Minutes of the Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

**Members** (14): Thomas Drummer (Math), Keat Ghee Ong (Biomed), Craig Friedrich (MEEM), Zhenlin Wang (CompSci), Greg Waite (Geo), Kari Henquinet (PCorps), Paul Ward (CogSci), Erika Hersch-Green (BioSci), Judith Perlinger (Atmos), Ashutosh Tiwari (Chem), Andrew Storer (SFRES), Noel Urban (Envir), Eugene Levin (SOT), Audrey Mayer (SocSci)

**Guests** (7): Jacqueline Huntoon (Grad Sch), Debra Charlesworth (Grad Sch), Nancy Byers-Sprague (Grad Sch), Kevin Cassell (GSG), Sarah Lucchesi (Lib), Jacque Smith (SFRES), Heather Suokas (Grad Sch)

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

2) Review and approval of 02/05/13 meeting minutes.

3) Old Business:
   a. Proposal to Modify (revenue-neutral modification) Research Only Mode (P. Moran): The Council was asked to take the proposal to their departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting. P. Moran has proposed this to the Senate. He reports that there was support of the proposal. He also reports the following concern was discussed: making sure this does not get abused by possibly limiting the amount of credits a student can take.
      • (C): In Environmental Energy Policy when students enter research only mode they sometimes switch to self funding. This creates a problem when a student wants to take a summer seminar but cannot afford to. Because of this Environmental Energy Policy supports the proposal.
      • (C): Dean Huntoon received an email suggesting that we allow a student to take up to three credits at the full rate while in research only mode and the research only tuition rate would then apply only to the remaining six credits. It is suspected that the lost revenue resulting from not charging for this additional one credit at full rate would be more than made up for by being stricter in disallowing students to sit in on a course that they really should register for. Dean Huntoon notes this might meet with Board of Control approval because the Board is strict in disallowing tuition.
      • (Q): The economic analysis in the proposal assumes that every one of those 136 PhD students will take a course?
      • (A): No. It is based on the small fraction of students that are currently paying for the courses.
      • (C): If students start entering courses that creates more work for the instructors. Maybe they should have to apply to take a course and explain why the course is critical to them.
      • P. Moran suggests that he add to the proposal that there must be instructor and advisor permission before a student enters a course.
      • (C): One concern is that the proposal spreads the cost across to everyone for the few students using it.
      • (Q): Can we limit the number of classes they can take?
      • (A): It is written now that they can take three credits per semester.
      • (Q): Why not leave research only mode as is but offer a reduced rate to those who want to take a course?
      • P. Moran suggests this: if a student wants to take an elective during research only mode (and gets permission from the advisor and instructor and there is room in the class) they can take that course at the same rate they are paying for research only mode (one third).
• (D): Dean Huntoon will pass this through to the budget team to see if they have an opinion.

b. Proposal for Allowing Multiple Attempts at Oral Exams (Dean Huntoon): The Council was asked to take the proposal to their departments and bring feedback to the next GFC meeting.
   • (Q): How will a conditional pass be handled?
   • (A): Dean Huntoon feels is would be best if it were handled within the program. This is because the program sets the conditions and they can then monitor whether or not the conditions are met.
   • The committee suggested some minor changes and Dean Huntoon agreed to make them and pass the revised version around via email for approval prior to forwarding the document to the University Senate:
   • (D): Motion to approve the proposal passed with the minor changes incorporated.
   • Post meeting update: The changes were emailed to the council and no further changes were suggested so this will be forwarded to the Senate.

c. Using BC/C in a Student’s Primary Field of Study (Senate Proposal 17-13: Graduate Scholastic Standards) Update (N. Byers Sprague): The Senate has approved this proposal.

d. Proposal for Determining When International Students Need ESL Services (Dean Huntoon): Will be discussed at the next GFC meeting.

4) New Business:
   a. Accelerated Master’s Recruiting, Including Research Scholars Model (Dean Huntoon/J. Smith): Will be discussed at the next GFC meeting.
   b. Coursework vs. Research Accelerated Master’s (Dean Huntoon/J. Smith): Will be discussed at the next GFC meeting.
   c. Banner Coding of Master’s Students (Dean Huntoon): Will be discussed at the next GFC meeting.

