April 27, 2012

Graduate Council
Mississippi State University

Number: 8
Date: April 27, 2012


1. Graduate Council Chair Dr. Juan Silva asked for a motion to approve the Graduate Council minutes of March 23, 2012.

2. Dr. Tim Barnett pointed out that Dr. Steve Taylor attended the meeting as proxy for him, not as a guest.

3. Dr. David Morse made a motion to approve the minutes with the noted change. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Monts. Graduate Council approved the March 23, 2012 minutes.

4. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)
   - No report since UCCC meeting was held at the same time.
   - Modification to Ph.D. in Earth and Atmospheric Science
     Dr. Monts made a motion to approve the modification to the Ph.D. in Earth and Atmospheric Science. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Lewis. Graduate Council members voted and approved the modification by acclamation.

5. Report from the Office of the Graduate School (OGS)

   Dr. Louis D’Abramo, Dean of the Graduate School, presented the following report:

   - **Administration and Staff Office of the Graduate School**
     We have completed a search for an individual to replace the currently vacant position of Admissions Assistant. We hope to make an offer today.

   - **Applications, Admissions, Enrollment**
     As of April 19, compared to fall 2011, the number of applications has increased by 3.1% with most of that increase attributed to a 6.5% increase in domestic applications. International applications have increased by less than 1% (0.2%). Admissions have increased by 66% over that of last year, a trend that continues based on restructuring of the
admissions part of the OGS in the interest of minimizing the delay of processing. AOCE applications and admission are up slightly over last year (~3.0%). For summer there is a slight decrease in applications while admissions have increased. The largest decreases were in College of Business (18), College of Arts & Sciences (12), College of Education (9), School of Accountancy (8), and College of Veterinary Medicine (5). We do have an increase in the unclassified applications.

The total number of applications for fall 2011 and spring 2012 was 4338, 180 less than for the same time period last year. For the academic year 2011-2012 we have so far processed 4,918 applications with 2,297 admissions (46.7%). The majority of the applications (4,854, 98.7%) were web based. The remaining 64 applications were entered manually due to updates or changes to the screening form by the departments, or through a Change of Degree or Concentration Form.

- **Graduation Spring 2012**
  Commencement will consist of two separate ceremonies scheduled for Friday, March 11 at 7:00 pm and Saturday, May 12 at 10:00 am. Currently, the total number of graduate students that are on track to graduate on May 11 and 12 is 426. Students will be awarded 353 master's degrees, 10 Educational Specialist degrees and 63 doctoral degrees. These numbers may still change slightly. Combined with the sum of doctoral degrees awarded in December 2011 and during the past summer 2011, the total number of Ph.D.’s awarded for the 2011-2012 academic year is 136. 32% of the degrees awarded will be Ph.D.’s.

- **International Fulbright Students**
  We received a total of 14 Fulbright applications for admission for fall 2012. One Fulbright scholar from the Dominican Republic accepted her admission into the master's program in Biological Sciences. Two students were not admitted, and three others declined their admission to enroll at another university. We are waiting to hear whether the eight remaining Fulbright students will either accept or decline admission to MSU.

- **Graduate Work Study Assistantships (GWSA)**
  The procedure for choice of recipients of Graduate Work Study Assistantships has been revised. Graduate students can find the application for these assistantships on line at the Office of the Graduate School (OGS) website under Financial Aid, Funding/Awards. Also, at the same web location a Departmental representative can apply to be awarded a student in whom they are interested in employing. To fund these assistantships, there are three sources: the Federal Government, the Department/unit and the Office of the Graduate School that proportionately provide 61.7 %, 30.0 % and 8.3 % of the total award.

- **Graduate Student Research Symposium**
  The Graduate Student Research Symposium was held on Saturday April 14. The Symposium had the largest number of participants ever, more than 100 representing 21 posters, and 77 oral presentations as part of 21 separate panels. We are indebted to the faculty/staff volunteers with representation from every college. It was the second year that Public Policy Administration master’s degree students presented their Capstone research as part of the Symposium.
Graduate Student Awards Banquet
The Graduate Student Association Annual Awards Banquet was held April 24, 2012 in Memorial Hall – Coskrey Auditorium. Over 80 graduate students, graduate coordinators and other graduate faculty, administrators and staff attended. Dr. Jerry Gilbert was the keynote speaker; he talked about the personal rewards of a graduate education as well as the economic impact and importance of graduate education at the university, state, national and international levels.

The recipients of awards from the 2012 GSA Symposium were presented plaques of recognition for their outstanding presentations by the GSA President Aaron Rollins and me. The awardees and titles of their presentations follow:

Most Innovative Research – Malika Kaya, PhD – Department of Physics and Astronomy; Monitoring Concrete Structure Cracking Using Fiber Loop Ringdown Technique and Monitoring Water in Concrete and Grout Structure by Using Fiber Loop Ringdown Technique
Best PhD Oral Presentation – Prashanti Manda, PhD – Department of Computer Science and Engineering; Cross Ontology Data Mining in the Gene Ontology
Best M.A. Oral Presentation – Terence Norwood, MPPA – Department of Public Policy and Administration - Capstone Group, Jefferson Davis County – M.A. Research Award Capacity Building through 4-H in Jefferson Davis County
Best Poster Presentation – Suresh Lokhande, PhD – Department of Plant and Soil Sciences; Temperature Effects on Cotton Growth and Reproductive Performance and Fiber Quality
Best Research – Qi Li, PhD – Department of Forest Products Investigation on Catalytic Pyrolysis of Lignocellulosic Biomass Using Py-GC/MS

Recipients of the Donald Zacharias Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) of the Year Award were Shanna Litchfield, PhD - Business Administration with a concentration in Management and Lavanya Challagundla, PhD – Biological Sciences. Natalie Nations, MA – English.

