

Graduate Faculty Council

Minutes: February 3, 2004

The Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) met on February 3, 2004 in the ROTC Blue Room.

Depts/Programs represented: Casey Huckins (Bio Sci), Mike Neumann (BMed), Paul Nelson (SBE), Joe Holles (CM), Sarah Green (Chem), Neil Hutzler (CEE), Soner Onder (CS), Kedmon Hungwe (Educ.), Bruce Mork (ECE), Kurt Pregitzer (SFRES), John Gierke (GMES), Dennis Lynch (HU), Mark Gockenbach (Math), Oner Arici (MEEM), Pat Martin (SS), Marilyn Vogler (GS), Michelle Trim (GSC).

Depts/Programs/Offices not represented: Material Science & Engineering, Physics, Research Office

Guests: Peg Gale (SFRES)

1. President John S. Gierke opened the meeting at 4:05 PM.
2. Administrative Business.
 - A. Discussion and approval of the minutes of December 2, 2003 has been moved to next meeting due to time constraints.
 - B. Gierke presented the modified agenda for the meeting.
3. Agenda Items:
 - A. Introduction and overview of the Proposal for 3 M.S. Spinoff Programs from Forestry – Peg Gale
 - M.S. in Forestry program is already available at MTU. The proposal suggests changing this to a Masters of Forestry (M.F.), obtainable by only Plan B or Plan C and with the intent of it being a terminable degree
 - Proposed are three new M.S. programs spun off of the existing M.S. curriculum: M.S. Forest Ecology & Management, M.S. Forest Molecular Genetics & Biotechnology, M.S. Applied Ecology
 - The purpose of these degree titles is to better reflect the nature of their research and curriculum by the name of the degree
 - In response to question from the floor, Peg stated that some existing students may switch into these new programs, but more importantly it will be a effective recruiting tool for new students.
 - Proposal is to be considered by a subcommittee of the GFC with a goal of a position statement for consideration at the next GFC meeting (April 6th)
 - B. Introduction and overview of the proposal for a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering – Mike Neumann
 - Proposal is for an interdisciplinary Ph. D. program in Engineering (Biomedical Engineering).
 - It will help the department to recruit the best faculty and students

- Areas of concentrations will be: Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering, and Physiological Measurements.
 - Department is hoping to build faculty lines to 6 to cover undergraduate and graduate loads appropriately..
 - Hutzler encouraged an interaction with other faculty on the Program Committee structure.
 - Gierke asked why M.S. program is not been included simultaneously. Neumann responded saying M.S. requires a longer approval through state but Ph. D. is direct. They will apply for M.S. later.
 - A comment from the floor was that NIH supports Ph.D. programs which will be very positive.
 - Proposal is to be evaluated by a subcommittee of the GFC with a goal of considering a position statement at the next meeting of the GFC (April 6th)
- C. Recruitment & Graduation – Casey Huckins
- Huckins summarized past year’s fly-in activities.
 - 11 out of 18 fly-ins matriculated at MTU
 - students views were very positive, and they enjoyed independent visits to departments in particular
 - AY04-05 there will be 10 to 15 fly-in opportunities.
 - Travel restrictions/spendings have been removed by Provost Wray. Needs to be verified (Follow up from Huckins later).
 - Each department will coordinate their own visits, i.e., no formal “Fly-In” this year.
 - Bruce Mork wondered if GS is willing to allot certain funding to each department to run it independently. Some will fly, some will drive, cost associated may be different.
 - Casey suggested that the invitees should be Ph.D.s and already accepted into the program.
- D. Policies & Qualities: 2 proposals
- a. Proposal to Modify the Oral Examination Requirements for a Plan C (Coursework) MS – Mark Gockenbach
 - Gockenbach shared some of his most recent experiences with regard to M.S.-Plan C Option.
 - The Policies & Qualities Committee Offer three alternatives:
 - A. Eliminate the university requirement of an oral examination for a Plan C MS. (Note that a department can still require the oral examination even if the university (*i.e.*, the graduate school) does not.)
 - B. Eliminate the requirement of an external committee member for a Plan C MS oral examination
 - C. Keep the current requirements for the Plan C oral examination and committee.
 - Decision is tabled until next meeting to give dept reps a chance to discuss the matter with their departments.
- E. Proposal to Amend Committee Membership Policies – Mark Gockenbach

- The effect is to make it simpler to include individuals from outside Michigan Tech on thesis committees.
 - Gockenbach briefly explained proposed M.S. and Ph.D. Committee structures.
 - M.S. Committees:
 - Current: Must be nominated by the chair of the major department, usually in consultation with the advisor, and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. At least three of the four examiners must be members of the graduate faculty and one of the graduate faculty must be from outside the major department.
 - Proposed: Add the following stipulation: *In the case of a committee member from outside Michigan Tech, ad hoc graduate faculty standing is required.*
 - Ph.D. Committees:
 - Current: The Examining Committee will be appointed by the dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the department chair. The committee will consist of at least four members of the graduate faculty. At least one of these will be from a cognate department or program. For interdisciplinary programs, cognate should be interpreted to mean a department other than those departments represented in the program or area of concentration. Additional external examiners who are not graduate faculty may be appointed by a nomination memo to, and approval by, the dean.
 - Proposed: Insert after “At least one of these will be from a cognate department or program” the following: *or from outside Michigan Tech. In the case of a committee member from outside Michigan Tech, ad hoc graduate faculty standing is required.*
 - Some relevant issues that came up during discussions are:
 - External member must be physically on the campus during the defense (Vogler)
 - Adjunct vs ad hoc graduate faculty (the latter in the proposal) has been questioned. Adjunct faculty involves human resources and it is a long process, whereas ad hoc is approved by the Dean of GS only.
 - Recommendation was made to find clear description of these terms and inform faculty - an important topic. (Vogler to followup with a clearer definition.)
 - Decision is tabled until next meeting to give dept reps a chance to discuss the matter with their departments.
- F. Remuneration & Benefits – Michelle Trim
- Trim explained the ongoing survey to Universities recommended by the representative departments – Peer survey.
 - She handed out a list of these universities and asked for more input.
 - Highest priorities at this time is to address Health Care and Child Care issues for Graduate Students.
 - Report will be made available to Board of Control and the members of GFC
- G. Recognition & Rewards
- Postponed to next meeting
- H. Wrap-Up Administrative Business
- Appointment of Members to Review Proposal for Spinoff Programs in Forestry: Sarah Green, Dennis Lynch, Bruce Mork, Jason Keith, H. Wang, and Kurt Pregitzer

- Appointment of Members to Review Proposal for a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering: Neil Hutzler, Oner Arici, Donald Beck, Kedmon Hungwe, and Seth Donahue,

4. New Business

- Proposal handout for Minimum Performance Standards was made available to GFC members so that it can be included into the agenda for next meeting.

5. Unfinished Business: The meeting adjourned prior to hearing an update on the Dean of the Graduate School Performance Review that is in progress and on the progress of the graduate certificate blanket policy and the certificate in sustainability, in particular. Also, the spring graduate faculty forum was not addressed, again.

The GFC adjourned at 5:05 PM.

Reported by O. Arici

GFC Secretary