Graduate Council Meeting

Thursday, August 29, 2024

**Present:** Professors: Barragan, Buck, Filios, Frank, Green, Hoffman, Johnson, Legge, Logsdon, Reynolds; Graduate Students: Dewitt, Golpour, Helm-Kwasny, Tennessen; Graduate College Personnel: Arbisi-Kelm, Campo, Danger, Pettit, Rodriguez-Rodriguez, Ta, Thein

Absent: Professors: Campbell, Gaine

The meeting was called to order by Dean Thein at 8:20 AM.

1. **Welcome & Announcements**

Each attendee was given the opportunity to introduce themselves by name, program, and their role/experience in graduate education.

Graduate College announcements by Dean Thein:

* This year was a highly successful new graduate student orientation with over 800 participants. The format is hybrid with online sessions in the morning and an in-person information fair in the afternoon.
* The first Connecting Communities event at Big Grove reached over 120 students.
* In it’s second year, the Peer to Peer (P2P) mentoring program has paired 180 students. There is equal enthusiasm for the program in the new student and returning student populations. Returning students (mentors) appreciate the experience in the mentor/mentee relationship as a high value professional development opportunity.
* Over the summer Academic Affairs Office continued it’s work on Degree Audits. This initiative has dedicated effort for three years thanks to a partnership between the Graduate College and the Provost Office. Goals of the project include increase transparency and efficiency amongst the student, staff, and faculty.
* Ana Rodriguez-Rodriguez began July 1st as the Graduate College’s Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Success. In addition to Graduate Council, she will be meeting the directors of graduate studies (DGS) and the associate deans for graduate education. She will be focusing on developing a DGS handbook of expectations and best practices.

Graduate Student Senate (GSS) announcements by President Helm-Kwasny:

* GSS held their first Executive Committee Meeting. Most are new to the committee. GSS also welcomed many new senators this year.
* Prospects at the info fair demonstrated strong interest in the organization and the application cycle of travel funds.

1. **Minutes of the April 11, 2024, meeting.** Legge made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Buck. The minutes were approved.
2. **Review of Grad Council’s duties and responsibilities.**

Dean Thein reviewed the Graduate College Manual, Part 2, Section XVI. Discussion included an overview of membership, term of office, and duties of the council.

1. **Discuss key findings of the Graduate College review.**

Dean Thein led discussion of the key findings. The review process included a self-study report, a review by committee that included two Big Ten deans, and concluded with the Provost’s letter. The review process and documentation provided great feedback. It was recommended that:

1. Begin on a new strategic plan to help identify which activities are essential and tangential.
2. Develop a best practices documentation for new directors of graduate studies.
3. Policy is a living document, therefore should be reviewed and revised to reflect changes over time. For example, one policy that could be revisited is the academic misconduct policy that is broader than plagiarism.
4. Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing the education landscape quickly. AI Ethics recently was awarded P3 funding to help faculty and staff better understand the uses and responsibilities of AI.
5. Improve communication and visibility of the Graduate College
6. Better leverage the expertise of the Graduate Council executive committee in developing the above.
7. **Suggestions for future topics to discuss at Graduate Council.**
8. Development of a teach-out policy when closing programs to share with students in which a commitment is made by the program to core sequencing.
9. Review registration requirements
10. Codification of counting of credit between two programs, especially counting master degree towards doctoral.
11. Review English Placement Exam of international students.
12. Grant funding award process that impacts graduate students.
13. Develop graduate education statements to administrative offices that impact graduate students.
14. Discuss outcomes of the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP).
15. Opportunity to work with Student Disability Services (SDS) for common milestone accommodations in graduate education that is significantly different from course-based accommodations.
16. Learn more about mentoring at Iowa. The mentor website <https://mentor.uiowa.edu/> was shared. The 2024 Mentor Conference registration is open. <https://mentor.uiowa.edu/conference>

Tennesen made a motion to conclude the meeting. The motion was seconded by Reynolds. The meeting adjourned at 9:26 AM.