The Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) met on October 5, 2004 in the ROTC Building

**PRESENT:** Sandra Boschetto-Sandoval (Humanities), Jianping Dong (Math), John Gierke (GMES), Kim Hoagland (Soc. Sci.), Joe Holles (Chem Eng), Casey Huckins (Bio Sci), Brent Lekvin, (SBE), Pushpa Murthy (chem sci), Soner Onder (CS), Ghatu Subhash (MEEM), Marilyn Vogler & Dave Reed (GSO/RSO), Justin Priestman (GSC)

**Depts/Progs not represented:** Biomed Eng, Civil & Env. Eng., Education, Elec. & Comp. Eng., SFRES, Material Science & Eng., Physics

1. President John Gierke opened the meeting at 4:05 PM.

2. New Business

   **Elections for GFC offices:** By unanimous votes Kurt Pregitzer (FRES) and Pushpa Murthy (Chem) were elected to the positions of GFC President and Vice-President, respectively. The GFC Secretary position was left unfilled and the suggestion was made that it be filled on a rotating basis at each meeting, or be filled by Graduate School personnel.

   **New Degree Proposals:** The GFC suggested that the review of new degree proposals should not appear on the GFC agenda without substantial forewarning. In order to avoid surprises in the future and the resulting need for a rapid response by the GFC, GFC members should alert the GFC if their respective departments are proposing new graduate degrees to be reviewed in the current academic year.

   **Introduction and Overview by Dave Reed:** The Graduate School is interested in continuing its examination of stipend levels and the benefits package for MTU Graduate Students. The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is currently developing and surveying cost of living estimates and stipend levels for peer institution comparison. The potential for including graduate students within other MTU insurance policies is being assessed as a method of enhancing the future package offered to the students. There was a brief discussion of the composition (i.e., domestic, international, minority) of the internally supported students. Of the 250 internally supported students, 180 are international and 9 were identified as minority students. Dave then opened the floor to questions and the question was raised about the potential for Graduate School funding to exist for graduate student recruiting. Available funding for recruiting activities is yet to be determined. The GFC was informed of the Graduate School program to provide funds ($100) to graduate students to help defray the costs of developing and submitting research grant proposals. The question was then raised about specific departmental needs for recruiting versus assistance with student support and at least one department suggested they needed student support more than recruiting funds.
Plan C Masters Degree requirements: Marilyn Vogler explained that in light of administrative changes since the previous session of the GFC, the Senate requested that the GFC reaffirm its position on several proposals relating to university level requirements for Plan C Masters degrees at MTU. One proposal suggested altering residency requirements for distance learning students; however this proposal had been withdrawn for reassessment prior to Oct. 5, so the GFC did not address it. One proposal advocated the elimination of the requirement for an oral examination for the Plan C Masters students. The remaining proposal was for the removal of the requirement of an outside member on Plan C Masters oral defenses. The GFC (03-04) had examined the pros and cons of the latter two proposals and by majority vote recommended they be supported. The GFC (04-05) reviewed summary language produced by the Senate about these proposals. GFC members then discussed the issues (pro and con) and agreed to maintain the previous GFC recommendation to support the proposals.

Ad Hoc Committee Membership (04-05): John Gierke opened a discussion of the various committees within the GFC and requested volunteers.

**Recruiting and Graduation (RAG)** – This committee will address issues pertaining to attracting new graduate students as well as enhancing the likelihood of graduation by those currently enrolled. An added issue for this year is to deal with new cross-disciplinary graduate programs being proposed.

*current membership:* Casey Huckins, Pushpa Murthy, Joe Holles and Brent Lekvin

**Remuneration and Benefits (R&B):** One of the tasks for this committee is to conduct the analysis of graduate stipend levels.

*current membership:* Kedmon Hungwe, Ghatu Subhash

**Recognition and Rewards (R&W):** This committee will review applications for the DeVlieg Fellowship and other thesis/dissertation awards. New awards will also be considered and possibly developed.

*current membership:* Sandra Boschetto-Sandoval, Soner Onder, Jianping Dong