

The Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) met on Tuesday, November 5, 2002 in the Blue Room of the ROTC Building. GFC President Huckins began the meeting at 4:05 PM.

**Present:** Arici (ME/EM), Beck (Phy), Gierke (GMES), Gockenbach (MA), Hoagland (SS), Huckins (SBL), Jobst (HU), Mihelcic (CEE), Nelson (SBE), Onder (CS), Tsai (SFWP), Van Dam.

**Guests:** Hutzler (CoE), Rafert (Grad School).

## I. Agenda

- A. No one requested changes to the agenda
- B. Minutes: no corrections.

## II. New Business

### A. Graduate Tuition

Neil Hutzler, representing the Recruiting and Graduation (RAG) committee, discussed graduate tuition at schools considered as competitive with MTU. The committee is responding to a request for a recommendation on tuition, due by mid-November.

Hutzler distributed copies of a spreadsheet (distributed to GFC members earlier via email) showing the different tuition rates from several schools with whom we compete—Big Ten schools, RPI, VA Tech, GA Tech, and Colorado School of Mines. Hutzler offered some comments to begin: In his research, he said, “the hardest figures to find were those from MTU.” Hutzler also said that the University of MI employs a thick book indicating the costs for various programs. MSU charges an extra fee for engineering.

Bruce Rafert pointed out that MTU competes with several MI schools on the basis of in-state tuition, while competing with other schools on the basis of out-of-state tuition. Students from IL, he said, will compare their in-state tuition at an IL school, with MTU’s out-of-state tuition. “Everyone is playing a game but us. We have no strategy for attracting students, such as with a single-rate tuition that we could offer everyone whether in or out of state.”

Tom Van Dam asked about an apparent difference in MTU’s semester versus annual costs: our semester fee is *below* the average of most schools, but our annual fee is *higher* than the average. Hutzler said this annual number includes all the fees and summer school costs.

Rafert was asked about tuition for in-state versus out-of-state students. “It’s virtually impossible to become a resident of MI if you

enter the state as a student,” Rafert said. “It’s not a trivial task.” He also told the Council that the percentage of in-state vs. out-of-state students is about fifty-fifty. “Many of these [out-of-state] people become de facto residents, with tuition paid by support—either grants or teaching.”

“We need to recommend a tuition rate,” he said, “before the budget process moves too far along--before the Administration begins figuring costs and rates.”

A key question, Rafert said, is this: Can we offer a tuition rate for unsupported students that is competitive with these other schools?”

Hutzler pointed out the two extremes of tuition rates: “No one can compete with Georgia Tech because it receives a major payment from the state. And we don’t need to worry about rising to the University of MI’s tuition, which is much higher than any other public institution.”

Our major worry, Rafert said, is whether we can afford to raise grad tuition 19% year after year.

Hutzler said that some schools offer a set rate for continuing students, and a different one for new students; this solves the problem of students supported by grant money locked in at a certain tuition rate.

Don Beck said that we shouldn’t recommend a rate above that of the average grad school.

Oner Arici mentioned the numerous students in his program who are working in industry and asking for a continuous tuition waiver. Rafert said the Grad School Office is working on what he calls “Grad leave.”

Rafert asked for someone to draft a memo recommending a particular rate. The wording of the memo would be informed by the spirit of the Council’s discussion. Huckins will undertake this and present it at the next meeting.

### B. Proposed New MS in Engineering Degree.

Hutzler described the proposed new degree as a spin-off of the current MS in Engineering degree, and for students in Civil and Environmental Engineering. Copies of this proposal were distributed to the GFC at the previous meeting.

Jim Mihelcic explained that this new degree is for students who wish a terminal master's, and who are not interested in research. In lieu of a research project or thesis, students admitted to the program would complete a practicum, probably during the summer after they have finished their bachelor's degree.

Jobst questioned the wording of the proposal regarding students receiving permission for an appropriate practicum topic. Mihelcic agreed to replace "may" with "must" ... discuss the topic with an advisor.

After the summer practicum, students would present extensive notes and defend this segment at any time, a process analogous to a thesis defense. Students could defend at any time, but most would probably complete this task in the spring, after finishing their coursework.

The proposers were anxious for an approval, and Huckins suggested an email vote, but Rafert pointed out that the eleven people present constituted a quorum.

Hoagland/Nelson moved/ seconded to approve the degree. Voting results: twelve yes; no nays. Proposal passes.

### III. Old Business

No old business came before the Council.

### IV. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 5:04 PM. Other agenda items (Bruce Rafert will discuss his idea for an annual, end of the year graduate faculty convocation/forum) will be carried to the next meeting: Tuesday, December 3, 2002.

Humbly Submitted,

Jack Jobst, Secretary