Graduate Council
Mississippi State University

Number: 1
Date: August 26, 2011


Absent: A. Bourgeois, R. Carr, A. Rollins, B. Mikel, D. Seale, D. Wise

Guest: D. Eakin, new Graduate Coordinator for Psychology

1. Graduate Council Chair Dr. Juan Silva welcomed all guests and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Dr. Silva stated that the April 2011 minutes will be submitted in time for the next Graduate Council meeting.

3. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)
   No Report

4. Report from the Office of the Graduate School (OGS)
   Dr. Louis D’Abramo, Dean of the Graduate School, presented the following report:

   - **Office of the Graduate School Staff**
     Two new staff members were added to the Admissions part of the Office of the Graduate School. One individual is a replacement; the other is due to the creation of a new position. The addition of a new admissions assistant has allowed us to implement a new management plan for the processing of applications in Admissions with the goal of eliminating delays after receipt. Applications will still be chronologically processed according to when they are received, but delays from receipt to the initiation of processing will be essentially eliminated. Presumed delays in sending applicant files to departments often do not lie in processing, but rather files lacking required documentation to merit transfer to departments.

   - **Graduate School Enrollment**
     The unofficial real time count for fall 2011 enrollment of graduate students is 3,789. This is an all-time high, exceedingly last year’s all-time high of 3,785. Anticipated enrollment by the 10th day of classes is 3850, which represents a 1.7 % increase. During the past 3 years the mean annual increase has been 2.2 %.
• **Summer Graduation**
  A total of 339 students were cleared for graduation - 304 master's students, 13 Educational Specialists and 22 Ph.D.s. The number of Ph.D.s graduated is approximately 20 less than last year. We expect a large number of Ph.D.s to be granted at the end of the fall semester.

• **Fulbright Graduate Students**
  We now have a total of 5 international Fulbright students on campus, a significant indicator of scholarship among graduate schools. Zadia Codabux from Mauritius and Ibrahim Abdoulahi from Niger joined MSU this fall. Both are students in Computer Science. The Office of Academic Affairs awards out of state tuition for these international scholars.

• **Applications to Graduate School**
  For the academic year of 2010-2011 (fall, 2010 through August 24, 2011) a total of 5466 applications were processed, a new record. The number of applications increased by 10%. A total of 2,802 students were admitted (51%).

• **Recent/Future Workshops/Receptions/Events of Interest**
  In collaboration with the Bagley College of Engineering, the Graduate School, and the Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM), a National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Fellowship Information Workshop for undergraduate juniors and seniors and graduate students will be held on Wednesday, August 31st from 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. in 210 Lloyd Ricks.

  Thirteen students participated in the Fulbright Information Workshop for Graduate Students coordinated by the Graduate School in collaboration with the Institute of International Education (IIE) on Wednesday, August 24th at the Union in Fowlkes Auditorium. Dr. Nancy Hargrove, a retired faculty member and recipient of five Fulbright awards presented information to the students. Drs. Cottrell, Grebner, Miller, and Raymond also provided students with pertinent information about the program.

  The Office of the Graduate School collaborated with Drs. Erdogan Memili, Anna Dill, Andy Perkins, Hyeona Lim, and Mrs. Diane Daniels, Mrs. Angela Verdell, and Mrs. Lauren Hollifield by hosting a 3-day GRE Preparation Workshop on June 14-16, 2011 for those students who participated in one of the three REUs (Research Experience for Undergraduates) on campus this summer. A total of 26 students participated.

  The Office of the Graduate School and the Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi hosted a Graduate Bridge Program earlier this summer. This program is designed to assist students in making a smooth transition from undergraduate to graduate school. Four students who were entering graduate programs in Mathematics, Industrial Engineering, Electrical and Computer Science Engineering, and Food Science, Nutrition and Health Promotion participated in the month long program.
• **International and Domestic Graduate Student Orientation**
  Approximately 143 new graduate students attended graduate student orientation on the afternoon of August 16\textsuperscript{th}. The OGS plans to work with Mitchell Memorial Library to avoid duplication of efforts in providing information about services and opportunities to promote academic success and equip all graduate students with the tools and knowledge of policies/procedures needed for successful completion of their graduate programs. A total of 39 students attended the International Student Orientation, called “Find Your Feet” on August 16\textsuperscript{th}.

