
GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL

Minutes of 23 September 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council was called to order at 3 p.m. on 28 October 2021 via Webex by Gene Freudenburg, chair.

Members Present: Dawn Anderson, Julie Apker, Michele Behr, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Carrie Cumming, Jennifer Fiore, Gene Freudenburg, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Sally Hadden (substitute for James Palmitessa), Rob Lyerla, Timothy Michael, Candice Seifer

Members Absent: Nicolas Witschi, Marcellis Zondag

Advisory Members Present: Edwin Martini

Ex Officio Present: David Flanagan

Guest(s): Malia Roberts, Interim Senior Director, Graduate College; Bradley Bazuin, Chair, Electrical and Computer Engineering; Janos Grantner, Electrical and Computer Engineering; Carol Weideman, Human Performance and Health Education

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

The agenda was amended to entertain discussion and action on curriculum proposals earlier in the meeting.

[MOTION] It was moved by Flanagan, seconded by Behr, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Apker, seconded by Hadden, to approve the 27 May 2021 minutes as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Freudenburg stated that he has been asked to provide an update on council activities to the Faculty Senate office in preparation for Faculty Senate President Marilyn Kritzman's report to the WMU Board of Trustees. Apker offered to provide last year's reports as a reference for this monthly request.

Ex Officio Flanagan conveyed that the Faculty Senate Executive Board was provided a demonstration of Curriculog by Interim Curriculum Manager Nick Witschi. He also shared concerns raised in the Faculty Senate regarding the lack of a proper communication process between colleges/units during and after the review of curricular changes and the proposals being put into effect. He informed the council of the indelible loss of Chris Coryn, who passed away on 24 October 2021.

Reports of University Representatives

Dean Byrd-Jacobs reported that the Graduate Writing Circles initiated by the Grad College were well received by graduate students, which has led to a second session being added. It will be flexible with a virtual option. With respect to recruiting efforts, the Graduate College received feedback from 77 graduate program applicants who were admitted to different programs but did not enroll. Analysis of the feedback will be shared with Deans and this council. She went on to report that 31 graduate students applied for travel grants and 30 students applied for research grants, which are currently being reviewed. She had suggested that there be champions for graduate students/education as part of the proposed University strategic planning process.

Martini informed the council about the renaming of the University College to the Merze Tate College, which was approved by the Board of Trustees. He mentioned that Provost Bott reconstituted the committee for Interdisciplinary Proposal reviews. He indicated that the Salesforce portal, used for student admission management, will have upgrade changes. He mentioned that the GoWMU site will be updated in the near future.

Seifer of the Graduate Student Association reported that GSA is finding that communicating to all graduate students is difficult. Byrd-Jacobs suggested that GSA reach out to Malia Roberts, so that she can publish the information in the graduate newsletter, which the Graduate College will be distributing soon. Flanagan was asked to report to the Western Student Association liaison.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

None.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Ex Officio Flanagan led a discussion of MOA-19/07: Revision of the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs-Academic Policies-Registration-Dropping or Adding Classes. The MOA is in consideration of changing drops and adds for summer semesters. It was noted that other universities have three days, while WMU has five days. The MOA proposes changing it to four days. Cumming shared the data on students who dropped/added classes during summer for the past three years. Discussion was held.

Lee provided summaries of two proposals and addressed questions.

[MOTION] It was moved by Apker, seconded by Anderson to approve proposal GSC_CHHS11-21A_SPADA_Other-Cert.fall22 and GSC_CHHS11-21B_SPADA_Other-Cert.fall22 as a package. The motion carried unanimously.

[MOTION] It was moved by Anderson, seconded by Apker, to approve proposal GSC_CHHS11-21_SPADA_New-Cert.fall22. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

Behr proposed a future discussion topic to be on ways to increase graduate enrollment, even though it is not a GSC charge. She suggested an exchange of ideas on this topic.

Anderson suggested a topic for discussion at a future meeting would be a curriculum proposal that includes credit hour change as applied to the WMU credit hour policy.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Flanagan, seconded by Anderson, to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next Graduate Studies Council meeting will be 28 October 2021 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Muralidhar Ghantasala, secretary

Minutes approved on 28 October 2021.