

## **GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES**

### **March 13, 2007**

The Graduate Council met Tuesday, March 13, 2007, in the MSC Boardroom at 3:00 p.m. with Dean Allan D. Headley presiding. Members present were: Dr. Ben Jang, Dr. Sue Espinoza, Dr. Harry Fullwood, Dr. John Hanners, Dr. Jeff Kopachena, Dr. Chester Robinson, Dr. Derek Royal, Dr. Mary Beth Sampson. Members absent were: Dr. Hasan Coskun, Dr. Cynthia Harr, Dr. David Mickelson, Dr. Chris Myers, Dr. Steven Shwiff, Dr. Janet Walker, Dr. Dayle Yeager, and Ms. Adena Young. Dr. Jon Travis, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies & Research was also in attendance.

The minutes from the last Graduate Council, February 13, 2007, were approved.

### **REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM**

Dr. Hanners presented the following curriculum changes: SPA 503 and 504. His motion to accept these changes was seconded by Dr. Fullwood and unanimously approved by the Council.

### **REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON FACULTY, RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION**

Dr. Espinoza presented the committee report on graduate faculty applications. After a motion by Dr. Espinoza, which was seconded by Dr. Kopachena, the Council approved the following for Graduate Faculty membership:

#### **Associate (Three-Year)**

Dr. Carrie Lee Klypchak	Theatre
Mr. Michael Knight	Mass Media, Communications & Theatre
Dr. Xiao Li	Chemistry
Dr. Kathryn Oden	Counseling

#### **Associate Status**

Dr. Ken Alford	Health and Human Performance
Dr. Maria Fernandez-Babineaux	Literature & Languages
Dr. Jena Hamra	Biological & Environmental Sciences
Dr. M. LaVelle Hendricks	Counseling
Dr. Rocky Lemus	Agricultural Sciences
Dr. Frank Miskevich	Biological & Environmental Sciences
Dr. Philippe Seminet	Literature & Languages

#### **Senior Status**

Dr. Bao-An Li	Physics
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#### **Associate Visiting Scholar**

Dr. Cynthia Bennett	Agricultural Sciences
Dr. Jeanette Boylan	Agricultural Sciences
Dr. Deborah Fripp	Agricultural Sciences

The Council approved the committee's recommended revisions to the application for graduate faculty membership.

### **Discussion Items**

The Council discussed several issues concerning graduate education and offered the following comments. These issues will be assigned to a committee for further review:

**The Council discussed the issues of grading thesis and dissertations and some of the problems encountered by the present system.**

Since a student is required to be enrolled in thesis to receive mentoring, an average student may take more than 6 hours thesis or 12 hours dissertation before completing the degree. As a result, a student transcript may show a number of 518/718s (in excess of 6 and 12 hours, respectively) with the grade of I (incomplete). This often times requires additional clarification from the student and/or university when the student applies for a job.

A grade of *I* does not indicate the quality of the work or progress made at the end of the semester.

The possibility of using grades of *S* or *U* was discussed.

### **The Council discussed the issue of allowing departments to use variable hours for 518/718**

There was concern about how this would affect formula funding, especially in the sciences.

Variable credit in Banner requires a section for each course with a different credit hour designation.

### **Graduate Faculty attendance at Commencement**

Members of the Graduate Council expressed concern about the low attendance at commencement ceremonies. Various suggestions were made to increase the participation including that department heads should make sure that their department is represented at the graduate ceremony.

### **Non-degree students**

Dr. Travis pointed out that some students are taking more than 12 graduate semester hours in a non-degree status before they apply for a degree program, and suggested that the Graduate School establish a mechanism to inform students of this limit. One option is to re-establish the use of the *Statement of Understanding for Non-degree Students*. Seven council members were in favor of using the form and 1 member was opposed.

### **Announcements**

The Federation Fall Seminar is scheduled October 5, 2007, on the Texas A&M University-Commerce campus. Senator Bob Duell, state representative and Carol Lynch from the Council of Graduate Schools in Washington, D.C. will be speakers.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2007, 3:00 p.m.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Council adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Louise Skinner  
Secretary to the Graduate Council