Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, February 7, 2011

**Members** (13): Thomas Drummer (Math), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Eugene Levin (Sch Tech), Sam Sweitz (SocSci), Bill Yarroch (Cog Sci), Steve Seidel (CS), Mi Hye Song (Bio Sci), Blair Orr (PCMI), Dave Watkins (Civil), Andrew Storer (SFRES), Greg Waite (Geo), Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Judith Perlinger (Atmos)

**Guests** (6): Jackie Huntoon (Grad Sch), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Felicia Chong (GSG), Erik Nordberg (Library)

1) **Meeting called to order at 4:05 pm.**

2) **Review and approval of 01/17/12 meeting minutes with amendment.** The following text was added to item 4a, “Seidel commented that this criterion is immeasurable.”

3) **Committee Reports:**
   a. **Thesis/Dissertation Guideline Review Committee (Dean Huntoon):** The committee will meet soon and bring updates to the next GFC meeting.

4) **Old Business:**
   a. **Changes to GACS (Dean Huntoon):** Dean Huntoon spoke with the Provost about all the comments that she has received. The Senate Survey results were also reviewed and they indicated great favor of GACS. The decision has been made not to modify GACS at this time. No changes will be made and the current GACS rules/policy still applies. What is the next step? Dean Huntoon suggested that the GFC could form a committee to look at the current GACS policy and determine if it should be modified to further enhance the goals of increasing the number, quality, and success of graduate students on campus. Is there anybody interested in being on a GACS committee? Nobody volunteered. This was also brought to the Research Advisory Council. Some thought the current policy should be modified to include associate and full professors’ eligibility for the automatic matches that assistant professors receive. Comments: We are treating these proposals/grants as if they are single investigators but the number of investigators is mixed. How does GACS currently handle these? If there is an assistant professor as the lead then it qualifies. If the assistant professor is not the lead then it is very rare that they receive GACS. One goal of GACS is to bring down the cost of a proposal for an assistant professor so that they are more likely to get their foot in the door. The GFC feels as though the current GACS policy works well and should remain as is.
   b. **PhD Guidelines (Dean Huntoon):** Dean Huntoon received the following comment by email: the time frame should be stated in either years or in academic semesters consistently throughout the document. The commenter’s preference was that the timeline be stated in years. Semester should indicate academic semester. Comment {JH1} and {JH2} – do we want to allow faculty with adjunct appointments in a unit to be the primary advisor? The GFC answers yes as this seems to benefit most programs. Comment {JH3} – is the current time frame (prior to the end of the second academic semester) for an advisor to be chosen the right time. Yes, as this is only a recommended timeframe. Comment {JH4} – for students in non-departmental grad programs, the external member must not be affiliated with the non-departmental program. Should this remain? No, take it out as the external member should have knowledge of what the student’s project is. Also, being a small campus makes it very hard to find a person who meets this requirement. A program who wants to be more restrictive can be. Comment {JH5} and {JH6} – are comprehensive and candidacy the correct names for the “first” exam and “second” exam? It was determined that a majority would like to change comprehensive to qualifying and candidacy to proposal defense (with clarifying language that once you pass you are considered a candidate). Do any programs administer the proposal defense before the qualifying exam? Yes, it happens on occasion.
Hunton will add that the qualifying exam should be taken first but exceptions could be made. It is also recommended that the second paragraph under Advisory Committee be removed as it is unnecessary to state. Comment {JH7} – the advisory committee should be appointed prior to the end of the study’s third academic semester. Is this the right time? No, it is recommended that it be changed to fourth semester. Comment {JH8} – the first exam should be administered prior to the end of the fourth academic semester. Is this the right time frame? Yes, it is agreed that this is the correct time. Comment {JH9} – should the text, “It must be given at least two terms before the final oral defense” be removed. Recommended that the word “must” be changed to “should” and leave time frame as is. What does term mean? Dean Huntoon will clarify the text “term” throughout the document. Comment {JH10}, {JH11}, and {JH12} – the candidacy exam should be administered prior to the end of the sixth academic semester. It must be given at least one term before the final oral defense. Is this reasonable? Dean Huntoon is going to change must to should in the last sentence and will clarify that it could be either an academic year semester or summer session. Yes, leave time frame as is. Comment {JH13} – the outside examiner may not be affiliated with the interdisciplinary or non-departmental program. This will be taken out. On the flow chart, under Pass Candidacy Exam (will be changed to proposal defense) Dean Huntoon will add a sub heading for research only mode and state that both exams must be completed to enter research only mode.

