Minutes Approved at the 562nd Meeting - October 2, 2006

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
561st Meeting
September 11, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Arado, Barbe, Bond, Carrier, Changnon, Factor, Goldenberg, Gowen, Gupta, Harris, Hurych, Karonis, Lockard, Macdonald, Muñoz, Odoms-Young, Riley, Shaw, Slattery, Shumow, Sims

MEMBERS ABSENT: Aggarwal, Johnson, Lusk, Waas

OTHERS PRESENT: Arntz (Assistant Vice President for Research), Pugh (Graduate School Records Officer), Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator), Watson (Associate Dean, College of Education), Wright (Secretary)

Rathindra N. Bose, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Bose welcomed the new Graduate Council Members and the returning members.

Introduction

Bose announced that the budget deficit experienced by the Division of Research and Graduate Studies should be eliminated by January 2007. Bose thanked the committee for helping him cut some faculty support that had been provided prior to his tenure as Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School in order to balance the budget. He was excited to announce that not only would the President’s Office be providing $150,000 salary support for Summer Research and Artistry as it has done in previous years, but also, that he would be willing to increase the summer support if the Research and Artistry Committee were to recommend it.

Bose also informed the committee that the Carnegie Foundation recently published new classifications for doctoral institutions. The three different categories are: Research University (very high research activity), Research University (high research activity), and Doctoral/Research Institution. NIU is categorized as Research University (high research activity). Bose mentioned some other MAC institutions that have the same status, these universities include; Kent State, Ohio University, Toledo, and Western Michigan.

At this time Bose asked each member of the Graduate Council to introduce themselves.

Priority Business
Establishment of 2006-2007 Standing Committees of the Graduate Council: Over the summer, Graduate Council faculty members were asked to choose which committees they would be interested in serving on. Faculty members were placed on at least one of their choices. Additional vacancies were then filled with non-Council members to assure appropriate representation by college. Approval for the standing committees list as distributed was moved by Karonis, seconded by Shumow; motion passed unanimously.

Selection of an Assistant Chair of the Graduate Council: This person will serve as chair when the chair is gone and assist with creating the agenda when called upon. The assistant chair also serves as an ex officio member on the University Council. A motion was made by Barbe, seconded by Chagnon, to nominate Thomas Sims. Thomas Sims accepted the nomination, which was unanimously approved.

Selection of a 2006-2007 graduate student representative to the University’s Libraries Advisory Committee: Bose asked the committee to forward him names of possible student representatives. The committee will vote on this item at the October meeting.

Selection of a 2006-2007 graduate student representative to the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee: Bose moved to nominate Carolyn Riley for this position, seconded by Gowen and unanimously passed.

Selection of a 2006-2007 graduate student representative and a faculty member to the University Assessment Panel: Gupta moved to nominate David Changnon for the faculty member position, seconded by Barbe and unanimously approved. The council will approve a student member at the October meeting.

Bose informed the committee that a student needed to be nominated to serve on the search committee for the Dean of the University Libraries. Gupta nominated Slattery, seconded by Macdonald and unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

Research and Artistry: Bose announced that the call for Summer Research and Artistry proposals had been distributed to departments. The changes that the Graduate Council approved at the May 1, 2006 meeting have been implemented. These changes have brought about some misunderstandings. Bose emphasized that the Graduate Council’s purpose is to serve both students and faculty. Two of the major changes that have taken place are asking faculty to submit proposals online in order to allow the Research and Artistry Committee to review online, and asking departments and colleges to rate proposals in addition to ranking them. Gowen mentioned that the ratings will help the Research and Artistry Committee to make more informed decisions when selecting proposals for funding. Sims interjected that electronic submission of Summer Research and Artistry proposals are overdue. For a number of years both the National Science Foundation and the NIH have required electronic grant submissions. Bose stated that the Division of Research and Graduate Studies has leased new software for the Office of Sponsored Projects and Research Compliance, which means that the IRB and IACUC
paperwork will be moving to a completely electronic process in the near future. Bose, not intending to inconvenience departments and colleges, said that if the departments and centers were not equipped to submit proposals online, his office would be more than willing to help them with the submission process.

Appeals Committee: Bond reported that the Appeals Committee met twice over the summer, reviewed 11 cases, less than half of those cases were readmitted. Bond will prepare a formal report of the 2005-06 Appeals Committee actions and present to the Council at a later meeting.

New Business

PeopleSoft Implementation: The PeopleSoft software is on schedule to be implemented campus wide in fall 2008. In order for the system to function correctly there are some issues that the Graduate Council needs to address in order for the implementation of the software to move further. The first issue to be addressed is dual level 400 courses. These 400 level courses are taken by both undergraduate and graduate students. The PeopleSoft program cannot recognize a course as both graduate and undergraduate. Bose checked to see if the software could be changed to process these courses. It is possible for the software to be changed, but the cost is too high and is a recurring cost. The best solution may be to renumber courses, with 400 level as undergraduate and 500 level as graduate. Students will still be taking the same course at the same time, just registering for different numbers of the course. The committee discussed this issue further, including whether departments would have to go through the entire curricular process in order to change these course numbers. Smith mentioned that the regular curricular process has to be followed, although the Curriculum Committee discussed approving revision charts instead of having departments complete all the paperwork normally required. Bose asked that this item be forwarded to the Curriculum Committee for discussion and to bring a recommendation back to the Graduate Council.

Student-at-Large Issue: At this time the university has over 2,000 students-at-large. Bose has gone through all the certificates of graduate studies offered and has found that we offer 51 certificates, but only 2 of those are recognized by the IBHE. Out of those 51 certificate programs, 14 require 18 credit hours or more. In order for certificates to be recognized by the IBHE they must have a required number of credit hours. Post-bachelor certificates require 18 hours and post-masters require 26 hours. Bose would like to work toward getting more programs recognized by the state. Students whose specific goal is to obtain a certificate, should not be classified as SAL. Another issue is that students who are SAL’s normally do not qualify for subsidized Stafford loans. If the certificate programs were recognized by the state, then the students would qualify for federal aid. Watson mentioned that many students in the College of Education are only at NIU for certification, not to earn a certificate. Bose stated that those students are not the ones to be concerned about. He would like to see the SAL status specifically for those students who are exploring their graduate education options. If we could track these students, then we would be able to advise and recruit them into NIU’s programs.
Two other issues that were mentioned in relationship to the PeopleSoft implementation were grading and registration of students by departments. Both of these issues, along with the SAL issue, will be forwarded to the Standards Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Graduate Council.

Announcements

*Presidential Research Professorship*: The call for nominations went out for this year’s Presidential Research Professor award. Bose urged faculty to nominate worthy individuals from all departments and colleges.

*LIREEF*: Bose announced that 7 proposals were received and 6 were funded. An ad hoc committee was formed to review the proposals. Three members were appointed by the Graduate Council, Dave Changnon, Donald Richgels, and Greg Waas. Two other members were selected by Bose, Nouredine Boubekri and John Mitchell. The ad hoc committee recognized that the call for proposals was not geared toward multi-disciplinary proposals. It was written for departments to submit their disciplinary proposals solely. The Research and Artistry committee may want to look at sending out a multi-disciplinary solicitation for proposals.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.