

UNL GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting of September 8, 2011

The UNL Graduate Council convened at 3:30 p.m. in Room 206 of Seaton Hall. Present were: Professors Andrea Bolland, Elizabeth Jones, Susan Lawrence, Jon Pedersen, Jody Redepenning, David Smith and Mark van Roojen; student representatives Jared Leighton and Sylvia Jons; Ex-officio members: Dean Pat Dussault and Assistant Dean Laurie Bellows; Suzi Tamerius, Office of Graduate Studies. Dean Pat Dussault presided.

April 14, 2011 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Early Literacy

A motion was made and seconded to approve a new graduate certificate in Early Literacy administered through the Department of Teaching, Learning and teacher Education. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposal for a Specialization in Journalism: Integrated Media Communications

After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to ask for clarification from Journalism on several parts of the proposal: profit and relevance regarding the partnership with UNK; goals and vision; future accreditation; online and on campus course load and additional resources needed. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposal for a Specialization in Special Education: Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

A motion was made and seconded to approve a new specialization in Special Education. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposal for a Specialization in Journalism: Media Studies

After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the Specialization upon receiving clarification from Journalism of the accreditation goals and nationwide standards for similar programs. The Council's approval will not automatically eliminate the existing specializations proposed. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on Graduate Assistant leave policy

Dean Pat Dussault reported that he is continuing to work on finding a formal way for graduate students to remain in their program when a leave of absence is necessary. This problem is currently being solved at the department level. Dean Dussault will continue to report as this issue moves forward through the administration.

Planned improvements in recruitment and retention processes

Dean Pat Dussault reported on the process of Graduate Admissions moving toward accepting unofficial transcripts, uploaded by potential students, at the initial stage of admissions evaluation. Admissions will still require students to submit official paper copies following acceptance into the University, and the admission certificate will include a statement that admission is based on verification of the unofficial student credentials. The benefits are not only for the workload of the department but also the cost to the students. If the proposed model is not ready to roll out by October, it will have to wait for another admission cycle before it is implemented.

Dean Pat Dussault also reported that he has initiated discussions with Information Services about a paperless PhD process. This would benefit students, faculty and the Doctoral Specialist. A paperless process would allow for students and faculty to more easily track their progress. It would also offer the possibility of automated emails sent to students at a particular point in their program. The time line and cost of this type of program is unknown at this time. If the PhD process moves forward and is successful, the Masters process will follow.

Announcements

- Dean Pat Dussault reported the Engineering proposal was not on the APC agenda this week. He expects it will be on the APC meeting agenda in 2 weeks.

GSA Report

Reported by Sylvia Jons, GSA President

- GSA hosted a kickoff event following the new graduate student orientation. It was held at YiaYia and over 100 students were present. Chairs of the committees were asked to sign at least one member to their committee at the event.
- GSA will host an Executive Social to open the lines of communication between the department representatives and the GSA. Their goal is for the department representatives to be more involved with the GSA and to really use the GSA as a student advisory board.
- Goals for the GSA are to take action on resolutions that have been passed; offer more options for distance education students to be involved with the GSA; create a Big 10 Grad Student Council; have representation of graduate students on committees around campus
- Jared Leighton, GSA vice president, reported on the need of a Graduate Student Government at UNL. The GSA will move forward based on the feedback received from a survey of Graduate Students regarding a student government within the next few weeks.
- Jody Redepening brought up the fact that the Chemistry department has lost two graduate students recently due to the high cost of Health Insurance for spouses. The GSA will look into this.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.