5) Motion to adjourn at 4:59 pm.
March 5, 2013
(Last update: 02/22/13)

Handouts of the Graduate Faculty Council

Michigan Tech
Some graduate students admitted with relatively low language test scores have difficulty understanding and communicating in English in their academic environments, and many have difficulty writing in English according to the standards and conventions of graduate work in US universities.

In order to address these problems:

- new graduate students admitted with scores below 79 TOEFL iBT should be evaluated upon arrival
- based on this evaluation and needs assessment, the ESL program should recommend appropriate support services.
Allowing Multiple Attempts at Oral Exams

1/25/13

Graduate School

Proposal

All students who must pass an oral examination associated with one of the following milestones required for completion of a degree are allowed up to two opportunities to successfully complete each required oral examination¹.  
- Qualifying Examination (test of disciplinary knowledge)
- Research Proposal Examination (test of capability to conduct independent research)
- Final Oral Defense (public defense of research)

Oral examinations can have one of the following outcomes:
- Pass
- Conditional pass
- Fail

Students who pass an oral exam are considered to have successfully completed the associated milestone. It is the responsibility of a student’s examination committee to communicate to both the student and the appropriate graduate program director and program assistant that the oral exam was successfully completed.

Students who conditionally pass an oral exam will not be considered to have successfully completed the exam until they have adhered to all of the specified conditions within the specified period of time. It is the responsibility of a student’s examining committee to clearly document in writing the conditions as well as the period of time the student has to address those conditions and to share this information with the appropriate graduate program director and program assistant. It is also the responsibility of the examining committee to monitor a student’s progress in completing all required conditions and to communicate to the student and the appropriate graduate program director and program assistant when the conditions have been met. If a student fails to complete all of the conditions imposed within the specified period of time, it is the responsibility of the examining committee to notify the student and the appropriate graduate program director and graduate program assistant that the student has failed the exam. Students who fail to complete conditions within a specified period of time will normally not be given a second opportunity to take the oral exam. If a student has been unable to complete the conditions due to circumstances outside of the student’s control, the student can request an extension from the examining committee. If the student is unsatisfied with the decision of the examining committee, the student can appeal the decision to the appropriate graduate program director who will consult with the chair of the student’s academic home department and issue a final decision.

¹ See: http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/requirements/phd/ and http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/requirements/ms/
Students who fail an oral exam on the first try can request an opportunity to repeat the exam one time. Requests must be made, in writing, to the student’s examining committee. Requests must explain why the student feels that a second opportunity is warranted. The student’s examining committee will determine if a second attempt will be allowed based on the student’s individual circumstances. If a second attempt is allowed, the examining committee must specify the time frame within which it must occur. If the student is unsatisfied with the examination committee’s decision, the student can appeal the decision to the appropriate graduate program director who will consult with the chair of the student’s academic home department and issue a final decision. It is the responsibility of a student’s examination committee to communicate to both the student and the appropriate graduate program director and program assistant that the student failed an oral exam, whether or not the student requested a second attempt, whether or not a second attempt will be allowed, and the outcome of a second attempt if one is allowed.
A proposal to modify the rules for “Research Only” Mode in a revenue neutral manner so as to keep the present benefits of its alignment with our **GOALS** while making it more consistent with one of our **VALUES**

**OUR MISSION:** We prepare students to create the future.

**A COUPLE OF OUR GOALS**
- increase external support for research and scholarship;
- expand PhD. enrollments and degrees granted;

**ONE OF OUR VALUES:** We Inspire Scholarship
- We inspire world class scholarship through academics, research and continued learning.
Present form of rule supports our goals

• THE PRESENT POLICY
  – Once graduate students have completed all required coursework, passed their qualifier, and their preliminary exam in which they present their research proposal, they enter a mode where they can sign up for 9 credits at a third of the regular graduate tuition rate