5) Motion to adjourn at 4:55 pm.
February 7, 2012
(Last update: 01/24/12)

Handouts of the Graduate Faculty Council

Michigan Tech
Doctor of Philosophy

The doctor of philosophy degree is a research degree. It is awarded in recognition of demonstrated mastery of subject matter in a chosen field of study and demonstrated competence in the conduct of an individual research investigation that represents a significant contribution to the cumulative knowledge of the field. The program of study and research will be planned and supervised by an advisory committee. Each candidate’s course work and research topic must be approved by the advisory committee as meeting the standards generally associated with the doctoral degree.

The doctoral student must comply with the requirements on this page, the requirements of their program, and complete any necessary forms to document their progress with the Graduate School.

**Individual programs may have higher standards, and students are expected to know their program’s requirements.**

**Residency Requirements**

- A minimum of two-thirds of the required non-research course-work credits required for the degree must be taken through Michigan Tech. PhD students must take at least 20 credits beyond the masters or 50 credits beyond the bachelors through Michigan Tech.
- Research credits used to satisfy degree requirements must be taken through Michigan Tech and must be supervised by a member of Michigan Tech graduate faculty.

Courses which meet the "through Michigan Tech" requirement are defined as courses listed in the Michigan Tech course catalog and taught by Michigan Tech faculty.

**Credit Requirements**

**Minimum requirements**

Programs may have stricter requirements than listed here and may require more than the minimum numbers of credits listed here.

- Thirty credits beyond the bachelor’s degree are required for a master’s degree.
- Thirty credits beyond the master’s degree are required for a PhD.
- Maximum of 12 credits may be at the 3000 or 4000 level (with program approval).
- One-third of the non-research credits may be transfer credits as long as they were not applied toward another degree.
- Research credits are the only non-graded classes that may be counted toward a degree.
Unallowable credits

- Courses numbered below 3000
- Audited courses
- Continuous enrollment courses (ex: UN5951, UN5953)
- Non-research courses taken for a pass/fail grade
- Credits applied toward another degree (see exceptions below)

Special Exceptions

- Peace Corps Master’s International students may use 2 credits of language courses below the 3000 level.
- One-third of the non-research/non-practicum credits earned at Michigan Tech may be reused to earn an additional master’s degree in accordance with Graduate School policy.
- Students in an accelerated master’s program may apply up to 6 of the credits earned while an undergraduate toward both their bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accordance with University policy.

Academic Progress

Students must be in good standing to earn a graduate degree.

Time Limits

All work for the master’s degree must be completed within five calendar years of the first enrollment in the degree program or earliest course listed on the degree schedule, whichever is earliest. All work for the PhD must be completed within eight calendar years of the first enrollment in the degree program or earliest course listed on the degree schedule, whichever is earliest. Requests for extension must be made by the advisor to the Graduate School.

Advisor

Faculty who advise graduate students must be members of the Michigan Tech graduate faculty. These individuals advise students on course selection and supervise the students’ research. All graduate students must have an advisor.

Each student’s advisor must hold a regular or adjunct appointment in the student's administrative home department or school. Students may be co-advised by two faculty members. At least one of the co-advisors must hold a regular or adjunct appointment in the student’s administrative home department or school.

- While one co-advisor may be from outside the student's administrative home department or school, it is recommended (but not required) that this co-advisor not also serve as the external member of the student's committee.
- Before recommending a sole advisor who holds an adjunct appointment in the student's administrative home department or school, the appropriate graduate program director...
should ensure that this person is sufficiently familiar with the department/school standards for research and with applicable university policies/procedures and that this person can maintain adequate contact with the student.

Students who enter the University may initially be advised by the **graduate program director** for their degree program.

**Advisory Committee**

The advisory committee consists of at least three members of the graduate faculty in addition to the advisor. The membership of the committee is recommended to the dean of the Graduate School by the advisor and the chair/graduate program director of the student’s academic home department or school or program using the *Advisor and Committee Recommendation form*. At least one member of the committee must be external to the student’s academic home department or school. For students in non-departmental graduate programs, the external member must not be affiliated with the non-departmental program. If co-advisors are chosen and one co-advisor is from outside the student’s home department or school, it is recommended, but not required, that an additional external member be chosen.

The advisory committee typically administers the student’s final oral examination and may administer the preliminary comprehensive and candidacy exams.

**Comprehensive Examination**

A comprehensive examination will be given to determine each student’s ability to apply general concepts and methods in their chosen field. This examination must include a written component and may also include an oral component.

The examination will be prepared and administered by members of the Graduate Faculty who are familiar with the examinee’s chosen field of study. The examining committee may be a standing committee appointed by the academic home department or school or it may consist of a student’s advisory committee. Any member of the graduate faculty may attend the oral examination as an observer.

Satisfactory performance on the comprehensive examination is required for students to maintain good progress toward completion of their degree.

**Graduate School**

The Graduate School would like to delete this. Is that acceptable?
Candidacy Examination

A candidacy examination will be given to determine each student’s readiness to conduct and complete an independent research project that will contribute to the body of knowledge in their chosen field. This examination must include an oral component and may also include a written component.

