August 30, 2013

PRESENT: Amy Adkerson, Ashli-Brown-Johnson, Lori Bruce, Russell Carr, Tim Chamblee, PC Cinnella, Karen Coats, Bob Wolverton, Jr. (for Frances Coleman), Lara Dodds, Dana Franz, Julia Hodges, Debra Prince (for Dwight Hare), Beth Miller (for David Lewis), David Morse, Dan Reynolds, Scott Roberts, Peter Ryan, Kirk Swortzel, Steve Taylor, Vemitra White, Margaret McMullen, Chris Rousseau, Forest Sparks, Pam Sullivan

ABSENT: Tommy Anderson (excused), Tim Barnett (excused), Steve Elder, Judy Schneider, Jerry Gilbert (excused), Jon Rezek, David Shaw, Juan Silva (excused)

GUESTS: None

1. The August 2013 meeting of the Graduate Council was called to order by Dr. Scott Robert, Vice Chair. He welcomed the new 2013-2014 Council members and Dr. Lori Bruce, new Dean of the Graduate School.

2. Minutes of previous meetings: There was a motion and second to approve the minutes of the April and May 2013 meetings, with noted typos to be corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)—Dr. Kirk Swortzel

   After a motion by Dana Franz and a second by Lara Dodds, the Graduate Council reviewed the proposed modification for the Materials Science Engineering Certificate Program submitted by the College of Engineering. The Council identified several concerns with the proposed modification.

   There was some confusion regarding requirements for certificate programs, mostly concerning whether these programs need to identify themselves as either undergraduate or graduate certificate programs. AOP 12.08 stipulates different minimum requirements for graduate vs. undergraduate certificates, but doesn’t specifically speak to programs that don’t identify themselves as one or another. This certificate program doesn’t identify itself as either and seems to have elements of both. All but two of the courses listed are at either the 3000-level or the 4000/6000-level, but the two 8000-level courses and the fact that a thesis or dissertation can substitute for the DIS requirement suggests an element of graduate certificate.

   The Certificate Requirements section suggests that a grade of ‘C’ or higher must be obtained in each class. This would satisfy the GPA requirement for an undergraduate certificate (2.0) but not for a graduate certificate (3.0). Would graduate students completing the certificate program be required to maintain at 3.0 GPA for these courses or only a 2.0?

   Clearly the intent is to allow graduate students to complete the certificate program. However, there is a requirement for one course from the Level I list. All of these courses are 3000-level courses which grad students cannot take for credit on their program of study. Presumably a graduate student would either be able to substitute another course or count a course that they took as an undergraduate. If the certificate is allowing substitutes, what courses are allowed? If credit is allowed for the course taken as an undergrad, what if the student received a ‘C’ in that course? Council needs more detail clarifying these issues.

   The requirements for the certificate list 12 hours of coursework from Level 1, Level II, and Level III courses plus a 3-hour of Directed Individual Study (Engr. 4000 – an undergrad DIS) for a total of 15 hours. Substitutions for the DIS course are stipulated including either ChE/ECE/ME 4883/6883 or a MS thesis or PhD dissertation. Since theses and dissertations are not graded credit hours, nor are 8000/9000 thesis/dissertation research...
hours, how do they factor into the 15 hour requirement? Again, language that clarifies these questions is required.

A couple of minor issues were noted. The title page simply refers to this as the “Materials Certificate Program,” yet on the chart providing the program description, as well as on the brochure advertising the program, the name is the “Materials Science and Engineering Certificate Program.” The name must be consistent, and the approval form should give the proper name for the program.

The “Minimum Admissions Requirements” mentions candidates in categories (1) and (2), yet there are only two categories now mentioned in the section above. (Previously there were 3.) So essentially all candidates will have either met the requirements upon entrance into the program, or will complete those requirements concurrently.

At the end of the list of courses that can be taken, a total of 15 hours is indicated. This obviously includes the DIS course or an approved substitute, yet those are not shown in the list of courses implying that 15 hours of Level I, II, & III courses must be taken. This must be clarified.

Dan Reynolds moved to table the motion, and Debra Prince seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The questions and concerns will be communicated to Dr. Judy Schneider, the certificate’s contact person.

4. Report from the Graduate School: Dr. Lori Bruce, Dean of the Graduate School

Dr. Roberts welcomed Dr. Bruce to her initial Graduate Council meeting as Dean of the Graduate School. Dr. Bruce’s report spotlighted five aspects of the Graduate School: Graduate Student Showcase, Graduate Faculty Showcase, Graduate School Updates, Graduate Academic Programs, and Graduate Enhancement Programs. Questions and discussion followed. A copy of her presentation is attached.

5. Report from the Graduate Student Association (GSA): Vemitra White, President

Vemitra White reported that the GSA began the 2013-2014 year with involvement in several activities: they donated paper and pencils at the Starkville Back to School Bash held at the Starkville SportsPlex on July 27; they co-sponsored lunch with Holmes Cultural Diversity Center for the New International Student Orientation on August 17; and they had a booth on both August 16 and 17 for the International Student Orientation, where they passed out graduate student decals, luggage tags, and GSA pens. On September 28th, they will volunteer at a special fishing event for children at the Palmer Home, sponsored by Friends of Noxubee Refuge in conjunction with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The first GSA meeting of the year was held on August 28 at 5:15 PM in McCool Hall 111. Dr. Bruce spoke to the group of 48 students in attendance. The next general meeting will take place on September 20 from 12:00-1:00 PM in McCool Hall 109.

6. New Business

Election of two Graduate School faculty representatives for the Academic Review Board: Dr. Karen Coats

Dr. Coats stated that it is time for the two-year reappointment to the Academic Review Board (grade appeal) and she had asked Dr. Kevin Williams from Communication to serve as the full member and Dr. Steve Gwaltney from Chemistry to serve as the alternate. With Dr. Reynolds’ move to accept the nominations and Dr. Carr’s second, Drs. Williams and Gwaltney were unanimously elected to fill these vacancies.

Student Exit Survey: Dr. Tim Chamblee

Dr. Chamblee distributed copies of the 2012-2013 MSU Graduate Exit Survey Results published by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.
7. Dr. Roberts announced that the next Council meeting is September 27, 2013. He further stated that the October meeting is scheduled for the 25th, which is during Fall Break, because of a conflict scheduling Room 611. Several stated they could not be present on the 25th. Because UCCC meets on October 18, the possibility of moving the meeting to November 1 was mentioned. No action was taken.

8. The meeting was adjourned.