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**GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL**

Minutes of 18 November 2021

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:03 p.m. on 18 November 2021 virtually via Webex by Gene Freudenburg, chair.

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

**Members Absent:** Julie Apker, Marcellis Zondag

**Advisory Members Present:** Edwin Martini

**Ex Officio Present:** David Flanagan

**Guest(s):** Malia Roberts, Interim Senior Director, Graduate College; Karen Blaisure, Family and Consumer Science; Adriane Little, Art; Carol Weideman, Human Performance and Health Education

**Quorum**

A quorum was present.

**Agenda**

The agenda was amended to move New Business before Unfinished Business.

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

**Minutes**

The minutes were amended such that Item A had an addition that Flanagan withdrew the motion on MOA-19/07.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Flanagan, seconded by Ghantasala, to approve the 28 October 2021 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports of Officers**

Chair Freudenburg reported that MOA-19/07: Revision of the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs-Academic Policies Registration-Dropping or Adding Classes is still under review by the Undergraduate Studies Council and may be on a future GSC agenda.

Chair Freudenburg asked for consideration of canceling the December GSC meeting. Discussion was held, and it was determined that the 9 December meeting would be conducted as scheduled.

Ex Officio Flanagan reported that the Writing Center Director Kim Ballard is willing to attend a future GSC meeting for discussion of Writing Center services in relation to graduate students. The Research Policies Council is reviewing MOA-21/06: Conflict of Interest Policy for Research Investigators. Ex Officio Flanagan inquired if GSC would want to take up a discussion regarding reduction and ways to improve graduate enrollment.

**Reports of University Representatives**

Dean Byrd-Jacobs supported the suggestion of discussion regarding the state of graduation education at WMU. She clarified the role of the Writing Center, stating that it will provide input on "how to write", but does not correct theses or dissertations written by graduate students. Dean Byrd-Jacobs stated that Midwestern Graduate Teaching Excellence award nominations are due 1 December, and encouraged GSC members to assist in disseminating reminders that a WMU graduate student won this award three years ago. She provided survey results regarding WMU admitted graduate students who did not enroll. One of the major findings of the survey is lack of communication with the students from respective

departments at different stages of the application process. Informing the students about the status of the review process appears critical in positively influencing the student's decision in enrolling in a program. She clarified that funding (offer of GA/TA/DA) information and admission decision information is separate. Dean Byrd-Jacobs reported that the advertisement for the Vice President of Research and Innovation position is being developed by the search committee.

Martini supported the idea of requesting the Director of the Writing Center to present about its activities and how it can help graduate students. He mentioned that Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott reconstituted the committee for Interdisciplinary Proposal. Two separate committees will look into fresh proposals and round 2 proposals this year, with the deadline for new proposals of 31 January. Of the 69 proposals submitted last year, 28 were progressed to round-two review. Martini mentioned the last of the strategic planning town hall sessions is scheduled on 3 December in the Bernhard Center.

Seifer reported that the Graduate Student Association elected a vice president. The GSC Executive Board will undergo restructuring on 28 November.

### **New Business**

Blaisure presented summaries of the two Family and Consumer Sciences curriculum proposals and addressed questions.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Hadden, seconded by Michael, to approve proposals GSC\_CEHD1175\_FCS\_Deletion-Major-YouthCommunityDevelopment.Fall22 and GSC\_CEHD1176\_FSC\_Deletion-Major-ADP-YouthCommunityDevelopment.Fall22 as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Little presented a summary of the Art curriculum proposal and addressed questions.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Hadden, seconded by Lyerla, to approve proposal GSC\_CFA01-21\_ART\_New-Major-Ceramics.Fall22 as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Weideman presented a summary of the Human Performance and Health Education proposal and addressed questions. Witschi raised a point of order questioning if GSC should be approving a name change. He noted that reduction of credit hours from 36 to 30 was not on the agenda. Discussion was held regarding the role and requirement for GSC approval. It was stated that the Graduate College had already approved this proposal. Chair Freudenburg and Ex Officio Flanagan will seek clarification on these points and report back to the council.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Ghantasala, seconded by Lyerla, to approve proposal GSC\_CEHD1156A\_HPHE\_ChangeTitle-Major-SportsCoaching.Fall22 as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Martini left the meeting at 4 p.m.

### **Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees**

None.

### **Unfinished Business**

Cumming led a discussion of council charge 5: *Review current repeat policy of selected courses for potential revisions. Conclude the initiative by producing a report to the Executive Board or a Memorandum of Action.* The council is being asked to consider a blanket repeat policy at the graduate level. When a student moves from one program to another, the GPA can be recalculated taking into consideration the core course requirement for different programs. A program change like this would be subject to approval by the Dean of the Graduate College based on the recommendation of graduate advisors. Discussion was held regarding the impact on student graduation and concerns were expressed. The council opted not to act.

Byrd-Jacobs noted that the policy pertaining to charge 3: *Review, provide best practices, and produce a Memorandum of Action in consultation with the dean of the Graduate College, regarding the awarding of*

*graduate faculty status* was revised in 2017. Specific criteria had been provided for awarding full graduate faculty status. Byrd-Jacobs mentioned that these are listed in the current grad catalogue. The Higher Learning Commission specifically requires evidence on current scholarly activity for awarding a faculty member full graduate faculty status. It was also noted that departments can have specific criteria as well. It was agreed to continue discussion of charge 3 on the next meeting agenda.

#### **Announcements**

None.

#### **Adjournment**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Ghantasala, seconded by Flanagan, to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next Graduate Studies Council meeting will be 9 December 2021 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

#### **Approval**

Submitted by Muralidhar Ghantasala, secretary

Minutes approved on 9 December 2021.