Graduate Council Minutes

Number: 8
Date: April 25, 2003


Absent: P. Bonfanti, S. Byrd, D. Hare, E. Milam, J. Pote, G. Rent, R. Shivaji, C. Sides

Guest: Dr. Tim Chamblee, Poultry Science

1. Dr. John Boyle called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. in Room 611 Allen.

2. Dr. Boyle noted a correction to the March 28, 2003 minutes. In item 4.d., the last sentence should read “Ms. Dale Welch noted that the university must maintain 100 doctoral graduate two-out-of-three consecutive years in order to retain SREB designation.” Dr. Dwayne Wise made a motion to accept the minutes as modified; Dr. Tor Schultz seconded. The Council approved the minutes with the noted modification.

3. Report from the University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC):

The Council reviewed a proposed program modification from the School of Architecture. Dr. Larry Barrow, Department Head, College of Architecture, presented the proposed modification. The modification would add a non-thesis option to the Master of Science in Architecture degree. The non-thesis option would require 33 hours graduate level course work, including 3 credit hours of independent study for production of a professional paper or research project, as well as a comprehensive examination. On motion by Dr. Schultz and second by Dr. Greg Dunaway, the Council voted to approve the proposed program modification.

The Council reviewed a proposed program modification from the Department of Poultry Science. Dr. Tim Chamblee, Professor, Poultry Science, presented the proposed program modification. The modification would add a non-thesis option to the Master of Poultry Science degree. The non-thesis option would require a minimum of 30 hours of graduate course work and a comprehensive academic examination. The Department of Poultry is working toward offering portions of this degree on-line. The Council discussed the 30/33 hours required for non-degree programs. Dr. Stan Bullington made a motion to approve
the proposed program modification for Poultry Science; Dr. Lynn Reinschmiedt second approved the motion. The Council approved the proposed program modification.

4. Dr. William Person presented the report from the Office of Graduate Studies:

   a. Dr. Person commended GSA for the successful Graduate Research Fair and the Graduate Banquet.

   b. The Faculty Senate hosted a roundtable discussion on graduate education, Lake Tiak O’Khata, March 29, 2003. Discussion on graduate education was positive. Dr. Linda Pote has developed a draft document of the discussion and distributed it to participants. The document, when finalized, will be distributed to the general faculty.

   c. Dr. Person announced that Ms. Jennifer Ann Woodfield, an Agricultural and Biological Engineering major, has been named an NSF Fellow. Ms. Woodfield will attend graduate school at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. The award for the fellowship will be $27,500 and the educational allowance will be $10,500. The award is expected to increase to $30,000 next year, with the educational allowance remaining at $10,500.

   d. Dr. Person noted that a new fellowship opportunity is available for both undergraduate and graduate students via the Homeland Security Fellowship (Department of Homeland Security) Program. Undergraduate students (junior or senior status), if selected, are eligible to receive $1000 per month for 9 months plus tuition. Graduate students (new graduate student status or first year student) if selected, will receive $2300 per month for 12 months plus tuition. These are renewable for two years, making the total award for three years. One hundred fellowships will be awarded nationwide for the first year. The fields of study are almost all inclusive. A letter of intent must be submitted via e-mail or postmarked by the student by April 30; the application is due by May 16; references are due by May 27.

   The Office of Graduate Studies e-mailed the information to graduate coordinators and department heads on April 24. Due to e-mail problems, OGS will resend the information.

   e. Mississippi State University will not reach SREB status this year. There are approximately 35 students who have completed graduation requirements; this will put the number of doctoral degrees awarded at about 90. This is only the second time in 13 years that Mississippi State University has not reached SREB status.

   Discussion at the Roundtable Discussion on Graduate Education did note the importance of SREB status for the university. The Council discussed the purpose of the Faculty Senate roundtable discussion and what the outcome of these discussions might be. Faculty seem to be particularly concerned about resident
tuition waivers no longer being allowed for externally funded graduate assistantships.

5. Dr. Michele Williams presented Graduate Student Association activities:

a. The Graduate Research Fair was very successful. Thirty graduate students participated in the Fair. Eight students received awards—four for oral presentations and four for poster presentations. Scholarship awards in the amount of $100 will be given to each winner. Next year information about the Fair will be sent to individual faculty members.

b. One hundred and eighty faculty, staff, administrators, graduate students, and family members attended the Graduate Student Banquet. Awards were given to graduate assistants in teaching, research, and service. Each winner will receive a $200 scholarship.

Dr. Reinschmiedt suggested that the program for next year’s banquet include information about the college/department of the student, including major advisor and some information about the student’s research program, if applicable.

6. The Council discussed the following items of Old Business:

a. The Council reviewed international fees charged at MSU (at the request of the President). The Office of Graduate Studies compiled a report of Additional Fees and Insurance Rates for International Students that was distributed in the April Graduate Council packet. Dr. Boyle will pass the report along to the President.

b. The Graduate Council continued the review of Policies and Procedures for Handling Graduate Student Academic Misconduct.

The Council discussed and finalized the process relative to interdisciplinary programs. Dr. Reinschmiedt clarified that a program can academically “belong” to one department.

Dr. Dunaway noted a needed correction on page 6, IV., line 2. The sentence should read, “Each interdisciplinary program will establish a GAMRC.”

Dr. Schltz made a motion to accept the document with the minor change noted above. Dr. Bullington seconded the motion. The Council voted to accept the document and send it forward to the Provost and Deans for their examination.

The committee will be available to answer questions that may arise from the Provost and Deans.
7. The Council discussed the following items of New Business:

a. Dr. Boyle announced that nominations for Chair and Co-chair of the Graduate Council for 2003-2004 are now due. Nominations should be sent to Dr. Person via e-mail. Nominations should be cleared with the nominee prior to nomination.

b. The second item of New Business concerned the Policy Change Request from the Faculty Senate. A copy of the request was distributed with the April packet.

This deals with the appeal of academic status. The Faculty Senate voted 31-0-0 to ask the Graduate Council to consider revising the appeal of academic status to require that request be made according to established guidelines of the degree-granting program. Student appeal would be made to the college dean only after all avenues of recourse at the program level have been exhausted as determined by program policy. In addition, the dean involved in an appeals process concerning the status of a dissertation or thesis should meet with all members of the dissertation or thesis committee, as well as the graduate coordinator before issuing a final decision. As currently written, the department head/coordinator reviews the appeal with the appropriate college or departmental committee and makes a recommendation. If the appeal at the departmental level is unsuccessful, a student may then appeal to the dean.

The second request from the Faculty Senate is that the Graduate Council request all departments with graduate programs to develop guidelines. Per the Faculty Senate, the appropriate dean will review the guidelines. Upon approval by the dean, the Graduate Council should vote on the guidelines. Changes or amendments to approved guidelines would follow the same procedure.

Dr. Bullington raised the issue of whether it is appropriate for the Graduate Council to have approval authority in this case. Dr. Hosie indicated that the matter required further thought. Dr. Boyle will carry the issue over to the May 16 meeting and will invite the Chair of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee to attend the May 16 meeting of the Graduate Council.

c. As a third item of New Business, the Council discussed the Bulletin Change Request form DAFVM. This is a concern to reflect changes in Research Professorships/Extension Faculty. DAFVM would like to have the current catalog reflect the current operating procedure. There is an academic affiliation for these appointments.

On motion form Dr. Bullington and second from Dr. Wise, the Council approved the changes to the Graduate Bulletin as requested by DAFVM.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.