

## **Minutes of the Graduate Council Meeting held on May 9, 2012**

**Present:** Chair: Caramello; Members: Bob Anderson, Elizabeth Beise, David Cronrath, Susan De La Paz, Kari Kraus, Leigh Leslie, Ian Mather, George Macready, Bill McDonough, Rochelle Newman, Shawn Parry-Giles, Bob Sprinkle, John Shea, Bill Strein, Jack Sullivan, Psyche Williams-Forsen, Steve Wolniak; Student Councilors: Anna Bedford, Julie Choe Kim, Ethan Watermeier, Mike Wiederoder; Ex Officio Councilors: Tita Chico, Arthur Popper; Graduate School Staff : Cynthia Hale, Justin Maher, Matt McLean, Shaun Myers, Joe Williams, Kathy Worthington

### ***I. Approval of the Minutes***

Minutes of the February 22, 2012 meeting were approved with no emendations.

### ***II. Announcements and Presentations***

Dean Caramello provided an overview of AY 2011-12 Graduate School Initiatives and Summer Projects. The Dean highlighted progress made in GOA, right-sizing, international initiatives, student support, and student, faculty and staff awards. The Dean also reviewed projects scheduled for Summer 2012, including a GS brochure, website improvements, GS staffing, and continued development of the new graduate application system.

Assistant Dean and Chief of Staff Cindi Hale provided an overview of the implementation timeline and process for the new graduate application system, Hobson's Apply Yourself. The GS has entered into a five-year agreement with Hobson's to develop this new system, which will go "live" in Spring 2013. Dean Hale reviewed advantages of the system and a communications pyramid for its implementation.

Associate Dean Tita Chico provided a brief report on Flagship and McNair Fellows so councilors would have a concrete sense of the high quality of students involved. Associate Dean Chico briefly summarized two of the Fellows' educational and personal backgrounds, as well as the institutions with whom we compete for these outstanding candidates. Dean Caramello noted that a recent recipient of a McNair Fellowship has been awarded a prestigious NSF Fellowship.

### ***III. Committee Reports***

#### ***Dean's Representative***

Councilor Ian Mather, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Dean's Representatives, provided a final report and recommendations from the Committee on updating the current Dean's Representative policy (see attachment #1). The Committee recommended that language be added to the current Report of the Examining Committee form verifying that campus policies and procedures were followed appropriately and clarifying the roles and voting status of individuals on the committee. The language also specifies time period within which a Dean's Representative must submit a written report to the Dean of the Graduate School in the event of procedural irregularities.

Councilor Bob Anderson moved the recommendation; and Councilor Bill McDonough seconded it. The motion passed by a vote of 16-0-1.

#### ***Certificate Programs***

Councilor Jack Sullivan, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Certificates, provided a report of issues the Committee wanted to put before the Graduate Council for discussion. A discussion followed regarding the co-mingling of certificate students and masters/doctoral students; development of a new admissions category, one more rigorous than that of the Advanced Special Student, but less complex than that for masters/doctoral students; development of a policy regarding use of the term "certificate," and possibly restricting this term to approved

programs that earn academic credit; and possible development of a credential that will be designated for non-degree professional training and development programs.

Councilors agreed these were the main areas regarding certificate programs requiring more research and discussion. Councilors noted that entrepreneurship should be considered when reviewing certificate programs: encouraging and growing entrepreneurial programs while maintaining high academic standards.

#### *IV. Updates*

Dean Caramello updated the Council on plus/minus grading. Changes in the document finally approved by the Senate and Provost, and cleared by the Legal Office, depart slightly from that which the Graduate Council originally approved in September 2011. The Graduate Council had proposed that “the minimum grade for individual course requirements currently specified in *Graduate School Policies* as *B* should continue to be specified as *B* (or 3.0). The grade of *B-* (or 2.7) will not suffice as minimum grade in these instances, which include, but are not limited to, courses being used for transfer credit and courses at the 600 level or above being double-counted for the Individual Bachelor’s/Master’s Program.” The finally approved campus policy specifies that a *B-* will satisfy individual course requirements specified as *B*.

The Graduate Catalog must be updated to reflect the new campus policy:

##### *1. Registration Policies: Graduate Credit for Undergraduates*

*Current language:* “An undergraduate degree-seeking student at the University of Maryland may register for graduate-level courses (600-897) with the approval of the Dean of his or her academic college, the chair of the department, the instructor offering the course, and the Dean of the Graduate School. These courses will be recorded as “for graduate credit only” and may ONLY be applied toward an advanced degree at this university or elsewhere. Students eligible for this option normally will have achieved Junior standing, will have a GPA of at least 3.0, and will have successfully completed the prerequisite courses with a grade of “B” or better.”

*New language:* The Catalog will change the last sentence to read: “Students eligible for this option normally will have achieved Junior standing, will have a GPA of at least 3.0, and will have successfully completed the prerequisite courses with a grade of “B-” or better.”

##### *2. Academic Policies: General Policies and The Academic Record: Transfer of Credit*

*Current language:* “The student must have earned a grade of “B” or better in the course.”

*New language:* “The student must have earned a grade of “B-” or better in the course.”

##### *3. Academic Policies – Combined Bachelor’s – Master’s Programs: Individual Student Bachelor’s/Master’s Program*

*Current language:* “Courses to be double-counted must be at the 600 level or above and must be passed with at least a “B” grade.”

