April 12, 2013

PRESENT: Tim Barnett, Russell Carr, Lara Dodds, Steve Elder, Dana Franz, Dwight Hare, David Lewis, David Morse, Dan Reynolds, Scott Roberts, Juan Silva, Amy Adkerson, Angi Bourgeois, Tim Chamblee, Gail Peyton (for Frances Coleman), Karen Coats, Lou D’Abramo, Katie Echols (for David Shaw), Marian Montgomery (for Steve Taylor), Margaret McMullen, Chris Rousseau, Pam Sullivan

ABSENT: Tommy Anderson, PC Cinnella (excused), Rafael Hernandez, Wes Schilling (excused), Thomas Sellers, Jerry Gilbert (excused), Benjy Mikel (excused), Peter Ryan (excused)

GUESTS: Linda Cornelius, Bill Herndon, Kenneth McRae

1. Graduate Council Chair Juan Silva called the meeting to order. He called on Dr. Bill Herndon, chair of the Graduate School Dean Search, to report on the committee’s progress.

2. Report on Office of the Graduate Dean Search:
   Dr. Herndon updated the Council on the status of the Graduate School Dean search. He reported that there were 57-58 applicants, that six (6) video conferences were held over the past week, and that the committee has identified four (4) candidates to participate in on-campus interviews. They are: Lori Mann Bruce, Mississippi State University; Karen Coats, Mississippi State University; Keith Parker, University of Georgia; and Diane Snow, University of Kentucky. Interviews will begin April 22 and end by May 3, 2013.

3. Upon a motion by Dr. Juan Silva and second by Dr. Scott Roberts, the minutes of the March 1, 2013, meeting was unanimously approved.

4. Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC):
   A Veteran’s Certificate Program offered through Distance Education was approved by UCCC and has been sent to Graduate Council for approval. Upon a motion by Dr. David Lewis and second by Dr. Russell Carr, the floor was open for discussion. Dr. Linda Cornelious, Professor of Instructional Systems and Workforce Development, in conjunction with the Center for America’s Veterans, developed the certificate and the courses for the benefit for individuals who work with veterans of the armed forces. She and Dr. Angi Bourgeois, chair of UCCC, were present and answered questions regarding the program. Questions focused on the number of course requirements and the level of the certificate. The proposal shows both 12 and 15 hours are required. Dr. Cornelious explained that one of the courses is an undergraduate course that may be needed as a prerequisite, but the requirement to earn the certificate is 12 hours. Members stated that in other certificate programs a student can take a combination of both levels to earn the certificate. Dr. Bourgeois pointed out that while that is true, certificates are generally identified as undergraduate or graduate. Following discussion, the members voted to approve the proposed certificate and courses, with one nay vote and one abstention.

5. Report from the Office of the Graduate School (OGS): Dr. Louis D’Abramo, Dean of the Graduate School, presented the following report:
   - **Applications and Admissions**
     As of April 10, 2013, summer 2013 applications are slightly less, -6.7% with domestic applications being 7.6% less. Admissions are down 7.6% with domestic student admission being down by 11.0%. Distance education applications are up by 4.2% when compared to last year, but admissions are 27.3% less than that for last year at the same time (56 vs. 77). Applications for the fall 2013 semester are at 1845, down 72 or 3.8% from the same date last year. Both international and domestic student applications are down, 2.0% and 5.8%, respectively. This is a trend that is essentially occurring nationwide. Admissions are down by 15.9% compared to last year (327 vs. 389). For distance education, the number of applications (144) is
down by 8 (-5.3 %) relative to last year and admissions are 73.2% less than last year (15 vs.56). There does not appear to be a dramatic decline in applications but a decline in admissions could be noteworthy. It is premature to make any conclusions because decisions to admit seem to be taking longer.

- **Graduation, Spring 2013**
  As of today, a total of 368 students are on track to graduate in spring 2013. The totals for the different degrees are 59 Ph.D., 2 Ed.D., 4 Ed.S. and 303 M.S. or M.A. The last day to apply for a degree is April 24. The application fee is now $250. Given the number of spring 2013 Ph.D.s, a total of 133 Ph.D. degrees will have been awarded for 2012-2013 (summer, fall, and spring). For the last three academic years, the total of Ph.D.degrees awarded has been 143, 139 and 135.