• THIS IS A GOOD THING BECAUSE....
  – It allows students supported on externally funded research proposals to have more of the TIGHT externally funded research $$ that support them go to the supplies, equipment usage fees, travel, and other OVERHEADED expenses that are incurred, sometimes unexpectedly, in their research
  – It allows us to externally support more Grad students/research$
PRESENT FORM OF RULE HAS THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCE OF NOT BEING ENTIRELY IN SUPPORT OF ONE OF OUR VALUES

THE PRESENT POLICY

• Students in Research ONLY mode cannot sign up for ANY advanced graduate elective classes unless they pay full price for the number of credits of the advanced graduate elective class

AN UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCE OF THE PRESENT POLICY:

There is a financial disincentive for an advisor who has to support externally funded graduate students in research only mode on a tight budget to allow them to take any advanced graduate elective courses

THE RESULT:

THOUGH...

• We value continued learning, and

• There exists advanced graduate electives taught by experts in the topic with seats available, and

• Students may never again in their career have an opportunity to learn about these topics from these experts

VERY FEW GRADUATE STUDENTS IN RESEARCH ONLY MODE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY
THE PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

- Change name from "Research Only" to "Dissertation Mode"

- Allow all students in "Dissertation Mode" to take up to 3 credits of advanced graduate electives each semester at no extra cost if there are seats available in the class if their advisor approves.

- Increase the cost of the 9 "Dissertation Mode credits" so that the revenue going into the grad tuition pool is no less than it is now with the small fraction of the "Research Only" mode students who take extra electives and pay for them.

How much would this modification increase the cost of "Research Only" mode from its present value?
**APPROACH TO ESTIMATING AN INCREASE IN THE COST OF "RESEARCH ONLY" MODE CREDITS TO MAKE PROPOSAL REVENUE NEUTRAL TO THE GRAD TUITION FUND POOL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Cost/Grad Credit</th>
<th>$744</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present Cost/Research Only Mode Credit</td>
<td>$248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SPRING SEMESTER 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPRING SEM 2013 DATA FROM REGISTRAR'S OFFICE</th>
<th># students taking BILLED Additional Credits</th>
<th># of BILLED additional Credits taken</th>
<th>% students taking SOME additional credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHD</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUM PHD + MS**

| 155 students w/ 9 res only mode credits | 155 | 4 | 10 | 3% |

- Total $ received: $345,960
- Total from Billed additional credits: $7,440
- $ needed for Res only mode credits to offset BILLED additional credits that would potentially be lost to this fund pool: $353,400

**NEW COST PER CREDIT FOR RESEARCH ONLY MODE TO MAKE OFFERING CHANCE TO TAKE 3 CREDIT ELECTIVE REVENUE NEUTRAL TO GRAD SCHOOL TUITION POOL**

- $253
- NEW % cost of regular grad credit: 34%

**BOTTOM LINE: BY INCREASING $/SEMESTER OF RESEARCH ONLY MODE TO THIS AMT:**

| $2,280 |

**FROM THIS AMT:**

| $2,232 |

**(an increase in $/semester of approximately):**

| $48 |

**WE CAN OFFER GRAD STUDENTS IN RESEARCH ONLY MODE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE UP TO 3 GRAD CREDITS/SEMESTER IN ADVANCED ELECTIVES (SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF SEATS) WITHOUT THE GRAD STUDENT TUITION POOL LOSING REVENUE**
## Graduate Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Students Taking Only Research Credits</th>
<th>students taking additional credits billed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% cost of regular grad credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>$248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>$248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>$248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Undergraduate Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Students Taking Only Research Credits</th>
<th>students taking additional credits billed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% cost of regular grad credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>$244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>$330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>$98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Total

- Fall 2012: $248
- Fall 2013: $248
- Spring 2014: $248

## Notes
- $248 is an increase in $/semester of approximately $2,382.
- This is subject to availability of seats without the grad student tutor pool funding revenue.
March 5, 2013

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

1. Review minutes of 02/05/13

2. Old Business
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