The September 25, 2015, meeting of the Graduate Council of Mississippi State University was called to order by Chair Scott Roberts at 1:34 PM, in Room 611 of Allen Hall. Roberts welcomed new members to the Graduate Council; Deborah Eakin, Priscilla Hill, Lynn Reinschmiedt, Keith Walters, and welcomed back Lara Dodds, who has returned from sabbatical.

Roberts asked for a motion to approve the May 7, 2015, minutes. Motion to approve by Dan Reynolds, seconded by Russell Carr. Motion carried unanimously.

Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC): Kirk Swortzel, Chair:

- **Name Change – M. S. in Sustainable Bioproducts** – The department has changed the name of the program to reflect the department name change. No changes will be made to the program. Roberts asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve by Tim Barnett, seconded by Dan Reynolds. Motion passed. This request requires IHL approval.

- **Modification – Master of Agribusiness Management, CALS/Ag Econ** – The program will reduce hours from 36 to 30 by removing a required course (AIS 8203) and reducing elective hours from 12 to 9 credit hours. Roberts asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve by Tim Barnett, seconded by Beth Miller. Motion passed.

- **Modification – PhD, CALS/Ag Science** – Reduction to program credits required from 80 hours to 68 hours beyond the baccalaureate will be made. To effect the change, the program reduces the coursework from 60 to 48 credit hours while keeping the 20 hours required for dissertation. Other changes include the requirement of 6 credit hours of ABE 7000 or other ABE graduate courses and ST 8114. Roberts asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve by Russell Carr, seconded by Steve Elder. Motion passed.

- **Modification – M.S. in Computer Science** - Reducing required hours from 34 to 31 hours in the non-thesis option was approved for both campuses (Campus 1 and 5). The modification was proposed to bring the total hours required in line with the thesis-option program. Roberts asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve by Beth Miller, seconded by Dan Reynolds. Motion passed.

**IV. Report from the Graduate School:** Dr. Lori Bruce, Dean

- The Graduate Dean’s Report was distributed. The report included:
  - Graduate Student Showcase – Sandra Schachat, a graduate student pursuing a master’s of agricultural life sciences with a concentration in entomology, and
Chandani N. Nandadasa, a Mississippi State alumna currently pursuing a
double in applied physics at MSU.

b. Graduate Faculty Showcase – showcase of Dr. Veera Gnanesan Gude in the
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.
c. Graduate School Updates – Admissions and Enrollment Trends, 2014-15
  Degrees Awarded, Graduate Academic Programs – 2015 Initiatives, Graduate
  Enrollment Management – 2015 Initiatives
d. Graduate Enhancement Programs – TA Training & Certification (August 11-14),
  National Fellowship Workshop (September 10), Academic Integrity Week (last
  week in October), 3 Minute Thesis Competition (November 11, 12, 13th).

- Dr. Bruce discussed highlights from her report as follows: The Graduate School has
  worked on streamlining the admissions processes; the graduate applications for Starkville
  Campus were up by 1% which translated into 10% increase in admissions. This resulted in
  an 8% increase in enrollments; the number of unclassified students has dropped
dramatically; 930 graduate degrees were awarded last year.

Dr. Bruce reported the Graduate School has several initiatives underway for academic
programs on campus. These include a review of all department and college graduate
handbooks; a survey of departments regarding their practices in transitioning doctoral
students into the candidacy status; and strategic planning for the use of software
solutions for student tracking and program management. A pilot program has also been
launched where each doctoral dissertation defense will include an external faculty
observer. The College of Education is leading the university in an effort to reinstate this
practice. The external observer is simply a neutral observer. They will observe the public
presentation and committee Q & A portion of the defense.

In the area of enrollment, Dr. Bruce stated the Graduate School will be conducting the
implementation of and training for a Client Relationship Management (CRM) software.
The CRM is Recruiter by Ellucian. The CRM will facilitate the management of
communications with potential graduate applicants, graduate applicants, graduate
admittees, and graduate enrollees. Other initiatives in the areas of enrollment
management include the launching of a series of graduate school videos, online
advertising, and name purchases for recruitment to specific graduate programs.

V. Report from the Graduate Student Association: Christina Hillesheim
  - Chair Roberts introduced the new Graduate Student Association (GSA) President,
    Christina Hillesheim. Christina reported that over 120 were in attendance at the first GSA
    meeting of the year. GSA holds a GSA General Meeting (last Monday of the month),
    Service Event, and Social Event each month. Christina announced that 150 participants
    attended the first service event, Canoe Day at the Refuge, which included 30 graduate
    students. Also, the GSA Social Event will be held at Lost Pizza Company to cheer on MSU
    vs. Auburn.

VI. Old Business:
  - Academic Policies-
    Language regarding “Academic Policies” now in place in the Graduate Catalog was
discussed and clarified amongst members of the Council.
VII. New Business:
  
  • Accelerated BS/MS Program Proposal, Mechanical Engineering - Keith Walters:
    The proposal was discussed and noted that the verbiage was incorrect on page 2; the change to Page 2 to reflect 60 hours will be made. Dr. Bruce commented on the form and suggested changing the form to read Accelerated Program and remove 5-Year BS/MS Program to keep students from self-disqualifying. The change will be made to page 2 to say students can enter into the program after 60 hours and not 90 hours. Roberts asked for a motion to accept as amended. Motion to approve by Dan Reynolds, seconded by Tim Barnett. Motion passed

  • Accelerated BS/MS Program Proposal, Management and Information Systems – Bob Otondo:
    The application will be changed to say 90 hours and remove “no requirement.” Roberts asked for a motion to approve pending revision of application. Motion to approve by Steve Elder, seconded by Tim Barnett. Motion passed

  • Software solutions for student tracking and program management – Dr. Lori Bruce:
    Discussed during Dr. Bruce’s Dean’s report.

  • Election of Officers – Scott Roberts:
    Chair Roberts discussed election of new officers for the upcoming year. It was decided to hold an email election. Nominations will be emailed to Chris Rousseau.

VIII. There being no further business, Roberts asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn made by Russell Carr, seconded by Steve Elder. Meeting adjourned at 3:04 PM.