• **International Teaching Assistant (ITA) and Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) Orientation; Classroom Certification**
  International Teaching Assistant Workshop, General Teaching Assistant Workshop and Microteaching Simulation/Classroom Certification Evaluation—were held prior to the beginning of the fall semester. A total of 212 students participated among the three program components, setting a new record for the largest group of first-time GTAs participating in the program. A total of 50 graduate students participated in the International TA Workshop, held August 1-5, 2011; 49 of the 50 (98\%) passed the Classroom English evaluation to advance to the GTA workshop. Graduate students who participated in the General Teaching Assistant Orientation numbered 212 and it was held August 9 and 10, 2011. A total of 154 students participated in the Microteaching Simulation/Evaluation for Classroom Certification component of the workshop to be classified as either TA2 or TA3. The pass rate was 98.7 \%. There were two paths for orientation, classroom or laboratory teaching. The laboratory orientation was designed for GTAs who were specifically involved in laboratory teaching within the sciences and was directed by Dr. Deb Mlsna in the Department of Chemistry.

The OGS sincerely appreciates all faculty and staff volunteers who gave their valuable time in providing a meaningful learning experience for the new GTAs. A total of 61 faculty and staff contributed to the success of the program as either session presenters during the ITA or GTA Workshops (20 total), evaluators for Classroom English Certification (12) and/or Classroom Certification on August 10\textsuperscript{th} (29 total). The OGS could not fulfill its role in ensuring quality orientation and classroom certification without the continued support and assistance from the faculty and staff volunteers. The beneficiaries are not only the graduate students but the undergraduate students whom they teach.

The OGS will begin sending out requests in September seeking faculty volunteers to serve as evaluators during the afternoon of January 5, 2012, for the Microteaching Simulation/Classroom Certification evaluation that immediately follows the Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation scheduled for January 4 and 5.

• **Graduate Assistantships**
  There are a total of 1,084 assistantships for the fall, 2011 semester, 16 more than last fall. 570 (52.6 \%) research, 358 (33.0 \%) teaching, and 156 (14.4 \%) service.

• **Travel Assistance Grants for Graduate Students (TAGGS)**
The OGS began accepting applications from graduate students for Travel Assistance Grants for Graduate Students (TAGGS) program on August 16, 2010. The TAGGS program, inaugurated in fall 2009, provides funding up to $1,500 to the graduate students, preferably Ph.D.s, selected as award recipients who will give a paper/poster presentation at national or international meetings. Applicants will be informed within one week after all application materials have been received. Requests will be accepted and reviewed until all available funds have been awarded for this TAGGS funding cycle.

- **Recruitment**
  Associate Interim Dean, Dr. Karen Coats, Ms. Shlynn Morris, and Ms. Vemitra White in the OGS will be participating in recruitment fairs at various institutions that include Tuskegee University, Mississippi Valley State University, Tougaloo College, Rust College, Mississippi University for Women.

- **Bulletin of the Graduate School**
  The 2011/2012 *Bulletin of the Graduate School* will soon be available online in PDF format. Print and CD copies should be available around September 15.

  Each *Bulletin of the Graduate School*, from 2004/2005 through 2010/2011, the last seven years, is archived and located on the OGS Web site.

- **Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grants (GRAGs)**
  We plan to send out a call for proposals for Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grants (GRAGs) on September 26, 2011. The deadline for submission will be October 28, 2011. A total of $15,000 of funds is available ($1,500 to $2,000 per grant) and strategies that involve departmental cost sharing are preferred Contact Karin Lee in the OGS for details about this next GRAG cycle.

- **Graduate Student Ambassadors for the 2011–2012 academic year**
  We are in the process of soliciting replacements for those ambassadors who have graduated.

5. Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)

  No Report

6. New Business

   a) Graduate Application Fee (D’Abramo – Handout)

   Dr. D’Abramo submitted a handout that shows the application fees charged by peer Very High Research institutions and SEC peers. Mississippi State University is still at the low end of the fees. The number of applications increased by 15% over the past four years. Dr. D’Abramo requested that a Graduate Council subcommittee review the feasibility of increasing the MSU graduate application fee from $40 to $60.
Discussion followed. Dr. Silva called for volunteers to serve on the Application Fee subcommittee and report back to Graduate Council. Dr. Dan Reynolds volunteered to chair the committee; Drs. Lara Dodds and Tim Barnett agreed to serve as subcommittee members.

b) Dual Degree Status/Sharing of Hours (D’Abramo – Handout)

Presently, we have a dual degree policy but it only addresses the sharing of hours between two master’s degrees in which the student is concurrently enrolled. What about students who are dual enrolled in a master’s and a doctoral degree – can those students share nine hours as well? What about a student who completed a master’s already and now wants to do another master’s. Can this student share nine hours? Our policy is not clear in any of those cases. Should there be a difference between non-thesis and thesis option master’s when the sharing of hours is concerned?

Discussion followed. Dr. Silva called for volunteers to serve on the Dual Degree/Sharing of Hours subcommittee and report back to Graduate Council. Dr. David Monts volunteered to chair the committee; Drs. Ed Allen and Rafael Hernandez agreed to serve as subcommittee members.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The date for the next Graduate Council meeting has been set for Friday, September 23, 2011, at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.