*New language:* “Courses to be double-counted must be at the 600 level or above and must be passed with at least a “B-” grade.”

The Graduate Catalogue will be updated to reflect these new policies by June 2012.

There being no other business, the Dean thanked the Councilors for their outstanding service for the past year and adjourned the meeting at 12 Noon.



## Final Report: Status of Dean's Representative

### Graduate Council Meeting, May 9, 2012

**Committee Membership:** Ian Mather (Animal & Avian Sciences, Chair); James Robert Anderson (Physics), Julie Greene (History), John Shea (Economics), Michael Sean Wiederoder (Bioengineering), Susan De La Paz (Special Education), Arthur N. Popper (Assoc. Dean, *ex officio*)

The Committee met on January 18 and March 15, 2012 and members were in contact by E-mail as needed. We conducted an informal survey of the status of the Dean's Representative (DR) (or equivalent) at nine other Universities, including our peers [UC Berkeley, UCLA, Universities of Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio State, Oregon, Penn State, Rutgers, and Wisconsin]. DR regulations among these universities vary widely, and include three major categories:-

- (1) There is no official DR (IL, Penn State, Rutgers, UCLA, UNC, WI). In some cases external members, either within (Penn State), or outside the university (Rutgers) bring in a broader and hoped-for unbiased perspective. In one case (UCLA), there is an "outside member", who has no responsibilities for rules and policies, but who evaluates the quality of the work and makes sure that the examination is fair from the standpoint of scholarship.
- (2) The DR is chosen by the Program or Dept. and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The DR, or equivalent, is from outside of the department or program (OR), and, also, may be outside of the discipline (UC Berkeley, MI).
- (3) The DR is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School immediately before the dissertation defense. The DR is neither a member of the program, nor a regular member of the committee, but does vote at the end of the examination (OH).

The option of having no DR at all (option 1, above) was not considered seriously by the Committee. All Committee members feel that DRs provide external perspectives to the evaluation of doctoral candidates and ensure that the examinations are conducted in a fair and rigorous manner. Also, there was no enthusiasm for option 3, in which the DR is directly appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Initiation of this kind of approach for College Park would require considerable reorganization and increased management time, as there are over 500 Ph.D. defense examinations per year on campus.

Option 2 is more aligned with the current practice on campus but it has run into difficulties from time to time, because there are now many interdepartmental programs and some departments have merged to form bigger academic units. Therefore, it has become difficult to identify a DR from outside the program or department. In addition, the status of the DR as a Doctoral Dissertation Committee member varies widely across departments and programs. In many cases, the DR is a regular Doctoral Committee Member from the outset of the candidate's studies and has a detailed knowledge of the field of study. At the other extreme, the DR has a peripheral knowledge of the field and only attends the final examination to ensure that correct procedures are followed. In all cases the DR is a voting member of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee, regardless of his/her depth of knowledge of the field of study.

To address these issues, the Committee proposes the following regulations for the conduct of doctoral dissertation examinations. Changes to current practice are in ***bold italics***.

- (1) There must be at least five approved and voting members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee for the dissertation defense. One member of the Committee must be a DR. ***The DR***

***may be one of the five voting members. Alternatively the DR may not be a voting member of the Committee. Whether the DR votes or not is a decision made by the student, primary advisor and the DR before the DR is nominated for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. In addition, the Dean will ensure that there are five voting members on the Committee. Therefore, Committees that have a non-voting DR must have at least six members (five voting members and the non-voting DR).***

(2) The DR is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, following nomination of the prospective DR by the primary advisor and the Graduate Program Director, after consultation with the graduate student. The DR should have at least some background interest related to the student's research or scholarship. The DR ensures that the procedures of the dissertation examination comply with those of the Graduate School [listed in the Graduate Catalog under Academic Policies: Doctoral Degrees] and reports any procedural irregularities in the conduct of the examination to the Dean of the Graduate School.

(3) The DR must be from another tenure home than the student's primary advisor, or co-advisor(s). ***In the case of multi-disciplinary programs, the DR can be a member of the program, as long as they have a different tenure home from the primary advisor, co-advisor(s), or Doctoral Committee Chair (if the Doctoral Committee Chair is not a primary advisor).***

***(4) The person nominated to become the DR may serve as a regular member of the student's Doctoral Graduate Committee from the time it is first convened. Alternatively, the person nominated to be the DR may be added to the Doctoral Graduate Committee at a later date and either take part in some committee meetings including the qualifying examination, or only join as a Doctoral Dissertation Committee member for the final dissertation defense. In all cases, the DR must be present for the full dissertation defense and serve to adjudicate the defense.***

(5) Voting members approve the dissertation by signing next to their respective names on the Report of the Examining Committee. Refusal of a voting member to sign is taken as disapproval (a "No" vote). ***The Report of the Examining Committee will be altered to indicate whether the DR is a voting or non-voting member.***

(6) Two "No" votes constitute failure.

***(7) The following question will be added to the Report of the Examining Committee: Did the examination procedures comply with those required by the Graduate School [listed in the latest edition of the Graduate Catalog under Academic Policies: Doctoral Degrees]?***

Yes

No

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***Signature of the Dean's Representative Date***

***If No, the Dean's Representative must apprise the Dean of the Graduate School of the procedural irregularities, followed by a written report (signed and dated) within three days of the examination.***