The recipient of the 2012 Graduate Research Assistant Award was Leonel Mejia, PhD – Agricultural Sciences with a concentration in Poultry Science.

The recipient of the 2012 Graduate Service Assistant Award is Jamey Matte, MPPA - Public Policy and Administration.

Thesis/Dissertation Standards
Use of the 5th Edition of Standards for Preparing Theses and Dissertations expired at the end of this semester. All submissions of theses and dissertations for August 2012 graduation and thereafter must follow the new "Standards for preparing theses and dissertations: 6th edition". Beginning today, templates for the 6th edition will be available on the Mitchell Memorial Library website. If you used the current template based on the 5th edition, it can be easily modified to accommodate the requirements in the 6th edition. If you need assistance, please visit the Thesis and Dissertation Office in the Mitchell Memorial Library.
● **International Teaching Assistant Workshop; Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) Orientation; Classroom Certification**

Plans for the fall International Teaching Assistant Workshop, Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation and Classroom Certification, and New Graduate Student Orientation are just about in place. In addition, a My Courses workshop with limited seating will be held on August 16. The New Graduate Student Orientation will be held on August 17. The online application to participate in the workshops, orientation, and classroom certification is scheduled to be available by June 1.

● **New Graduate Student Orientations**

The new graduate student orientation will be held in conjunction with graduate student orientation services that are offered through the Mitchell Memorial Library. Find Your Feet, an orientation devoted to the special needs of new international graduate students will again be offered.

● **National Graduate Student and Professional Appreciation Week**

The Graduate Student and Professional Appreciation Week, a national event held on the MSU campus for the first time, from April 2 through 6, was a great success. We will invite graduate faculty and graduate students to provide ideas for Appreciation Week as part of the planning of next year’s event.

● **Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor of the Year**

Dr. Sandra Eksioglu, Associate Professor in the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, was selected as Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor of the Year Award and was presented a plaque and monetary award from the MSU Alumni Association at the Annual Faculty Awards and Recognition Program schedule on April 24.

● **TAGGS**

No more applications for Travel Assistant Grants for Graduate Students (TAGGS) will be accepted for travel from May 1 through October 31. Funds have been exhausted.

6. **Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)**

GSA incoming President Thomas Sellers introduced himself and presented the following report:

GSA will be creating a Student Graduate Council which will consist of one student representative from each graduate program. The Student Graduate Council will help GSA with the Graduate Student Symposium and Graduate Student Week.

1. **New Business**

   a) **Description of Minors in the Graduate Bulletin (D’Abramo Handout)**

   Dr. D’Abramo asked for more clarification of what constitutes a minor for a graduate student in the Graduate Bulletin and circulated a handout.
Discussion followed. Dr. Tim Barnett made a motion, seconded by Dr. David Lewis, to approve the wording in the Graduate Bulletin as follows:

“…a current block of approved coursework derived from a graduate degree program or concentration other than the major department”

Graduate Council voted and the new wording for the 2012-13 Graduate Bulletin was approved by acclamation.

b) CP Graduate Courses in Graduate Bulletin (D’Abramo - Handout)

Dr. D’Abramo stated that there are five Career Center graduate courses that are used for students who are on internships or doing a CO-OP. We encountered a problem because one department allowed a student to list the Career Center courses on the program of study. However, these are courses that cannot appear on the program of study and something to that effect should be included in the Graduate Bulletin to prevent future issues.

Dr. D’Abramo asked that Graduate Council review the statements on the handout. Dr. Hart Bailey made a motion to approve changes to the description of CP courses in the Graduate Bulletin. The motion was seconded by Dr. Barnett.

Discussion followed. Graduate Council approved by acclamation the inclusion of the following statement in the Graduate Bulletin to be inserted here:

“Cooperative experience and internships are available. Cooperative Education requires students to complete two work periods, one of which may be a summer. Internships are one semester in duration and may occur during any academic period (fall, spring, summer). These credit hour programs will be included on the student’s transcript but cannot be included to satisfy course hour requirements in a graduate student’s program of study.”

c) Number on Non-Research Credits with an S Grade allowed on POS (D’Abramo)

Dr. D’Abramo asked for review of this issue. Discussion followed.

Dr. Silva asked for volunteers to serve on a subcommittee to review the S-Grade issue. Dr. David Monts agreed to chair the committee and Drs. Russell Carr and Juan Silva agreed to serve as members.

Dr. Silva stated that the May 11, 2012 meeting may be cancelled. Graduate Council members will be notified via email.

Karin Lee stated that voting Graduate Council members will receive a call for nominations to serve as Chair and Vice Chair for AY 2012-13 Graduate Council. Election will be conducted via email.
In the absence of other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

The date for the next Graduate Council meeting has been set for Friday, August 24, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.