

MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

February 26, 2013

105 Houchens

Convene – Meeting Convened at 3:00 PM – Dr. Beth Boehm, dean of SIGS, presided.

Ex-Officio present: Paul DeMarco, Associate Dean SIGS

Members Present: Susan Olson Allen, Allen Ashman, Sherri Brown, Barbara Clark, Cynthia Corbitt, Christine Ehrick, Jennifer Gregg, Charles Hubscher, Mary Hums, Karen Kopelson, Luke Milligan, Eric Rouchka, Bibhuti Sar, David Scott, Sandra Smith (for Deborah Armstrong), Krista Wallace-Boaz, Jasie Stokes (for Amerisa Waters, Graduate Student Council), and Pam Yankeelov.

Members Absent: Ray Austin, Haribabu Bodduluri, Lijian Chen, Namok Choi, Eileen Estes, James Fiet, Christopher Greenwell, Debra Journet, and Balaji Panchapakesan.

Guests: none

1. **Convene** – Dr. Beth Boehm opened the meeting at 3:00 PM. in Room 105 Houchens.
2. **ACTION Item: Approval of minutes of December 11, 2012**
Dr. Boehm asked for approval of the special meeting on December 11, 2012 (Graduate Council and Deans Advisory group) held in 139 Shumaker. MOTION to approve by Jennifer Gregg; seconded by Charles Hubscher. APPROVED. Note: The special notes from this meeting will be attached as an addendum to the council minutes.
3. **ACTION ITEM: Nominations for Honorary Degree**
Dr. Boehm mentioned that Dr. Barbara Clark has been elected as the new chair of the Honorary Degree committee (replacing Dr. Pam Yankeelov) and asked if she would make the recommendations of the committee the nominations with the council.
 - a. **Henry Vogt Heuser, Jr. (by Blake Haselton)** – nominated for Honorary PhD Degree for Public Service (see attached nomination). James Graham Brown Cancer Center. Pending letters of support, the committee is bringing this nomination forward to the council for recommendation to the board and second. APPROVED.
 - b. **Howard Fineman (by Susan Duncan)** – nominated for Honorary PhD for doctorate in law (see attached nomination). Received four strong letters of support. Best known for his political and journalistic background. Currently is Editorial Director of AOL Huffington Post Media Group and will be graduation speaker for the Brandeis School of Law on May 15, 2013. Recommendation to the board and second. APPROVED.
4. **Update on University Fellowship nominations** – Dr. Paul DeMarco
Dr. DeMarco reported that 43 student nominated for fellowships this year; have made 29 offers. SIGS hopes to fund 25. We will continue to offer since some have declines. Last year somewhere about 50% declines, so we're going to try to be aggressive in early offers.
5. **Update on Progress toward Electronic Theses and Dissertations** – Dr. Paul DeMarco
Dr. DeMarco reported about the progress

- a. We now have a template in Microsoft Word so students can plug their text in and the formatting is done for them. Courtney Kerr is ready to send a data test to all students that intend to graduate this semester and 10-15 cross-section of students will be selected to test the system in a cross-section of students. A service account will be used to receive pdf documents. IT does not anticipate that file size of documents should be a problem. Guidelines and procedures will be determined a bit later.
 - b. The goal is to have all communications between Courtney and the students be electronic and the documents can be sent to the library. We have been working with Allan Ashman and Tyler Goldberg in the library to work out the bugs of the process.
6. **Report from Graduate Student Council** – Jasie Stokes (sitting in for Amerisa Waters and nominated for student council president). Jasie introduced herself as a Humanities PhD Student and a University Fellow.
- 7.
- a. **Graduate Student Research Symposium, March 21, 9 AM-4 PM, Student Activity Center- Floyd Auditorium (Jasie).** There are still openings for submissions, there are 30 so far. Looking for volunteers to judge the submissions. Instead of conference style it will be poster presentation. Two faculty members are needed (one on social sciences/humanities and one from another program). Three-minute thesis presentations and poster (based on thesis competition presentation model method from Australia). Prizes will be awarded to presenters. Information on the symposium will be emailed to Dr. Boehm and she will share it. It will be shared with DGS' on Friday, March 1. Note: Christine Ehrick (History) volunteered.
 - b. **Graduate Student Safety and Climate Survey**
 Dr. Boehm reported on this survey (Graduate Student Council partnered with Institutional Research) from students last May. Part of the climate they asked questions about mentors. Redacted by IR and further redacted by Dr. Boehm (e.g. corrected English when necessary or if student would be made known). These are bland critiques, if responded “why are you not satisfied” it forwarded the student to another screen. One of the things that Dr. Boehm saw as four big areas of complaint:
 1. Neglectful
 2. Unresponsive (don't answer emails, don't communicate with student)
 3. Not knowledgeable (about university processes, give bad advice)
 4. Mean/nasty--slave driver type

Also “those who are satisfied” are not looking for a whole lot from mentors: kind, patient, and wants student to succeed. Knowledgeable, they care about student, are available (via email, etc.). It's not all that much that we ask our mentors to do these things.

About 65 comments about unhappiness, and probably about the same for satisfied. The survey will be shared with DGS's.

Question asked about if we know survey responses were from masters or doctoral students. It's hard to know.

8. **Old Business** –

- a) DGS Meeting this Friday, March 1 in Miller IT Center at 2:00 PM. One of the things we'll be talking about is conditional and provisional non-degree students. They will not be able to keep registering for classes. DGS' are invited and maybe even bring the person that does the Peoplesoft work in your department.
- b) Translational Neuroscience Interdisciplinary program – is getting close. Letters from four or five chairs of participating departments or that have mentors in the program. The School of Medicine Graduate Council is meeting to discuss it this Friday. Dr. Magnus is going to present there. After we hear from all chairs, it will come to Academic Affairs Committee and Graduate Council.
- c) **Stipend increases?** - Dr. Boehm reported that the Frazier Family donated \$22 million to the university. Of that, they are designating \$1 million for graduate school stipends in endowments. Could spend down now but that would be short-term. Keith Inman, Vice President of Administration, is working to raise another \$1 million to match it. We'd spend the income from that. Not going to happen next year. Departments that have funds through grants or other resources can raise their minimum stipends; are allowed to do that.
- d) She also commented that we got a commitment from the Provost to add \$40,000 CAR money to our program this summer and another \$40,000 next year for a total pool of \$80,000 that would allow graduate students to solicit buy-outs for teaching loads (i.e. to complete a dissertation). When we get that money we'll figure that out.
- e) **New Business** – none
- f) **Adjournment** – MOTION by Charles Hubscher to adjourn at 3:35 PM. Second by Sandra Smith..

Respectfully submitted 2/27/13

Jan Link, Recording Secretary

Reviewed

Approved Graduate Council Meeting April 23, 2013