
GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL

Minutes of 9 December 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 9 December 2021 virtually 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, Rob Lyerla, Timothy Michael, Candice Seifer, Nicolas Witschi

Members Absent: James Palmitessa, Marcellis Zondag

Advisory Members Absent: Edwin Martini

Ex Officio Present: David Flanagan

Guest(s): Kelly Ackerson, Nursing; Steve Covell, Chair, Comparative Religion; Lisa DeChamo-Cook, Geography, Environment, and Tourism; Malia Roberts, Interim Senior Director, Graduate College; Lisa Singletary, Interim Director, Nursing

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

The agenda was amended to remove discussion of council charge #3.

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

Minutes

A correction was made.

[MOTION] It was moved by Anderson, seconded by Flanagan, to approve the 18 November 2021 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Freudenburg reported on his report to the Faculty Senate Executive Board regarding Charge 5 as discussed at the November meeting. In November, it was proposed that today's meeting be reserved for discussion of the status and future of graduate education and research at WMU. If approved, the four curriculum proposals on today's agenda are effective fall 2022, and it was therefore necessary to act on them today. The chair proposes that the 27 January meeting be devoted to this discussion and that outlines for that meeting be discussed today. Earlier in the fall semester, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott was scheduled to meet with the council at its January meeting. A draft statement was prepared for that meeting as follows: *"WMU graduate programs are threatened by recent sharp declines in funding and enrollment and by severe faculty attrition; that many once-thriving programs are in a crisis; and that some have found it necessary to close. Successful graduate programs are closely tied to strong research, and both require significant institutional investment."* It is expected that later today WMU President Edward Montgomery will be announcing the Empowering Futures Gift initiatives. It is expected that \$200 million of the \$550 million endowment is to be used to enhance graduation rates and Diversity and Equity initiatives at WMU.

Ex Officio Flanagan reported on the evaluation of President Montgomery; it was requested that he take on a more visible role. Flanagan has invited him to speak to one of his classes. The Curriculum Decision Tree is being drafted by a small working group and is expected to be ready by the January meeting.

Reports of University Representatives

Dean Byrd-Jacobs reported that the writing circle continues to go well with 59 touch points so far this fall. A virtual version is beginning that has planned meetings from now through April. Research grants had 31 applicants with 18 awards. Travel grants had 13 applications, with all receiving awards. Kristen Foley is being awarded the Graduate Teaching Award. The Office of Faculty Development and OLLI have provided a fellowship to develop a lecture or series based on completed research or dissertation with the mentorship of a professor; nine graduate students applied.

Due to Martini's absence, he did not provide a report

Seifer reported on the Graduate Student Association. The GSA now has a full Executive Board, and they are focusing on the issue of moving the student numbers and improving enrollment.

Ghantasala joined the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Witschi provided an update on Curriculog. He gave a walkthrough of the new Curriculog site and explained the process for program and course revision, hopeful that the year and a half of effort will pay off as the new system is set to begin use in January. Individuals will sign in using their Bronco NetID and password, and the appropriate permissions will be granted. The process will allow anyone to track proposals in process and view the steps of the process for each type of curriculum proposal. There will be comment sections that can be used so that approvers can see discussions from others in the approval chain. There is a feature that will send the list of proposals to be considered at each meeting for the chair to include in agenda building.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Ackerson presented a summary of the Nursing proposal and addressed questions. The references not part of the catalog description must be deleted.

[MOTION] It was moved by Anderson, seconded by Flangan, to approve proposal GSC_CHHS31-21_NUR_New-Cert-NurseEducator.Fall22. The motion carried pending revisions.

Covell presented a summary of the Comparative Religion proposal and addressed questions.

[MOTION] It was moved by Apker, seconded by Behr, to approve proposal GSC&USC_CAS21-22_REL_Change-Master-RevisedGradRequirements.Fall22. The motion carried unanimously.

Lisa DeChano-Cook presented a summary of both of the Geography proposals and addressed questions.

[MOTION] It was moved by Anderson, seconded by Fiore, to approve proposal GSC_CAS21-03_GEOG_ChangeTitle-Cert-UnmannedAerialVehicles.Fall22. The motion carried pending revisions.

It was requested that the admission requirements be removed from proposal GSC&USC_CAS21-08_GEOG_Other-ADP-MSGeography.Fall22.

[MOTION] It was moved by Michael, seconded by Anderson to approve proposal GSC&USC_CAS21-08_GEOG_Other-ADP-MSGeography.Fall22. The motion carried pending revisions.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Fiore, seconded by Flanagan, to adjourn the meeting at 4:20 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next Graduate Studies Council meeting will be 27 January 2022 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Muralidhar Ghantasala, secretary

Minutes approved on 27 January 2022.