: Rich Ford