Graduate Council Minutes  
Richards Hall, VPAA Conference Room  
February 13, 2015 – 12:00 p.m.

Council Members in Attendance
Dr. Cheryl Smith (COEHP), Council Chair  
Dr. Kimberly Gill (COLS)  
Dr. Andres Jauregui (DATCOB)  
Dr. John Ellisor (COLS)  
Dr. Greg Blalock (COEHP)  
Dr. Kevin Burgess (COLS)  
Dr. Michael Richardson (COEHP, for Dr. Margie Yates)  
Dr. Ellen Roberts (AA)  
Ms. Annette Brown (HR, guest)

Agenda Topics

1. Welcome by Dr. Smith. Approval of January meeting minutes delayed until the March meeting.

2. News from the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
   a. Dr. Roberts reported on the upcoming Graduate Discovery Day scheduled for February 21. She stated that forty-one potential students had signed up to attend, not including students from Columbus who might attend. Dr. Roberts stated that attending students will want to talk directly to faculty members not necessarily graduate students from the various departments. She reiterated the need for faculty representation from each graduate program at the Discovery Day.

      b. Dr. Roberts then announced that in the future the General Administrative Reports in ISIS will be used for graduate faculty applications. The old NOLIJ reporting system has proven too cumbersome. The new ISIS reporting system should be online by April to facilitate the processing of the large number of graduate faculty up for renewal for the next year. These approvals must be done before faculty can teach any graduate courses that year.

3. New Business
   a. Graduate Research Assistants Health Care Plan: Annette Brown of Human Resources informed the council that the Board of Regents had agreed to offer university health insurance to graduate research students, nine of which presently work on campus due to the number of hours working as a GRA. Either the colleges or individual departments where these students work will pay the university’s portion of the cost. The students will also pay a portion. However, any student availing him- or herself of one of these university policies will not be eligible for the health insurance subsidy provided by Obamacare.

      b. Anthem Breach: Annette Brown also informed the council of the need to get financial counseling and credit monitoring as a result of the Anthem breach which has compromised the names, addresses, Social Security numbers, and other personal information of our university personnel. She also reminded the council of the e-mail sent out on this subject by Human Resources.

      c. Graduate Assistant Stipends: Dr. Roberts asked that the council members make a recommendation on the minimum amount of stipend that should be paid to graduate assistants for their work during a semester. Based on an average of current stipend amounts, she recommended a sum of $2,000 per semester for nineteen hours work each week. Dr. Gill followed with a motion to that effect; Dr. Burgess seconded the motion; and the council unanimously approved the motion to make this minimum sum university policy.
d. Changes to the MBA Program: A discussion by council members revealed that the MBA program changes at issue were not ones that required council approval.

e. Discussion – What needs Graduate Council approval? Dr. Smith thought that the council might need to review the actual content of graduate programs, even though the college curriculum committees do this at present. But Dr. Roberts pointed out that the University Curriculum Committee examined program content, and Dr. Smith, and the council at large, seemed satisfied that that review was sufficient. Thus, concluded Dr. Roberts, the council would only review some substantial changes to programs such as name changes, numbers of course hours required, numbers of credit hours required, track additions, and the like.

f. Use of Independent Study Courses in Graduate Programs: Dr. Roberts pointed out that independent study courses were sometimes used as filler in graduate programs rather than how they should be used. She reminded the council members that these courses should not duplicate regular class courses required for the degree, just to make up for the student not being able or wanting to take the regular course offering at its set time. Instead, independent study courses should be used to supply the student with additional knowledge or specialization over and above that supplied by the regular classes. Moreover, the independent study should have a set design based on a plan of study supplied by the student and approved by the instructor. Furthermore, these independent study courses must have their own syllabi on file.

Dr. Roberts promised to look at the Graduate Independent Study policy, in part because she believes some students are not even qualified for independent study. She will ask that the council review the policy and make recommendations for changes at a later date if need be.

4. Old Business

a. Approval of Graduate Faculty: The council approved the last ten graduate faculty applications left over from the February approval meetings.

5. Announcements

a. Shared Governance: Dr. Smith expressed the concern that the University Council, charged with issuing university by laws and policies, had no representative from the Graduate Council. Dr. Roberts assured Dr. Smith that the makeup of the University Council would be considered by that body at a later date.

b. CSU Graduate Application Report for Fall 2015: 181 applications so far, up from 151 applications in the fall of 2014. Dr. Roberts also reported an increase in the number of people asking for information on our graduate programs, and she encouraged program coordinators to contact these interested parties.

Adjournment: Dr. Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.