**Graduate Education Council**

**Meeting of**

**Tuesday, April 24, 2012**

**1:00 – 3:00 p.m., 433 Johnston Hall**

**Minutes**

**Present:** Victor Barocas, Richard Brundage, Belinda Cheung (staff), Kathleen Conklin, Shawn Curley, Jigna Desai, Vicki Field (staff), Ameeta Kelekar, Ann Masten, Christopher Phelan, Tim Salo, Henning Schroeder, Char Voight (staff), Elizabeth Wattenberg

**Guests:** Nita Krevans (chair, Graduate School Policy Review Committee), Karen Starry (director, Graduate Student Services and Progress)

**For action:**

1. Approval of the notes and minutes from the March 20, 2012, GEC meeting: the notes and the minutes from the 3.20.12 GEC meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Request to discontinue several academic plans and subplans in the College of Education and Human Development (Henning Schroeder; attachments: letters of March 21 and April 11, 2012, from Dean Jean Quam requesting program discontinuation):
   - Family, Youth, and Community subplan for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Education, Curriculum and Instruction
   - Social Work graduate minor
   - Work and Human Resource Education graduate minor

The request to discontinue these CEHD academic plans is a result of the PCAS project that encouraged programs to review their offered degree objectives. GEC discussion focused on the need to perhaps have more information about the request to merge or discontinue programs in the future to facilitate discussion and decision, particularly with regard to the impact on students and student views on mergers and program closures. Ultimately, though, programs and collegiate units are in the best position to determine which programs should be merged or discontinued.

The motion to approve the request to discontinue the CEHD academic plans and subplans passed unanimously.

**For information:**

1. Updates (Henning Schroeder)
   a) Recruitment of Fulbright Scholars: There is an effort to increase the number of Fulbrights scholars at the University. ISSS is providing matching funds to offset the gap between the fellowship and the actual cost of education to help in this effort.
   b) 2012-13 NSF Fellows (list of NSF Fellows by college attached): To date, we have increased the number to of NSF Fellows to 81. A course is now being offered to train students to write NSF proposals. It was suggested that courses might also be offered to faculty to assist them in writing letters of support. It was also suggested that the University might make available successful proposals and letters as examples to others wishing to submit NSF applications.
c) Announcement and call for applications for fall 2012 faculty workshop on developing and sustaining interdisciplinary graduate programs (announcement attached): This information has been circulated to interdisciplinary faculty and to DGSs.

2. Council of Graduate Students’ Resolution on Timely Review of Ph.D. Programs Identified as “Need Reassessment” and Charge for COGS Ph.D. Program Metrics Committee (Mr. Salo and Ms. Weisenhorn; COGS documents attached): Tim Salo presented on these issues. COGS would like to see a process of identifying programs that need reassessment as an institutional policy as well as the process for the reviews. Charge for COGS Ph.D. Program Metrics Committee: The aim of this committee is to educate the broader body of graduate students on issue of metrics. The committee would like to be in a position to offer some recommendations on metrics that should be used for program evaluation and assessment. The committee will work on this in the summer. Pamela Weisenhorn will be the chair. The purpose of the agenda item for the GEC meeting today is to have Salo bring these resolutions forward and to speak briefly to them. There will be a more robust conversation at the May meeting.

3. Update on graduate education transition (Karen Starry): Starry updated GEC members on the transition of GSSP staff to ASR. Reporting lines will shift on July 1, and there will also be a physical relocation, though space has not yet been identified. She reassured Council members that, at least for the short-term, student support staff will continue to provide the same services to students and faculty as they have in the past.

4. Update from the Graduate Education Policy Review Committee (Nita Krevans): Krevans updated GEC members on the policies that have been posted for public comment (Admission, Readmission, and Post-baccalaureate certificates). The main substantive comment concerned the elimination of the requirement for a minimum English language proficiency standard, though guidelines will be retained.

Degree progress and completion policies: These have been approved by the Policy Advisory Committee and will go to President’s Policy Committee for review and approval on June 5. The committee is still in the process of making changes that are primarily related to the technical procedures, forms and so on.

Krevans told GEC members that the policy on fellowships will go to the Senate next week for review. The committee will not draft an advising policy at this point, but instead will develop best practices guidelines on advising that will be posted on a very visible web site. The site will link the issue of concern with the University policies and practices that are related to these issues (e.g., sexual harassment, code of conduct).

*For discussion:*

1. Graduate education policy transition plan (Henning Schroeder and Nita Krevans): Krevans explained that the committee will end its work soon (June) and the work will be transitioning to Graduate School staff. There will also be a role for the GEC in review of proposed policies and monitoring, somewhat similar to what the Council has experienced over the last two years. GEC members would like to ensure that the Senate will continue to consult appropriately with the GEC on matters related to educational policy affecting graduate education.
2. Filling open seats on the GEC (Henning Schroeder; attachments: GEC bylaws and relevant excerpts from bylaws of committees of the University Senate): The GEC bylaws do not specify how the body should deal with open seats in between elections. The decision about how to deal with this issue may be dependent on the length of time to fill (e.g., 6 months or 2 years) for any particular vacancy and we may take different approaches depending. The GEC may also look at the Senate bylaws in terms of language and adapt it for the GEC bylaws. Members who will be vacating their seats before the end of their elected term will need to inform the committee by a certain deadline so that plans can be made to replace them or have their seat on the slate as part of the next election.

Review of the bylaws also raised the issue of ex officio members on GEC from AHC and TC Dean’s Council. If the GEC thinks this representation is important, then the bylaws would continue to reflect this stance. Council members also discussed whether it would be preferable to just let the TC Dean’s Council decide if a representative should be sent to GEC meetings, or whether the preference should be for an individual (and possibly an alternate) to be identified for a specific term.

3. Proposed plan for handling graduate student academic complaints (Karen Starry; attachments: proposed Graduate School conflict resolution process for student academic complaints; Board of Regents Policy on Conflict Resolution Process for Student Academic Complaints; Administrative procedure on Conflict Resolution Process for Student Academic Complaints: Twin Cities; appendix to policy: Guidelines for Colleges: Hearings Under the Conflict Resolution Process for Student Academic Complaints: Twin Cities): With the restructuring of graduate education, the question of whether we need to change the current policies and procedures with regard to this issue has surfaced. The proposed plan is to maintain a neutral third party in the Office of Graduate Education, following the same academic procedures that are currently in place. The proposed plan would call for a pool of 7 faculty and students. Henning would appoint one of the faculty members as the academic grievance officer. We would then follow the process as outlined in the meeting handout on the proposal.

4. Update on Quality Metrics Allocation Plan (Henning Schroeder): The Graduate School will convene an extended quality metrics review committee with one representative from every college to develop a plan for allocations moving forward. Pamela Weisenhorn could also be the student representative on the committee, given her leadership role in the COGS initiative on quality metrics.

5. Graduate Review and Improvement Process (GRIP) (Henning Schroeder; attachments: draft project description and list of program participants for pilot project): Schroeder briefly described the GRIP initiative. There are 8 programs in a pilot study that will launch next fall. The Graduate School is funding the pilot and intends to generate lessons learned from this process.