

Graduate Council Approved Minutes 12/02/19

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

649th Meeting

November 4, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Barnes, Bateni, Binderup, Bond, Camic, Furr, Gallaher, Gavieta, Groves, Hanley, Holthuijzen, Jackson, Johnson, LaFrance, Mantzke, Osorio, Reyman, Smith, Zheng

MEMBERS ABSENT: Henningsen, Herrmann, Kelly, Kortegast, Ryzhov, Sciammarella, Vahabzadeh, Werstler

OTHERS PRESENT: Barshinger (secretary)

Bond called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

LaFrance moved to have the minutes of the September 9, 2019; meeting be approved. Arado seconded. Motion carried. Minutes approved.

Committee Reports

**Graduate Council Curriculum Committee:** Mantzke reported on behalf of the Committee. The GCCC met on October 14. She reported highlights of the meeting. 1.) The Department of Technology is requesting to change its name to the Department of Engineering Technology. There will be a variety of changes made to the catalog with this name change, 2.) The Department of Economics introduced a new course called Intro to Financial Engineering this course will be offered to undergraduate and graduate students, and 3.) The committee will continue to discuss the NIU dormant class policy. Groves moved to approve the report. Johnson seconded. Report approved.

**Graduate Faculty Membership Committee:** Bond reported the committee met in early October. The items discussed were: 1.) Minor criteria changes were submitted from the School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions and the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology, and Foundations. The committee approved all changes. 2.) Graduate faculty membership appeal. A faculty member was moved from Senior to Full membership as part of the regular review process. The committee reviewed the appeal and concurred that the faculty member met departmental and university qualifications to serve as a senior member. The committee approved the appeal and the faculty member will remain at senior status. Mantzke moved to approve the report. Hanley seconded. Report approved.

**Graduate School Faculty Awards Committee:** Bond reported the committee met on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, to discuss nominations for this year's distinguished graduate faculty award. The committee reviewed eight nominations. This award recognizes graduate faculty for excellence in graduate mentoring and outstanding scholarly achievement. The committee selected three recipients: Gregory Beyer from the School of Music, Sean Farrell from the Department of History, and James Wilson from

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the Department of Geography. Greg Beyer and Sean Farrell will be honored at the December commencement and Jim Wilson will be honored in the spring. Last spring the President's office introduced the University's refurbished mace at commencement, which requires a macebearer. Instead of recruiting volunteers, one of the award recipients will carry the mace at all future graduate ceremonies.

***Graduate School Student Awards Committee:*** At the October meetings of the two subcommittees. The Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education Subcommittee and the Health Sciences and STEM Subcommittee each selected a thesis and dissertation prize winner. The Outstanding Dissertation Award was awarded to Nicole Loring from the Department of Political Science and Matthew Krogstad from the Department of Physics. The Outstanding Thesis Award was awarded to Anne Stoughton from the Department of English and Logan Rice from the Department of Physics.

***Graduate School Tuition Waiver Committee:*** Bond reported the committee received eleven nominations for tuition waivers this spring. All eleven were awarded tuition waivers.

### New Business

***Writing Skills:*** Bond has been approached by faculty, staff, and graduate students with concerns about graduate student writing skills. The subject has been discussed with the Graduate Student Advisory Committee. Dean Bond asked the Council, "How do you assess graduate student writing skills?" A broad discussion ensued. Hanley asked, "How many graduate programs incorporate writing skills into their programs?" Many departments already have intense writing courses offered in their curriculum. Some offer the writing course at the beginning of their program and some toward the end of their program. Reyman, recommended talking to Brad Peters, the Director of the Writing Across the Curriculum program, to see if this could be a University wide effort to focus on graduate student writing and how we might approach it. The Writing Center sees a lot of graduate students already on a routinely basis, and the center assesses that graduate student writing skills – including grammar, spelling, organization, conceptualization, and style manual knowledge – as deficient. Bond stated that we need to provide more opportunities for students to improve their writing throughout the course of their studies. Bond asked if anyone has any specific ideas on this subject to please contact him. As ideas emerge, Bond will share with the council.

***Dean's Designee:*** The Dean's designee serves two functions: 1.) To ensure that the student is treated fairly during a dissertation defense, and 2.) To ensure that the defense is rigorous and that the dissertation is of good quality. It is hard to find faculty to do this because of schedules and interests. Do we need to keep doing this? Hanley noted that being a dean's designee is time-consuming, but it had changed her experience at NIU. La France asked, "How did this come to existence at NIU?" Bond could not find the memorandum that established the process, but he recollects this being instituted in the late 80s early 90s. This policy was instituted at a time when there was an off-campus cohort doctoral programs that was graduating a large number of students; there were concerns about the quality of advising and the dissertations. The council concluded that the dean's designee served good purposes, including ensuring a level of accountability. Bond thanked the council for its insight.

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***UNIV 650 New Course Proposal:*** Bond distributed a handout introducing a new independent study course titled UNIV 650: Interdisciplinary Independent Study. This course will be part of the Illinois Innovation Network, a multi-university collaborative, intended to offer courses to students at campuses in the network. Eastern Illinois University has volunteered to offer the first course. The intentions are to have students register for a course at their own institutions and be taught on-line by a faculty member from another institutions. The network would like to roll out this program in January. Dean Bond apologizes for not sending this to the GCCC first, but notification of the kick-off arrived only last week. Reyman noted “obtain” should be changed to “obtained” in the third paragraph, last sentence. Changing the course title was discussed. The Council approved changing the course title to “Inter-University Special Topics”.

### Announcements

Bond announced that everyone should have received an article on Wieteke Holthuijzen. She’s a master’s student in biology studying under Holly Jones and is also a member of the Graduate Council. Bond encouraged everyone to read the article about the research on Midway Island that Holthuijzen has conducted.

Hanley moved to adjourn the meeting. Barnes seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.