Council Members Present: Peter August, Jacqueline Britto, Michael Greenfield, Marc Hutchison, Beth Leonardo, Julia Lovett, Karen McCurdy, Lindsay McLennan, Abran Salazar, Lubos Thoma, Jean Walton, Karen Wishner

Not Present: Denise Coppa, Robert Laforge, Scott McWilliams, Daniel Sheinin, Angela Slitt

Others Present: Dean Nasser Zawia, Associate Dean Andrea Rusnock, Megan Yakey, Alycia Mosley Austin

I. Call to order at 2:01 PM by Dean Zawia.

II. Minutes of Meeting Number 497 were approved

III. Announcements

A. Dean Zawia reminded Council that reviews for all of the nominations for Scholarships, Fellowships, and Diversity Awards are due by the 18th. In order for us to award them it is critical that the reviews all be done on time.

B. Dean Zawia asked Council to remind their colleges and departments that all Catalog changes are to be emailed by May 4th in order to make next year’s catalog. Please note that changes should be sent to Megan in a word doc with track changes. It was noted that there are an increased number of discrepancies between the catalog and department websites. The catalog is the University sanctioned information site so please make sure that your website agrees with it.

C. Dean Zawia noted the recent appointments to the Graduate Faculty:
AMY VYAS PHARMACY 3/8/2016

D. Associate Dean Rusnock introduced the Food for Thought series. On March 30th, Zika: Global Health Challenges will be presented and on April 6th, Clean Water: Flint and Beyond will be presented. She encouraged all Council members to attend and to make their colleges aware of this new series.

E. Two years ago the Graduate Faculty Summit was moved on campus and put on a December reading day. Since then, the attendance has gone down. It was suggested that perhaps another day aside from a reading day would be better. There was general consensus that a summit scheduled earlier in the semester on campus might attract more attendance.
IV. Committees

Curriculum Committee

Changes approved
BIO512  Evolution and Diversity of Fishes
PHP504  Health Systems

Courses deleted
PHP503  Health Systems 1

V. New Business
A. Mary Riedford from the Office of Research Integrity proposed creating a one-credit course on IRB and RCR. Council members were asked to see if there might be interest in such a course and to report back at the next Council meeting.

B. Associate Dean Rusnock reported her meeting with the Curricular Affairs Committee to discuss the approval process of 400 level courses. The Council discussed the differences between 400 level courses (where all students --both undergraduates and graduate students) complete the same requirements, and simultaneous (or slash) courses, where undergraduates register for a 400-level and graduate students register for a 500-level course, which meet simultaneously but have different course requirements. The Council also discussed the case where a graduate program would like to include a 400 level course, which is listed “not for graduate credit.” One solution is to have the student register for 591 (directed study). Another solution is to have departments modify “not for graduate credit in this specific program.” It was agreed that for now such situations should be handled on a case by case basis.

C. Changes to Graduate School Forms
   a. Program of Study: a discussion was started to remove all signatures except student, major and co-major professors, and department chair.
   b. Written and Oral Comprehensive Exams: the discussion to eliminate first form requesting to schedule written comprehensive exam was started and based on conversation noted below, moved to the next Council meeting.

D. Committee Composition- why do we add two faculty to the oral comprehensive exam committee? Another issue concerns the requirement for an “outside member” on the committee. Is the outside member’s primary function to make sure the rules, processes, and fairness are abided by in a defense? The answer is that those functions are just one of the jobs of the outside member. The students reported on their findings from a meeting as well as an e-mail survey. It was also discussed the outside members’ change might not be beneficial in the protection of the student. Peer schools with non-fixed departments have two
pools of thought- a recommended second outside member and an appointed outside member. Colleges with fixed departments stand by the inside/outside rules. The discussion showed that there is no one ‘best method’ that fits all departments. The decision was to loosely define “outside” so that departments can put forth a rationale for an outside member that may look like an inside member. There was general consensus that the chair needs to be outside the department and discipline. For the master’s form, an area will be added for a rationale to include an “inside” member as an outside member. A motion was made to drop the inside/outside distinction on committees. There was no second so the motion failed.

To simplify the administration of the comprehensive exams, it was suggested that both the written and oral comps be scheduled on a single form. There was much debate about whether the results of the written and oral exams could be reported on a single form. The consensus was that the Graduate School needs to have the notification on passing the written prior to the student taking the orals. It was noted that several members felt that having at least 1 additional member for the oral comps is beneficial. Council members were asked to discuss with their colleges/departments the possibility of reducing from 5 to 4 members for both the oral comps committee and the defense committee. It will be discussed again at the next Council meeting. A motion was made to drop the doctoral committees for Oral Comprehensives and Defense from 5 to 3. The motion was not seconded so failed.

VI. Old Business

A. Reconsider Inside/Outside Members of PhD committee was discussed at length and will be continued next meeting when we have more feedback from departments and the students.

VII. Adjournment at 3:26 PM