- **Office of the Graduate School Magazine**
  OGS submitted all contributions to the OGS magazine to University Relations. All interviews for feature articles have been conducted by University Relations. The Office of the Graduate School magazine now has a name, *Benefacta*. The inaugural issue is scheduled for a July 1 release. Ultimately, plans are to produce 2 issues per year, pending availability of funds.

- **MSU Honor Code**
  The revised MSU Honor Code has been approved by the Deans Council and will now be directed to the Robert Holland Faculty Senate for review. Relative to graduate and professional students, the policy states that graduate and DVM students who are found responsible for violation of the Student Honor Code will be placed on academic misconduct probation and must address sanctions that were imposed. In addition, during the probationary period, graduate students will not be permitted to take preliminary/comprehensive, written or oral examination, or defend or submit a thesis or dissertation for graduation. There are other different consequences for DVM students. A second violation of the Student Honor Code by a graduate or DVM student results in expulsion from MSU (except under rare extenuating circumstances).

- **Graduate Coordinator Workshop**
  The Graduate Coordinator Workshop was held on Wednesday, March 6, or Thursday, March 7. A total of 41 graduate coordinators attended (82 % participation). Approximately ten staff employees also attended.

- **National Professional and Graduate Student Appreciation Week**
  This year’s Appreciation Week was held April 1 through April 5. Many programs and events took place including a presentation by Dr. Ansley Abraham, Director of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) State Doctoral Scholars Program, a workshop on financial literacy given by Becky Smith (Department of Agricultural Economics), an etiquette dinner, the GSA sponsored Graduate Student Awards Banquet and an ice cream social. Eleven departments in five Colleges also provided department specific receptions to offer their appreciation to their graduate students.

- **Graduate Student Awards Banquet**
  Approximately 100 faculty, students, parents and staff attended, including 25 nominees for the Graduate Teaching, Graduate Research, and Graduate Service Assistant Awards. Awards were also presented to first and second place winners for the oral and poster sessions at the Graduate Student Research Symposium.

- **Graduate Student Research Symposium**
  The 2013 Graduate Student Research Symposium was held on Saturday, March 23. A total of 48 graduate students participated in either oral sessions or poster sessions. A total of 20 faculty and staff participated as judges. A list of those graduate students who were recognized as awardees in two categories, each for oral or poster presentation, can be found on the home page of the OGS website.
• **Graduate Assistant Awards**
The Outstanding Graduate Teaching, Research and Service Assistant Awards were presented at the Graduate Student Association’s Annual Graduate Student Awards Banquet. Students received monetary awards and plaques. Awardees can be found on the home page of the OGS website.

• **Fulbright Informational Roundtable**
A Fulbright Informational roundtable for the U.S. Student Program was held on March 28. Four students who were very interested in participating in the program attended. Faculty who participated as panelists included Stephen Cottrell, Jane Greenwood, Phyllis Miller and Don Grebner.

• **Grant Preparation and Submission – Financial Literacy**
The Office of the Graduate School, through the organizational leadership of Associate Dean Coats, is working with an array of faculty who are experts in different aspects of financial planning/economics to establish a strategy to prepare a financial literacy grant application that will be submitted to the Council of Graduate Schools. Those faculty and staff who are collaborating include Becky Smith, Extension Instructor in Ag Econ; Paul McKinney, Director of Financial Aid; Meggan Franks, Program Coordinator for Student Leadership; Alex Washington, Financial Aid Counselor; and Meghan Millea, Professor of Finance and Economics.

• **Creating a Campus Culture of Research and Teaching Integrity - Graduate Students**
A campus Responsible Conduct in Research Committee has begun to produce a Research Integrity Survey for graduate students and for faculty, an Academic Integrity Survey for all graduate students, similar to that conducted for undergraduates, a Teaching Ethics module for new TAs, and a Responsible Conduct of Research module for all GRAs. By August most of these surveys and modules will be ready to put into effect.

