Graduate Council Minutes
September 18, 2009

Council Members Present:

Dr. Lowell Caneday, Vice-Chair
Dr. Barbara Stoecker, Group I
Dr. Allen Scott, Group II
Dr. Merrall Price, Group II
Dr. Rob Whiteley, Group III
Dr. Tim Passmore, Group V
Dr. Lin Liu, Group VI

Graduate College:

Dr. Gordon Emslie
Dr. Mark Payton
Dr. Craig Satterfield

Guests:

Mr. Aravind Seshadri and Ms. Stephanie Rogers (GPSGA)
Dr. Mark Weiser (SSB)

The start of the official meeting was delayed until 2:40 PM due to lack of a quorum. All actions requiring a vote occurred between 2:40 PM and 3:30 PM, at which point other commitments of Council members again left the Council without a quorum.

Approval of August 12, 2009 minutes

Following a motion (Price) and a second (Scott), the August 12, 2009 minutes of the Graduate Council were approved.

GPSGA Report

Stephanie Rogers, Vice President, gave the report. GPSGA has had three meetings so far; their main goals are to improve visibility and increase awareness of GPSGA’s purpose. The Welcome Reception was very successful. They are active in a variety of university committees and have organized a professional development series to be offered throughout the year. Another goal is to increase the level of funding for graduate student travel to professional conferences.
New/Modified Programs

New program request (M.S. in Entrepreneurship): Dr. Emslie reported that the Academic Program Committee had discussed this proposal and recommended that it be forwarded to the Council. It was pointed out that two of the key faculty members listed in the proposal were not currently members or affiliates of the graduate faculty, and Drs. Emslie and Weiser agreed to contact the department to rectify this. There was some discussion about whether the degree was better characterized as an MS in Entrepreneurship or an MSE. Following a motion (Scott) and second (Whiteley), the Council agreed unanimously to accept the proposal under either designation, and Dr. Emslie agreed to suggest the alternative designation to the department.

Program Option deletion (Political Science): This proposal had been tabled at the last Council meeting, to allow the unit to provide a more appropriate justification for the request. Following a motion (Scott) and second (Price), the Council unanimously agreed to recommend the proposed changes.

Program name/Option changes (Natural Sciences M.S.): Drs. Emslie and Payton indicated that this was a “housekeeping” request, to place the Options currently within the Natural and Applied Sciences degree into a more appropriate framework, of one degree (Interdisciplinary Science) with two Options (Aviation and Space Science, and Health Care Administration). It was also stressed that it was also possible to earn the degree without specifying an Option, in which case the degree would conform to both the current Interdisciplinary Science and Natural Science Options, i.e., a “thematic” degree involving courses from at least three units. The participating departments had been contacted and had indicated their agreement with this change. Following a motion (Scott) and second (Stoecker), the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Graduate Assistant Responsibilities and Benefits: The Graduate College presented proposed Catalog wording that would limit graduate assistant employment to 0.5 FTE, in order that graduate assistants would have an adequate time to devote to study. Mr. Seshadri suggested that the proposal be amended to permit 0.75 FTE employment in summer, since the required course load during the summer term is only three credit hours. After some discussion, it was agreed to amend the language accordingly and to seek input (e.g., from Instruction Council) prior to returning the proposal for Graduate Council review.

It was also pointed out by a Council member that current policy does not permit employment as GTAs or GRAs after graduation, even although the student may have related work (e.g., manuscript preparation) still to complete. Dr. Emslie agreed to discuss this matter with appropriate university offices and report back to Council.
**Professional Masters Degrees:** Citing significant impetus at the national level, the Graduate College circulated draft language to define a “professional” master’s degree, i.e., a terminal master’s degree that was not a “stepping stone” to a doctoral degree. The Council agreed to review the draft language with their respective groups.

**Graduate College Report**

Dr. Emslie reported that graduate enrollment had reached an all-time high of 4667. There were numerous “highlights,” including new student enrollment in Tulsa up some 30%. He indicated that this had had a significant positive effect on the overall university budget.

The colleges have been sent letters committing Graduate College funds for FY 2011 recruitment. Despite this year’s budget cuts, commitments for FY 2010 will be honored. However, the FY 2011 letters have a slightly reduced amount of money for top-tier fellowships, to guard against possible future budget cuts. Offsetting this, the level of tuition support was increased, in part due to dollars freed up by the recently-implemented initiative to automatically bill contracts and grants for GRA resident tuition.

Dr. Payton reported on ongoing discussions regarding the SPEAK and ITA exams for non-native English speakers who seek employment as GTAs. He indicated that the OSU-administered SPEAK test would be phased out in favor of scores on the Speaking section of the internet-based TOEFL (iBT) examination. The current proposal (originating in Instruction Council) is for students who score at least 26 on the Speaking section of the iBT to be exempt from further testing, while students who score from 22-24 would require only the ITA examination. This would require a restructuring of the fee scale for these tests and, more importantly, require that departments request applicants to submit iBT scores to review in the expectation of an offer of GTA employment.

Dr. Satterfield distributed new recruiting bookmarks, each highlighting a different graduate program. These will be used at recruiting fairs, and will also be made available electronically for departments to use. The Council was charged with urging departments who had not yet contributed material for these bookmarks to do so as soon as possible.

Dr. Emslie reported that the RCR policy has been implemented. However, in response to a variety of concerns, its contents may be adjusted somewhat over the next month or so.

**Requirements for Graduate Coordinators:** Dr. Emslie proposed that the Council draft a set of requirements (e.g., OSU faculty member, voting member of the graduate faculty) for an individual to serve as a graduate coordinator for a department or program. Dr. Caneday agreed to draft language to this effect, to be presented at the next Council meeting.
Old Business

*Graduate Course Syllabus Requirement:* Following an earlier request by Council to draft language to this effect, Dr. Payton distributed a document for Council review. Price moved and Scott seconded that the document be approved with a minor revision. The motion was approved unanimously.

*Graduate Minors:* The Graduate College reminded the Council that graduate minors do not require approval by any University body and yet may appear on the transcript. Payton questioned whether minors were appropriate for graduate degrees and noted that replacing them with Graduate Certificates (which require proper University approval) might be the best option. Dr. Caneday distributed draft wording to define a “graduate minor” and to delineate its approval process. In the absence of a quorum, this issue was deferred to the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.