Minutes Approved at the 590th Meeting – October 4, 2010

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
589th Meeting
September 13, 2010


MEMBERS ABSENT: Battula, Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT: Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator), Wright (Secretary)

Lisa Freeman, Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Freeman welcomed both new and returning Graduate Council members. Freeman asked the members of the Graduate Council to introduce themselves.

Priority Business

*Establishment of 2010-2011 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 committee of their choice. Additional vacancies will be filled with non-Council members to assure appropriate representation by college. Approval for the standing committees list as distributed was moved by Gowen, seconded by Macdonald; 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 and Faculty Senate. A motion was made by Umoren and seconded by Smith to nominate Bennardo. Bennardo accepted the nomination, which was unanimously approved.

*Selection of a 2010-2013 faculty representative and 2010-2011 graduate student representative to the University’s Libraries Advisory Committee:* Sunderlin previously served the faculty term on the Committee and volunteered for another term. The Council unanimously approved his reappointment on the Committee. Barnes stated that he would see if there were any Art Education graduate students interested in serving and try to bring a nomination to the October meeting.

*Selection of a 2010-2011 graduate student representative to the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee:* Von Hagel volunteered to serve as the graduate student representative. The Council accepted her self-nomination, which was unanimously approved.
Selection of a 2010-2011 graduate student representative to the University Assessment Panel: Niemi volunteered to serve as the graduate student representative. The Council accepted his self-nomination, which was unanimously approved. Walker mentioned that he was appointed as the Graduate Council faculty representative to replace Professor Behrooz Fallahi, who is no longer serving on the Graduate Council.

New Business

Overview of Search Process, Graduate Dean: Freeman described the separation of duties that took place after the former permanent person resigned. Formally, the position was Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School. When Jim Erman took over the position on an interim basis he was given the title of Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and Bond was named Acting Dean of the Graduate School. When Freeman interviewed she was invited to give her opinion on the position structure. She discussed the positions with the Provost and the search committee and felt that there should be a close connection, communication, collaboration and synergy within the positions, but in today’s reality of the academic world the dean position is a full-time job that requires the titles to be separate.

Freeman announced that the division will be initiating a search for the Dean of the Graduate School position and would like the search committee to be a subset of the Council, with the addition of a representative from the Council of Deans and the Graduate School. According to Article 18 of the University Constitution and Bylaws, the search process should be forwarded to the Faculty Senate for review and consent. This will be an internal search. Freeman opened the floor for questions.

Zittel questioned what percent of the Graduate Council would make up the search committee. Freeman responded that she has not calculated, but is looking for broad representation across disciplines and colleges. The committee size needs to be manageable in order to schedule meetings. She asked Council member to email her if they have strong feelings about the composition and size of the committee and do not want to bring them forward during the meeting. Macdonald questioned whether this had gone to the Faculty Senate or whether it was going. Freeman stated it would be presented at the second meeting, although her schedule will not allow her to attend she is working out arrangements with Alan Rosenbaum, President of Faculty Senate and Executive Secretary to the University Council, to ensure it is on the agenda. Macdonald mentioned that she was wondering about the timeline. Freeman stated she would like to move forward as quickly as possible. She further explained that the division has never hired a dean of the graduate school as a stand-alone position and it requires a search. Bennardo questioned whether the Graduate Dean will have additional titles. The Graduate Dean may have an additional title of Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies. That is consistent with the current administrative structure and that is how it is being put forward. It is unclear whether that will be approved. Freeman continued to explain that within most organizational structures the Dean of the Graduate School is considered a dean without students, similar to the Libraries Dean. Along with the title of Graduate Dean, many times there is a second title that indicates the reporting structure. That is more important for external validity than for validity within the institution. Bennardo
asked what type of person will fill this position, administrator or a scholar. Freeman stated that the responsibilities and portfolio will be very similar to the ones that Bond manages now. In addition to administration, leadership, resource development, collaboration with the deans of students, and collaboration with graduate faculty are essential. Enrollment management is a major topic of conversation at the Graduate School level as well as the Undergraduate level. As the Strategic Management Plan for Enrollment Management wraps up and Vision 2020 moves forward, this position will be an important voice in that conversation regarding the needs of graduate students. The same would be true regarding stipend development and progress toward degree.

Smith asked Freeman to explain the rationale for an internal search. Freeman stated that there are many reasons for an internal search. Some of those reasons are familiarity with the institution, having a new Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and a new structure makes an internal candidate valuable, in addition to the economics that have to been considered. It is difficult to attract external candidates with limited resources. Umoren questioned whether an Assistant Dean or further administrative support would be implemented. Freeman responded that no Assistant Dean position would be proposed, but that manpower needs would be revisited as necessary.

Freeman reiterated to the Council that they should feel free to follow-up with her on this matter by phone, email, or an appointment.

Announcements/Information

*Presidential Research Professor Call for Nominations:* Freeman announced that the call for nominations has been distributed. Nominations must be received by October 11, 2010. Applicant materials are due November 1, 2010. A couple of nominations have already been received.

*Graduate Student Research Association:* Smith announced that this is his second year as advisor to the Graduate Student Research Association. The association plans to host another conference the last Saturday in March. Last year they had over 80 participants with 30 poster and paper presentations representing five colleges. He would like to see the College of Law and College of Business involved. The Call for Proposals will go to department chairs near the end of September. Any questions or for students to contact Smith, email him at mcsmith@niu.edu. Hathaway asked whether there would be a theme for the conference. Smith responded that they discussed having a theme, but decided that not having one would allow a broader range of research to be submitted. Bennardo asked whether panels/discussions were appropriate and Smith responded yes. The association would like the conference to be multidisciplinary.

Gowen asked Freeman to update the Council on the Research and Artistry Call for Proposals. Freeman responded that the current Request for Proposals (RFP) is under revision and will be released soon. Freeman is considering adding subcategories to the RFP as well as increasing the flexibility of the award. The revision will likely include three categories of proposals: seed investment for growth of a program, completion of project, and limited access to funding. Freeman would like to increase the amount of funding per project as well as have some flexibility with funding – flexibility with the
calendar and with the allocation of salary and other items. Figuring out how to be more flexible with the existing fund categories for Research & Artistry is taking more time than expected, but the office is working on it. Gowen questioned whether the deadlines would be extended. Freeman expects that the deadlines will be extended and appreciates the patience of the university while waiting for the RFP to be distributed. Additionally, she mentioned that she is working to streamline the application process and that the deadlines will be adjusted accordingly.

Sunderlin questioned the current review process noting that there is review at three levels: Department, College, and Research & Graduate Studies. Freeman responded that the review process has ownership across campus and is not something that the Vice President for Research & Graduate Studies has sole authority to change. Liu questioned whether the new RFP would affect the review process at the department/college level as it is the measurement used in the review process. Freeman responded that the three categories already exist, but are not identified specifically. She hopes that this will make the process easier. Liu questioned whether or not the categories will be a quota system. Freeman responded that this is not going to be a quota system. She reiterated that the three categories already exist and this is a step in making the process more formalized. Bennardo interjected that even if it did include a quota system it still makes the process clearer. Freeman stated that this is a pilot which can be reviewed after this year. Holt asked whether there would still be separate categories for tenured and untenured faculty. Freeman responded that it is important to invest in our newest faculty and mid-career faculty and that the designations will remain.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.