The Graduate School
Graduate Council Meeting No. 430, October 27, 2008
MINUTES

Council Members Present: Brian Gallagher, Chong Lee, William Rosen, Gary Stoner, Beth Marcoux, Mary Sullivan, Matthew Freeman, Jennifer Jones, Kevin McClure, Lori Ciccomascolo, Steven Carey, Henry Schwarzbach, Cynthia Willey, Pankaj Ahire, Davida Robinson

Others Present: Associate Dean Harold Bibb, Associate Dean Keith Killingbeck, Ms. Megan Verry

I. The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. by Associate Dean Harold Bibb.

II. The Minutes of Meeting No. 429

A. The minutes were amended to include Pankaj Ahire as a present Council member and then approved.

III. Announcements

A. Recent Appointments to the Graduate Faculty as well as a notation from Associate Dean Keith Killingbeck that there will be additional appointments noted on November’s agenda

   Asst. Prof. Adam D. Roth - Department of Communication Studies
   Adjunct Prof. Anthony Scioli - Department of Psychology

B. Associate Dean Keith Killingbeck announced that use of the electronic forms for course proposals and changes is in effect. Along with the detailed instructions for electronic signatures on the memo from Associate Dean Keith Killingbeck dated, October 15, 2008, he also noted that three workshops had been set up for November 5th that will cover use of the forms and electronic signatures. The workshops will be held in Ballentine Hall room 240 at 1PM, 2PM and 3PM. The workshops are designed to last about 45 minutes and no sign up is needed.

C. Associate Dean Harold Bibb reported on a Compact for Faculty Diversity that he attended in Tampa, Florida last week. This group meets annually and is an institute for teaching and mentoring. Minority students or students that are underrepresented in higher education are brought in from all over the country, as are faculty mentors and support groups, like the SLOAN Foundation, a group that helps us to fund Graduate students. In particular, there was a NSF-funded group called AGEP, which we participate in with the University of Massachusetts. There was discussion regarding funding, which continues to be an issue, however most notable about the program is that it does provide enhancements and allows URI to do some recruiting for students from underrepresented groups that we would not be able to do otherwise. It is limited to and emphasizes students going on to STEM disciplines. The meetings with the SLOAN Foundation touched on the continuation of direct funding. We currently have 3 to 5 SLOAN fellows currently on campus. It is a STEM emphasized effort, and is particularly vibrant and one we can rely on for continued support for students who fall into those categories.
IV. New Business

A. Associate Deans Bibb and Killingbeck brought forth the topic of excellence in graduate education at the University of Rhode Island: making the case in the search of our next President. With Dr. Carothers retiring and a search committee actively looking for a new President for the University, it was pointed out that graduate education needs to be given higher visibility. Requested of Council members were thoughts, ideas, notions and suggestions as to how to bring the issue of graduate education more clearly to the search committee as well as central administration. Commissioner Jack Warner has asked for direct feedback from all. Associate Dean Killingbeck noted that in the job description, which is several pages long, graduate education is mentioned only once towards the end of the document. A suggestion was made by Dr. Gary Stoner to offer to meet with any candidates with as many members of council as possible. Another suggestion, from Dr. Steven Carey, was to draft a brief statement of interest and concern from the Council that includes the importance of having a president who promotes graduate education and a strong graduate school. The Associate Deans asked for several people to meet Monday, November 3rd to draft the statement that will then be circulated to the Graduate Council for review. This statement will accompany the request to meet with prospective candidates for the President of the University. Volunteers to help draft the statement were Dr. William Rosen, Dr. Beth Marcoux, Dr. Gary Stoner, Dr. Kevin McClure as well as Associate Dean Killingbeck and Associate Dean Bibb. Suggestions and ideas for that should be included in the draft should be forwarded to Associate Dean Killingbeck before Monday November 3rd. A motion was made and approved to draft the letter and request meetings with candidates.

V. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum Committee- Associate Dean Killingbeck reported that STEM and non-STEM courses would no longer be treated separately by the curriculum review panel.