The examination will be prepared and administered by members of the Graduate Faculty who are familiar with the examinee’s chosen field of study. The examining committee may be a standing committee appointed by the academic home department or school or it may consist of a student’s advisory committee. Any member of the graduate faculty may attend the oral examination as an observer.

Satisfactory performance on the candidacy examination is required for students to maintain good progress toward completion of their degree. Completion of the candidacy examination is required prior to students entering research-only mode.

The candidacy examination should be administered prior to the end of the sixth academic semester in residence at Michigan Tech. It must be given no later than six years after enrollment. It must be given at least one term before the final oral defense.

Dissertation

The research undertaken as part of the doctoral degree program will be presented in the form of a dissertation that will be a permanent acquisition of the library. Any classified or proprietary material that cannot be made available to the public is not acceptable as a dissertation. Completing the dissertation requires preparation of the document according to Graduate School guidelines, and submitting the completed (and successfully defended) dissertation to the Graduate School.

A completed draft of the dissertation must be approved by the advisory committee chair two weeks prior to the final examination.

Final Oral Examination

At a public final oral examination, primarily concerning the research and doctoral dissertation, the candidate should justify the validity of the methods and conclusions contained in the dissertation and should demonstrate familiarity with the significance of the study in relation to the existing body of knowledge.

The examining committee will be appointed by the Graduate School in consultation with the department chair or school dean of the student's academic home unit. The student’s advisory committee will typically serve as the examining committee. In all cases the examining committee will consist of at least four members of the graduate faculty. At least one of these will be from outside the student's administrative home department or school. The primary advisor, or a co-advisor who serves as chair of the committee, must be from the student's home department or
school. While one co-advisor may be from outside the student's administrative home department, it is recommended, but not required, that this co-advisor not fill the role of sole external member on the student's committee. For interdisciplinary and non-departmental programs, the outside examiner may not be affiliated with the interdisciplinary or non-departmental program. A person external to Michigan Tech may be appointed as an ad hoc member of the Graduate Faculty to serve as the outside examiner. Persons who are not members of the Graduate Faculty may not serve as voting members of doctoral examination committees.

The examination will be scheduled by filing a Pre-defense form with the Graduate School.

The date of the examination must be at least two weeks following the approval of the completed draft of the dissertation by the advisor and distribution of the completed draft of the dissertation to the examining committee.

The examination may be given two terms following successful completion of the comprehensive examination and one term following successful completion of the candidacy examination. The student’s examination results must be reported to the Graduate School on the Report on Oral Exam form (D8).

Comment [J H13]: Another instance for consideration.
### Select Advisor
**Purpose:** Advises student on courses/research
**Requirements:**
- Member of Graduate Faculty
- Regular or adjunct appointment in student's administrative home department
**Recommended Timing:**
- At start may be Graduate Program Director
- Permanent advisor chosen within 1 (post master's) or 2 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start

### Select Advisory Committee
**Purpose:**
- Advises student on courses/research
- Provides cognate expertise
- Contributes diverse perspectives
- Promotes cross-disciplinary communications
**Requirements:**
- Members of Graduate Faculty
- Minimum of one from outside student's academic home department
**Recommended Timing:**
- Appointed within 2 (post master's) or 3 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start

### Pass Comprehensive Examination
**Purpose:** Test of disciplinary knowledge
- Examiners: Standing Committee or Advisory Committee
- Format: Written and/or oral
**Timing:**
- Recommended: Within 3 (post master's) or 4 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start
- Required: No more than 5 years after start

### Pass Candidacy Exam
**Purpose:** Test of capability to conduct independent research
- Examiners: Standing Committee or Advisory Committee
- Format: Written and/or oral
**Recommended timing for completion:**
- Within 6 (post master's) or 10 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start

### Prepare Dissertation
**Purpose:** Written description of research
- Examiners: Standing Committee or Advisory Committee
- Format: Written and/or oral
**Recommended timing for completion:**
- Within 6 (post master's) or 10 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start

### Pass Final Oral Defense
**Purpose:** Public defense of research
**Recommended timing for completion:**
- Within 6 (post master's) or 10 (post bachelor's) academic semesters after start

### Complete Degree Requirements
**Purpose:** Leads to awarding of degree
**Requirements:**
- Final dissertation approved
- All paperwork
**Recommended timing for completion:**
- Within 8 years after start
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February 7, 2012

NOTE: (all handouts connected to a single pdf file)

1. Review minutes of 01/17/12

2. Committee Reports:
   a. Thesis/Dissertation Guideline Review Committee (Dean Huntoon)

3. Old Business
   a. Changes to GACS (Dean Huntoon)
   b. PhD Guidelines (Dean Huntoon)

4. New Business