March 28, 2014

PRESENT: Jim Adams, Amy Adkerson, Tommy Anderson, Tim Barnett, Russell Carr, PC Cinnella, Karen Coats, Bob Wolverton (for Frances Coleman), Lara Dodds, Steve Elder, Jerry Gilbert, Julia Hodges, Beth Miller (for David Lewis), David Morse, Dan Reynolds, Scott Roberts, Peter Ryan, Juan Silva, Kirk Swortzel, Tracy Craven (for Steve Taylor)

ABSENT: Ashli Brown-Johnson (excused), Lori Bruce (excused), Dana Franz (excused), Jon Rezek, David Shaw, Judy Schneider (excused), Vemitra White

GUESTS AND REGULAR ATTENDERS: Bob Otondo, Cindy Smith, Pam Sullivan

The March 28, 2014, meeting of the Graduate Council of Mississippi State University was called to order by Chair Juan Silva at 1:33 PM in Room 611 of Allen Hall.

Silva called for review of the February 28, 2014, minutes. Scott Roberts moved to approve the minutes, and David Morse seconded. The minutes were approved.

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

Two matters from UCCC were presented to Council. Dr. Bob Otondo and Ms. Cindy Smith from the College of Business were present to discuss the Master of Business Administration program modification, changes based on research of similar programs. The Business Administration course requirement changes include the modification of four courses and the corresponding course numbers to reflect three credit hours instead of the current two (new numbers are ACC 8113, BIS 8113, BL 8113, MGT 8113). The modification also deletes MGT 8111 and changes the elective requirements from six to three hours, leaving the 30-hour requirement intact. The Project Management concentration requirement changes from 33 to 36 credits based on the MBA changes noted above as well as the deletion of three elective hours. Tim Barnett moved to approve the proposed modifications and Jim Adams seconded. Following discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

The second item from UCCC was the proposed graduate minor in Horticulture (Floral Management) from the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. The minor requires 12 credit hours: PSS 6013, PSS 6023, PSS 6033, and PSS 6043, and can be taken by a master’s or doctoral level student. Jim Adams moved Council consider the proposal, and Dan Reynolds seconded. Following discussion, the graduate minor in Horticulture (Floral Management) was approved unanimously.

Graduate Student Association (GSA): Vemitra White, President

In the absence of Vemitra White, Associate Dean Karen Coats reported the Graduate Research Symposium was a success, with 174 oral or poster presentations. She noted an increased number of oral presentations over the previous years. Many disciplines were represented, and the winners are reported on the Graduate School website. Coats also reminded members of Graduate Student Appreciation week March 31-April 4.

Graduate Dean’s Report: Lori Bruce, Dean

No report.

Old Business:

Silva recognized David Morse, who at the February meeting told Council that his department was developing a course to help doctoral students who need to begin or who have reached an impasse with research and/or writing for the dissertation. He had proposed that such a course could be used toward satisfying the research-hour requirements for doctoral students (university requirement is 20 hours), while providing practical help for the student. The course would not be mandatory but available for students needing assistance. Following discussion
at that meeting, Morse said he would return to Council with a proposal. Dr. Gilbert asked if the course would count toward coursework requirements. Council agreed that it would not, and Coats said that must be stated in the course description. She suggested a course with a 9000-level number that would be used by each department which develops this course. It will be a three-hour, non-GPA graded course that can be taken for no more than six credit hours counted toward the dissertation requirement. Lara Dodds moved to approve the amended motion and Jim Adams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The wording in the graduate bulletin will be changed from: “The student must register for at least the minimum number of required dissertation/research hours. The university requirement is 20 credit hours although some programs have been approved to require more” to the following statement: “The student must register for at least the minimum number of required dissertation/research hours. The university requirement is 20 credit hours, although some programs have been approved to require more. These hours may optionally, at the discretion of the student’s doctoral committee, be divided between 9000 (‘dissertation research’) and a 9000-level course developed to assist students in starting and/or completing their dissertation. This course must be designated numerically 9990 [number to be determined], must be non-GPA graded, and can be repeated for up to six credit hours.”

Other Business

- Provost Gilbert stated that SACS site visit reaffirming accreditation will take place the week of March 31 and focus on the implementation of the QEP. He reminded those present that “Maroon and Write” is the name of the two-level undergraduate writing program. Level I is an intensive writing-across-the-curriculum focus implemented last summer with selected faculty who learned to incorporate writing into their curricula. Five to ten faculty per year undergo the training, which is aimed toward sophomore-junior level students. Level II is less formal and is used by those who use different strategies to promote writing in the classical disciplines. The intent of the program is reinforcement of writing skills at MSU, and Dr. Gilbert stated that members of the SACS team could question anyone about QEP during their visit.

- Silva recognized Swortzel who stated that UCCC’s last meeting of the year is scheduled for Reading Day, May 1. The meeting will begin at 8:30 or 9:00 and meet until finished in the afternoon, with a break for the traditional end of year lunch. On April 10 he will know how many graduate proposals will be considered. Silva proposed setting May 9 as a tentative meeting day for Graduate Council if UCCC approves programs that Council must consider. Silva announced that the next meeting is April 25 at 1:30 PM, and a May 9 meeting will be held if required.

There being no further business, Jim Adams moved that the meeting adjourn, and David Morse seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.