Discussion Items:

1. Economic Development Fellows Consulting Program (Tim Tripp, Office of University Economic Development, OVPR; see the recent Star Tribune feature on the Program)

Tim Tripp presented the group with an overview of the Economic Development Fellows Consulting Program. The program grew out of the Advanced Professional Degree Consulting Club, a student organization that worked in teams to provide consulting services to local industry. The goals aligned well with the Office for University Economic Development, headed by Tripp, to form closer partnerships with local business and industry. Tripp reviewed the number of students that had been involved, the companies and projects they had consulted on, and the estimated value they had contributed to industry through their free-consulting work. He also reviewed the timeline and process for soliciting student/postdoc fellows and project volunteers, as well as business proposals for the three annual project cycles.

Since fall 2016, the Graduate School has worked in partnership with UED and OVPR to promote the program to students with the intention of attracting more students, and students from a broader representation of fields. A future goal is to also increase the range of projects submitted by companies, which will also likely increase student interest. For the spring project cycle info session, more than 320 students and postdocs expressed an interest (compared to approximately 90 last cycle), and more than 80 attended the info session in January. We will be assessing the expansion of this pilot project, with a long-term goal of developing a proposal that could generate state funding.

2. Graduate Education Policy Oversight and Compliance (Scott Lanyon): Lanyon explained that there has not been any formal mechanism for monitoring some aspects of compliance with any of the graduate education policies since they were instituted as University-wide policies more than four years ago. The policies are now undergoing comprehensive review, and the issue of compliance has been raised. Lanyon would like to develop a matrix of policy responsibilities to help track such things as timelines for review, policy issues, and compliance. He asked GEC members to think about whether there were policies they thought we in particular need of additional compliance monitoring, or aspects of policy to pay
particular attention to, who should be responsible for such monitoring, and to communicate this back to him.

3. Duluth Campus PhD Programs (Scott Lanyon): Lanyon explained that Duluth faculty have expressed an interest in increasing the number of PhD students at UMD in UMD-based programs. None of the current PhD programs are administratively housed at Duluth. Lanyon also clarified that while PhD programs are restricted to the U of MN by state legislation, they are not restricted to the Twin Cities campus of the U. The University has guidelines about what aspects a proposed graduate program must have in place in order to be approved, so this ensures consistency across our campuses.

Duluth administrators have asked their faculty to think about cross-cutting programs that Duluth might be particularly well-suited to offer that do not duplicate TC campus programs. What sort of programs would draw on the strengths of Duluth? The idea would be to have new programs that are doing something fundamentally different than what is happening on the TC campus. The fact that Duluth is a smaller campus may also have some advantages.

When this topic has been raised in the past, some TC faculty have expressed concern over the issue of quality control between the two campuses, and allowing independent PhD degree granting on Duluth campus. It was also stated that if this were to be implemented, the rationale must be academic and in the best interest of students. An intermediate step might be to move the core administrative function of programs such as Water Resources Management, which are U-Wide, to the Duluth campus. The current DGS is exploring whether it is more cost-effective to administer the program from the TC campus as opposed to Duluth, but this may not be the most important consideration.

Updates:
1. Policy Review Subcommittee (Liz Davis): Davis gave an update on the status in the review and approval process for the following policies: 1) Eligibility to Serve on Graduate Examinations Committees, 2) Admission to Master’s and Doctoral Degrees, 3) Readmission and Changes to Master’s and Doctoral Degree Objectives. All three were approved by SCEP in March, and will be presented to PAC in April.

2. Graduate School Updates (Char Voight, Karen Starry)
   a. Notification of Conditions for Readmission
   b. Request for Thesis Hold (Embargo) Form

The GEC also discussed the University’s response to President Trump’s Executive Order on Immigration, particularly with respect to students from affected countries who have been accepted into graduate programs. Do they have the right to defer admission for a year (yes)? The GEC was referred by Lanyon to Dean Tsantir, Director of the Central Admissions Office, for more information and knowledge about what other institutions might be doing. Student Legal Services and ISSS are also critical sources of expertise and information in answering questions from current and prospective students, as well as faculty who may be affected.