• **Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor Award**
The 2013 recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor Award, jointly sponsored by the MSU Alumni Association and the Office of the Graduate School, will be recognized and receive an award at the Faculty Awards and Recognition Reception to be held on April 25 in the Grisham Room of the Mitchell Memorial Library.

• **Office of the Graduate School Bridge Assistantships**
Eight (8) Office of the Graduate School bridge assistantships for either one or two semesters were awarded today. There was a total of 36 applications.

• **TAGG applications**
The deadline for the submission of applications for Travel Assistance Grants for Graduate Students (TAGG) for the next interval is Monday, April 15, at 5:00 PM. A total of $22,000 is available to award. We will be moving to a three-interval submission format starting in August of this year, replacing the two-interval format.

• **Preparing Future Faculty Program**
The very popular Preparing Future Faculty Program, jointly offered through the efforts of the Office of the Graduate School, the Mitchell Memorial Library, and the Center for Teaching and Learning, and Dr. Megan Millea, should produce 23 graduates this year.

6. **Report from the Graduate Student Association (GSA):** No report

7. **Old Business:**
   Graduate students taking the same split-level course as an undergraduate student and a graduate student:
Dr. Silva recognized Dr. Lou D’Abramo who asked for a motion approving a revision to AOP 11.04 regarding split level courses. He raised the issue in response to professors concerned when a graduate student takes a 6000 level course after having taken the 4000 level. Following discussion at a previous meeting, Dr. PC Cinnella and Dr. D’Abramo edited the AOP so that #5 reads as follows: “Students who have already taken a course at the 4000-level are not allowed to enroll in the same course for credit at the 6000 level except for those courses that are specifically approved to be taken multiple times for credit.” Dr. D’Abramo believes this statement will satisfy everyone and after its approval he will submit it to the Provost’s Office and request that the AOP be changed. The AOP was revised in 2010 but it can be reviewed before four years have passed, which would be January 2014. If it passes today, it will be added to the next Bulletin of the Graduate School. Discussion followed regarding approval of those courses which can be repeated; the response was that UCCC approves this when approving a new or modified course. The courses are flagged in Banner showing their approval for retake and the number of times it can be retaken. Dr. Bourgeois stated that the request comes from the department as part of the course proposal, and UCCC considers whether or not the course involves a type of material relevant for a repeatable course; examples are seminars, journal reviews, internship, and studio. If UCCC questions the repeatability of a course, it requires justification from the department. Dr. David Morse asked about a situation in which a student took a course at the 4000 level, did not do well, and is later admitted to a graduate program which requires the course at the 6000 level. Would this policy prohibit the student from doing so? Dr. Bourgeois suggested putting a grade requirement pre-requisite on these undergraduate courses before the student could advance to the next level, saying that there are many graduate courses with undergraduate pre-reqs to ensure the skills are there. Dr. Tim Chamblee suggested adding “Only courses that are specifically approved to be taken multiple times for credit may be taken at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.”

The vote was taken, and the motion passed with one opposing vote.

8. New Business:

Dr. Silva stated that he had proposed two items of new business. One relates to his concern about publication of manuscripts derived from a thesis/dissertation before the thesis or dissertation has been approved by the student’s committee. Does Graduate Council need to establish a policy or guidelines? Following discussion, the consensus of the group was that the committee should be involved with the student throughout the writing of the thesis/dissertation and therefore would be involved in the manuscript(s) the student submits for publication. Dr. D’Abramo stated that a statement could be added to the Graduate Bulletin encouraging students to consult with their committee before submission of a manuscript for publication that is based on the thesis/dissertation research.

Dr. Silva also introduced the topic of a non-thesis degree vs. a thesis degree. Discussion followed but no action was taken.

8. Nominations for Chair 2013-2014: Nominations will be sent via email.

9. UCCC will meet April 19, 2013, and will review a number of degree proposals, which will determine Graduate Council’s need to meet in May. That meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 13, 2013, at 11:00 AM in Allen 611.

10. The meeting was adjourned.