1. New Business

Changes Approved:
- NRS402 Wildlife Biometrics – change in prerequisite
- NRS406 Wetland Wildlife – change in prerequisite
- NRS 423 Wetland Ecology – change in prerequisite
- CPL538 Site Planning – change in catalog description and prerequisite
- MTC594 Special Problems in Biotechnology – change in credits
- BIO563 Ichthyology – change in catalog description, credits, and cross listing with NRS (BIO/NRS563)
- CVE570 Sanitary Chemistry – change in title (to read Water Chemistry for Engineers), and catalog description
- EDC586 Problems in Education – change in credits, and add another permanent topic – “Teaching Concepts through Historical Re-Creation”
- EDC587 Problems in Education – change in credits, and add another permanent topic – “Disciplinary Literacy”
- EDC921 Workshop for Teachers – change in method of instruction, and add another permanent topic – “Using Blogs and Wikis to Foster Literacy”
LSC595 Professional Field Experience – change title, method of instruction, prerequisite and catalog description

Tabled:
OCE560 Introduction to Data Collection Systems (minor change; more information requested)
OCE565 Ocean Laboratory (minor change; more information requested)
NRS511 Population and Environmental Change (new course; more information requested)
NRS514 Climate Change and Policy (new course; more information requested)

New Courses Approved:
PHY430 Modern Biological Physics
MCE 591/592 Special Problems

New Requirements Approved:

A. College of Engineering – Department of Mechanical Engineering and Applied Mechanics
   Master of Science Degree (Non-Thesis Option 30 Credits)

Only part-time, off-campus students will be eligible for the non-thesis option and they should normally apply for the option at the time they are applying for admission to the graduate program. Students enrolled in this program will be assigned an advisor to aid in course selection, be the instructor for the special problems class and administer the written and oral comprehensive examinations (see below). No thesis committee is required for students in this category.

Course Work Requirements
A total of 30 credit hours of course work must be completed. Additional course work may be required to remove any student background deficiencies identified during admission to the program. Within their program of study, students must take one course in each of the three department core areas from the selection list shown in the thesis option section. One three credit course must also be taken under MCE 591/92, Special Problems. This course is to be taught by the student's advisor, and will consist of independent study related to the student's major area. Results from the special problems course will be a written paper and an oral presentation of the findings. A program of study form should be completed and submitted to the Graduate School by all students after completing 6-9 credits of part-time study.

Comprehensive Master’s Examination
At or near the end of completion of course work, non-thesis master's degree candidates should take their Special Problems course as previously discussed. Integrated into the end of this course will be a written and oral master’s comprehensive examination that candidates must successfully pass. The written exam shall be the document resulting from the course study and is to be independently developed by the student. This document should be comprehensive in nature, typically drawing on other course work and subject matter from the student's program of study. However, it is to be the result of a single semester’s study and thus should not be of the length and breadth of a master’s thesis. The paper should contain the usual sections of a technical report such as:
Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Problem(s) Studied, Results and Conclusions, References. The oral exam shall consist of a presentation and defense of the written paper. The presentation should be approximately 20-minutes followed by a committee questioning period not to exceed one hour.

Both written and oral examinations will be evaluated by a three-person committee composed of the student's advisor, one member from the Department's Graduate Committee, and one additional member selected from the general faculty whose background matches the student’s major area of study. The advisor (in consultation with the department’s Graduate Studies Director) shall be responsible for selecting the evaluation committee and handling all other administrative issues related to conducting these examinations. The semester time schedule for the special problems course should follow: establish evaluation committee at beginning of term; distribute student’s written paper during next to last week of the course; conduct oral exam approximately one week later. Based on review of both written and oral portions, the committee shall make a pass/fail decision at the end of the oral exam and immediately report the results to the student and Graduate School. In the event of failure, the student will receive an incomplete grade in the course and re-examination procedures outlined in section 7.45 of the Graduate Manual will be followed.

B. College of Arts and Sciences - The Graduate School of Library and Information Studies
   MLIS Degree

3 credits of LSC 595 are now a graduation requirement for all students who do not take LSC 596 (School Library Media Practicum and Seminar). Students who enter the MLIS program with significant previous experience may waive the requirement and earn 1 LSC 595 credit hour by means of “Credit by Examination,” demonstrating the desired course outcomes through a reflective portfolio based on work experience.

VII. Old Business

VIII. The meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.