Council Members Present: Gary Stoner, Kevin McClure, Rebecca Robinson, Naomi Mandel, Gerhard Muller, Martin Sadd, Terry Deeney, David Rowley, Mary Sullivan, Megan O’Brien, Noel Burgess, Katherine Boden, Woong Kook and Larry Englander.

Council Members Not Present: Scott Martin, Graham Forrester, Henry Oppenheimer and Brian Gallagher.

Others Present: Dean Nasser Zawia, Associate Dean Keith Killingbeck, Dr. Alycia Austin, Dr. John Stevenson, Lori Ciccomascolo, Elaine Finan and Michelle Grambley.

I. The meeting was called to order at 2:02 pm by Dean Zawia.

II. The Minutes of Meeting No. 458 were approved.

III. Announcements

A. Associate Dean Killingbeck noted that we have updated our website to reflect an amendment to the verbiage regarding the English language proficiency testing required of international applicants. To promote a clear understanding of what is acceptable on each test, he also discussed the newest allowed proficiency test, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

B. Dean Zawia and Associate Dean Killingbeck described a new mechanism for alerting students who are approaching their time limit to degree completion. The proposed system would place holds on enrollment for those students approaching the time limit for completion of their degree in order to alert them to the fact that they have approximately a year left. Associate Dean Killingbeck reviewed wording that would accompany such hold. On eCampus the ‘service indicator’ that students will see is as follows

You must meet with your major professor or advisor prior to registration because you are a) nearing the five-year time limit for completing a master’s degree, or b) nearing the seven-year time limit for completing a doctoral degree. When a time line has been developed that will result in your graduation within the five- or seven-year time limit, that plan will be conveyed in writing to the Graduate School by the major professor or advisor so that the hold on registration can be removed.

Concerns were noted that the expectation of completion in one year, especially for non-traditional, part-time and PhD students, may not allow enough time. The Dean noted that this is not a tool to rush students through their work, but to help remind them that they are on a
time clock and that they are nearing the end of their allowed time towards completion. He also stated that accommodations would be considered for those who have been working diligently and need a small measure of additional time for completion if a compelling argument to that end is made by the student and major professor. Other concerns were logged about department heads being left out of the flow of information regarding this alert and how to resolve the hold. The Dean explained that decisions made or policies created at the departmental level as to the flow of information once that alert is received could mitigate this issue.

C. Dean Zawia and Associate Dean Killingbeck gave a brief recap of the Council of Graduate Schools recent national meeting in Arizona. The speakers were fabulous and many issues were discussed and debated that will be used to direct growth in graduate education, especially in interdisciplinary studies and diversity.

IV. Committees

A. Curriculum Committee

**Changes Approved**
CVE 483 (OCE 483) Shallow Foundations
NRS 361 Watershed Hydrology and Management

**New Courses Approved**
CSC 424 Live Forensics and Incident Response
CSC 523 Advanced Intrusion Detection and Defense
CSC 524 Advanced Incident Response
GEO 920 Geoscience workshop for Teachers
OCE 516 Biometrics in Ocean Engineering (conditional approval granted pending syllabus changes)
CVE 540 Public Transportation Systems (with change in prerequisites to read: Pre: CVE 346 or permission of instructor)
CVE 586 Earth Retaining Structures

**Tabled**
MIC 422 Biotechnology of Industrial Microorganisms
MLS 581 Clinical Research
MLS 571 Biotechnology product Evaluation and Development
LSC 520 School Library Media Service
NEU 501 Introduction to the Neurosciences

**Additional Curricular Matters**
CELS proposed a change to their catalog description in the BES degrees (MS and PhD) by adding the new specialty of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems
V. Old Business

A. Associate Dean Killingbeck, Lori Ciccomascolo, John Stevenson and Elaine Finan all explained the history of, need for and evolution of the Thesis/Dissertation Defense Evaluation forms. Lori and John gave a brief recap of the processes involved in creating and implementing these forms and explained the original intent of this idea. Originally, this was meant more as a mechanism for understanding learning outcomes when used at the defense of the thesis/dissertation. This seemed like the best summative way to understand how students are learning and positively influence the way courses are taught. Understanding how students in the program are assimilating knowledge was more the aim than using this as a teaching or instructing tool to guide individual students in a formative manner. John noted that there is a definite possibility for using such forms earlier in the process or using the collected information garnered to help individual students in an active way as part of their thesis/dissertation process. He asked that feedback be provided from departments as to how the forms are being used and adapted as well as how they are perceived as helpful or hindering. Some concerns were shared as to who will be allowed access to the information and how the information will be used with regard to the outcome of a student’s thesis/dissertation. After much discussion, the consensus reached was that the assessment team should proceed with the development and distribution of thesis/dissertation proposal and defense rubrics. These rubrics, however, would be initially used on a voluntary basis.

B. Dean Zawia and Associate Dean Killingbeck revisited the issue of co-major advisors and reviewed the processes involved (including recent decisions regarding adjunct status). Concerns were raised as to signing authority, power dynamics, nepotism and changes to defense committees, forms and obligations. Positive aspects regarding the allowance of two major professors were also discussed. After lengthy discussion, new proposed wording was presented for section 8.32 of the Graduate School Manual that addresses the issue of adjunct faculty:

> All major professors must be continuing, tenure-track members of the University of Rhode Island Graduate Faculty. Adjunct faculty cannot serve as sole major professors on thesis or dissertation committees.

A motion was made, and seconded, to accept this wording. The motion was unanimously approved.
Associate Dean Killingbeck also introduced an additional amendment to the wording of section 8.32 to address the issue of co-major professors:

In cases where co-major professors are deemed necessary and appropriate, one, but not both of the two co-major professors could be an adjunct faculty who carries Graduate Faculty Status at the University of Rhode Island.

A motion was made, and seconded, to accept this wording. The motion was approved with a vote of 9 for and 5 against.

C. Graduate Faculty Status – automatic conference of GFS for new hires with a PhD – Tabled for lack of time

VI. Policy Issues and Initiatives – Due to time constraints, this matter was not addressed.

VII. New Business – Due to time constraints, this matter was not addressed.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm