April 8, 2016

PRESENT: Tim Barnett, Heather Blackwell (for Christina Hillesheim), Ashli Brown-Johnson, Lori Bruce, Russell Carr, Tim Chamblee, Lara Dodds, Dana Franz, Richard Harkess, Rebecca Long, Priscilla Hill, Beth Miller, David Morse, Joel Paz (for Steve Elder) Lynn Reinschmiedt, Dan Reynolds, Peter Ryan, Scott Roberts, Kirk Swortzel, Keith Walters, Bob Wolverton (for Francis Coleman)

ABSENT: Jim Adams, Amy Adkerson, Deborah Eakin, Dana Franz, Julia Hodges, Allison Pearson, Jon Rezek, David Shaw

GUESTS AND REGULAR ATTENDERS PRESENT: Kathy Griffin, Chris Rousseau, Pam Sullivan

I. The April 8, 2016, meeting of the Graduate Council of Mississippi State University was called to order by Chair Lara Dodds at 1:33 PM in Room 611 of Allen Hall.

II. Dodds asked for a motion to approve the February 26, 2016, minutes with minor edits submitted by Scott Roberts. Motion to approve with edits made by Dan Reynolds, seconded by Russell Car. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula, UCCC: Kirk Swortzel

- MS Aerospace Engineering, Degree Modification -
  Swortzel stated the Department of Aerospace Engineering requests approval to reduce the coursework hours for non-thesis Master’s from 33 to 30 for Campus 1 and 5. After discussion, Dodds asked Council if they were in favor of accepting the degree modification. Motion was made by Roberts, seconded by Beth Miller. Modification accepted unanimously.

IV. Report from sub-committee on Thesis Submission Deadlines: David Morse

- David Morse stated the problem arises for graduate students who submit thesis or dissertations that have a number of deadlines that separate them from graduation within a given semester. At present, there are three dates given and the dilemma becomes what the students will need in order to graduate. Morse stated the sub-committee consisting of himself, Tim Barnett, Deborah Eakin, Dan Reynolds, and Pam Sullivan, polled several graduate coordinators for their input. After discussion, Morse stated the committee recommends that, for graduate students who complete submission of all required thesis/dissertation materials and approvals within a given semester, but after the published deadlines to graduate that semester, be permitted to enroll as a zero-hour “graduate in waiting” student in the next semester for a nominal fee—$25 is suggested—and graduate the next semester. Fees associated with application for a degree would still be responsibility of the student. Dr. Ryan stated he thought it is a great idea, and that it helps address a needed option to allow students to stay engaged with the University. He made the point so that Council will realize they are not going out on a limb. Dr. Bruce stated that the 1-hour becomes quite expensive for students. There was discussion among members of Council regarding the definition of deadlines. Council suggested the recommendation be amended to state “until date/time grades are due.” The Office of the Graduate School will look into the technical details and come up with an
V. Report from the Graduate School: Dr. Lori Bruce, Dean

- The Graduate Dean’s Report was distributed. The report included:
  a) Graduate Student Showcase – Kate McKinney, a second-year Master’s student in the Applied Anthropology program of the Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Cultures and Heather Blackwell, a Master’s student in Entomology.
  b) Graduate Faculty Showcase – Dr. Mohammad Marufuzzaman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering.
  c) Graduate School Updates –
     - Graduate Student Impacts on Campus –
     - Applications for May 2016 are up from last year. There are 391 applicants as of April 1st with the following breakdown:
       Master’s – 320
       Educational Specialists – 4
       Doctoral – 67
     - Fall 2016 GRE Name Purchase Marketing/Recruitment Campaign - As of April 1, the project has generated 89 additional applications to the targeted departments. Dr. Bruce reported we are at .7% above our .5% target.
     - Admissions Enrollment Trends – The number of applications submitted for Fall 2016 are currently 3% less than for Fall 2015. However, the number of admissions (acceptances to Graduate School) are 27% higher. Historically, the admission-to-enrollment rate has consistently been in the range of 46% to 49%. Thus, the number of admissions is an indicator of enrollments. Thus, admissions data (as of April 1) suggests there will be an increase in graduate enrollments for Fall 2016.

- Graduate Enhancement Programs – Dr. Bruce introduced Heather Blackwell, representative for the Graduate Student Association, for updates.

VI. Report from the Graduate Student Association: Heather Blackwell for Christina Hilesheim

- Heather Blackwell reported the 14th Annual Graduate Research Symposium, sponsored by the Graduate Student Association and the Office of the Graduate School, was held Saturday, April 2, 2016, was a success. The symposium included 70 oral presentations and 60 poster presentations, involving more than 200 graduate students. Also, MSU Graduate Student Appreciation Week was held this week (April 4-8). University-level events were scheduled Monday-Thursday. Some highlights of the week included a flag display on the drill field with each flag representing one graduate student, a mini-concert held in the Student Union Dawg House, free 10-minute neck and shoulder massages for graduate students in the Union, free ice-cream to graduate students on the Drill Field, Lab Rats Comedy Troupe performance, and an induction ceremony for the 2016 Graduate Student Hall of Fame.

VII. New Business:

1. Requirements for participation in commencement ceremonies – David Morse
Morse brought to Council an issue concerning participation in the ceremony prior to all requirements being met, i.e., exam results received past deadline or exams administered past the deadline. Dodds stated that there appears to be a structural problem and there may be extenuating circumstances in the College of Education for non-thesis master’s students. Discussion followed. Dr. Bruce stated that she would prefer meeting with the college and discuss some possible solutions; Morse will contact department heads as well for their feedback.

2. Thesis hours for MA and PhD students – Dr. Paz for Dr. Elder
   - Paz stated that Dr. Elder wanted to bring a question to Council and asked if we should pursue a formal proposal. Dodds stated that she understands the issue to be that instead of a distinction between 8000 and 9000 hours, the requirement should be 8000 or 9000 to be taken by master’s and Ph.D. students. Discussion followed.

VIII. There being no further business, Dodds asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Russell Carr, seconded David Morse. Meeting adjourned at 2:58 PM.