
GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL

Minutes of 24 February 2022

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 24 February 2022 virtually via Webex by Gene Freudenburg, chair.

Members Present: Dawn Anderson, Julie Apker, Michele Behr, Carrie Cumming, Jennifer Fiore, Gene Freudenburg, Muralidhar Ghantasala, Rob Lyerla, Timothy Michael, James Palmitessa, Candice Seifer, Nicolas Witschi, Marcellis Zondag

Members Absent: Christine Byrd-Jacobs

Advisory Members Present: Edwin Martini

Ex Officio Present: David Flanagan

Guest(s): Louann Bierlein Palmer, Educational Leadership, Research and Technology; Brett Geier, Educational Leadership, Research and Technology; Malia Roberts, Interim Senior Director, Graduate College

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Fiore, seconded by Apker, to approve the 27 January 2022 minutes as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Freudenburg asked council members to volunteer for the All-University Teaching Effectiveness and Research Awards review subcommittees.

Ex Officio Flanagan reported that it has been confirmed that an interim provost will be selected to serve at least one year while a national search is conducted.

Reports of University Representatives

Due to the absence of Dean Byrd-Jacobs, Roberts reported that the 3-minute Thesis competition, organized by the Graduate College, was held on 11 February. A total of 40 students participated in the event, with 20 attending in person and 20 virtually. Tabitu DiBacco was awarded first place. Roberts stated that the Graduate College is active in digital marketing via social media through YouTube, Instagram, and other platforms. Twenty-five welcome scholarships, at \$2,500 each, will be awarded for self-paying fall 2022 admitted students.

Dean Martini reported that WMUx, in conjunction with Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, will be providing support to graduate students. The WMUx Office of Faculty Development in collaboration with the Graduate College is organizing events for graduate students on Developing an Effective Relationship with Faculty Mentors. He stated that University President Edward Montgomery informed the Provost Council that Acting Provost Christopher Cheatham will serve for two months. The national search for a provost will begin in fall 2022. Martini indicated that Interdisciplinarity, Strategic Resource Management budget model, and other initiatives will continue as planned during this period.

Seifer provided the Graduate Student Association report. GSA is providing needs-based scholarships of \$1,000 each to graduate students who are able to demonstrate the need requirements. GSA in collaboration with WMUx will be facilitating graduate student study groups. Seifer requested council members to encourage graduate students to contribute articles to The Hilltop Review Journal, published by GSA. GSA will make monetary awards to the authors of the top three chosen best articles.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Hearit provided the InfoReady Application Review report. She gave an overview of the review process used for nominations of graduate students for the All University Teaching Effectiveness and Research Awards for this year. There were 41 departmental award nominations for the awards. In addition, there were 15 and 13 teaching and research effectiveness nominations, respectively. Volunteers from GSC are being sought for two review committees.

Unfinished Business

Flanagan explained the curriculum flow chart that outlines procedures for approving proposals that was developed by the Undergraduate Studies Council. However, the council found that the flow chart was not clear. The council determined it would postpone this topic until Curriculog is completely implemented in order to provide more clarity on the purpose of having such a document.

A draft Memorandum of Action was presented by Bierlein, Palmer, and Geier regarding the difficulties with the current six-credit hour thesis requirement for the Education Specialist Degree program and the need to change to a three-credit hour capstone course. Discussion was held.

[MOTION] It was moved by Michael, seconded by Palmitessa, to approve the MOA and put forward to the Executive Board for consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Freudenburg explained the need for an annual graduate studies data report and the purpose of a possible Memorandum of Action. Overall, there was consensus of the council membership for the MOA, and discussion will continue at the next meeting.

New Business

None.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Ghantasala, seconded by Apker, to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next Graduate Studies Council meeting will be 24 March 2022 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Muralidhar Ghantasala, secretary.

Minutes approved on 24 March 2022.