UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES

September 10, 2020   1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.   WEBEX

Council in Attendance:
Mike Wittie (Engineering)
Christopher Livingston (Architecture)
Brock Smith (Agriculture)
Mark Pernarowski (Letters & Science)
Tricia Seifert (Education)
Dawn Tarabochia (Health & Human Development)
Bradford Watson (Faculty Senate)
Catherine Dunlop (Letters & Science)
Anne Christensen (Business)
Que Vo (International Programs)
Dennis Aig (Arts)
Craig Ogilvie (Dean of The Graduate School)
Doralyn Rossmann (Library)
Maureen Kessler (Student Representative)

Also in Attendance:
Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)
Emily Peters (Graduate School)

Absent:
Wade Hill (Nursing)

Meeting started at 1:01 pm on WebEx
August 27, 2020 minutes
- Motion to approve by Dunlop, 2nd by Wittie, unanimously passed

Announcements
- **Welcome to new student member:** Maureen Kessler
  - **Additional new members:**
    - Mark Pernarowski (Math) substitute for Lisa Davis this semester
    - Doralyn Rossmann (Library) substitute for Sara Mannheimer this semester

- **Vice Chair:** Contact Livingston if willing to serve as Vice Chair

- **Update from the Dean:**
  - Focusing on safety and wellness of graduate students during pandemic: food scholarships, emergency fund, childcare scholarships, new initiative on graduate student wellbeing
  - Enrollment: over 2,000 graduate students enrolled for fall; up about 50-60 students

- ▪ Increase in retention

- • **Faculty Senate update (Watson)**
  - ○ Provost convened taskforce to look at the impact of COVID; focus on pedagogical offerings for spring semester and beyond
    - ▪ Deadline of early October before spring registration opens
  - ○ Q: Inviting graduate TA voices into the report?
    - ▪ A: No, graduate TAs were not included; Watson will relay the suggestion to include graduate TAs

Old Business
- • **Certificate in Mental Health Support:** no updates

- • **Graduate Certificate Policy:** no updates

New Business
- • **MSU Strategic Plan 1.2.4. "All graduate degree programs will undergo systematic review and, if appropriate, redesign to ensure that they are structured to meet the diverse career paths of today's students by 2022."**
  - ○ **Graduate Council taskforce to set framework for department-level reviews**
  - ○ Every graduate program is expected to look at the careers of their graduates and review how the program is preparing students for those careers; completion by 2022
  - ○ Dean Ogilvie proposes forming a taskforce to set the framework for these reviews
    - ▪ Academic Analytics data on doctoral graduates – departments should have access to this data, time to review, propose ways to support students in those career goals
    - ▪ Want to provide resources for departments to implement their plans – taskforce could draft strategic investment proposal (SIP) for departments to request funds
    - ▪ Tentative timeline: taskforce defines framework for department review, review Spring 2021/Fall 2021, Fall 2021 write SIP, funds as early as Spring 2022
  - ○ Call for feedback
    - ▪ Q: Are you suggesting we find out what our graduates are doing?
      - • A: We have that data through Academic Analytic. Data (from February 2020) on where all doctoral graduates from the last 10 years are working. Departments would be asked to interpret the data and assess how the program is preparing students for those careers.
    - ▪ Math has an informal exit survey
      - • This data could be evaluated in conjunction with the Academic Analytics data
    - ▪ Q: Is there any concern about this review during the pandemic? Pandemic is impacting the careers of graduates.
      - • A: The data is pre-pandemic. Could request an extension due to the pandemic workload on faculty.
    - ▪ Q: Size of the taskforce?
      - • A: at least 3 (representatives from stem, social sciences, arts & humanities)
    - ▪ Q: Could the funds be used to create a standardized data collection process for departments?

- A: Can pay for this data from Academic Analytics instead of making departments track their own data
  - Q: Is the data available through a query database?
    - A: Interface through the company as well as an excel spreadsheet with the data
  - Data can be helpful for recruitment—showing where graduates work with these degrees
  - Q: Is this actionable for our colleagues in this moment?
    - A: Consensus that this is not the best time for a thorough and thoughtful review
  - Dean Ogilvie will write a letter requesting a one-year grace period
    - In meantime, the Academic Analytics data can be provided to departments

- **Discussion: Removing central requirements for doctoral coursework past master's (Ogilvie)**
  - Current policy requires 12 additional coursework credits beyond a master's degree; sense is that this should not be a central requirement, but departments or advisors should make those determinations
    - There are currently a lot of departmental exceptions to this policy; cleanest solution may be no central requirement for additional coursework credits
    - The total number of required credits (60), minimum credits from MSU (30), and the dissertation credit requirement would remain central requirements
  - Call for feedback:
    - Computer Science is in support of this change
    - See a distinction between a master's from MSU and an external degree
      - Agreement that there should be flexibility for departments to decide how many credits from an external degree can be accepted
      - With this policy revision, the locus of control would shift even more to the department to make those determinations
    - Proposal may benefit smaller graduate programs with fewer course selections
    - From a student perspective, removing the additional 12 credits requirement and letting the committee/department make that decision would be helpful
    - HHD is pursuing some doctoral programs—would support this policy change
    - Q: How does transfer credit approval work?
      - Distinction between transfer credits (maximum of 9 credits) and considered credits (maximum of 30) from a conferred degree
      - Departments decide what courses can be transferred or considered from a previous degree by listing them on the student's program of study
  - Dean Ogilvie will review the policy proposal and make any necessary changes based on UGC's feedback; possible vote at the next meeting

- **Sub-Committee members needed**
  - **Policy; all members, possibly:** The policy sub-committee is a sounding board for policy review and proposals; help protect students and move the interests of the university forward; assist with revising policy language before presenting to full Council for discussion
    - Upcoming policy on spouses serving on the same graduate committee

- **Curriculum; two members:** The curriculum sub-committee assists with the curriculum proposal process through the CIM system. All course and program proposals go through the CIM system. All program proposal will be reviewed by the full Council. The sub-committee reviews course proposals, by looking at learning outcomes, syllabi, etc.
  - Aig is the only remaining member on this subcommittee
  - Discussion on the history and purpose of the curriculum approval process
- Email Livingston if interested in serving on a sub-committee; sub-committee membership will be revisited at the next meeting

Adjourned at 2:15 pm

<u>Next scheduled meeting </u>– September 24, 2020 WEBEX