

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2009

I. Call to order

Dr. Jeff Brown called the meeting to order at ~11:05 on November 20, 2009.

Roll call

The following persons were present:

Jeff Brown, Faridoun Farrokh, Mehnaaz Momen, Tagi Sagafi-Nejad, Randy Brown, Whitney Bischoff, Louise Autio, Neal McReynolds, Rogelio Hinojosa, Mosqueda

MOTION: Minutes unanimously approved from last URC meeting with the changes previously discussed

II. Graduate Faculty Standing Applications

Faculty need to reapply to have graduate faculty standing if it has been more than 5 years, application is available on-line on the graduate council webpage

Request made of Dr. Brown that he send out a reminder with upcoming expired email include the dean of graduate faculty

III. Applications from international student – potential problem

Bologna process - a portable class structure (3 years bachelors +2 years masters), where a student could finish a bachelor's degree in 3 years, which could be a potential problem for students transferring to TAMU, since current TAMU policy requires a 4 year degree. Other colleges are deciding this on a case by case basis, depending on the coursework student completed.

MOTION: Committee unanimously agrees to also decide this on a case by case basis

IV. Grad assistantships

Most are from LBV fund, although there is local money for the PhD program

Graduate assistants could be hired using external grant funding

No current policy against having multiple positions, ie. More than one assistantship

College Station policy restricts graduate assistants to a maximum of 50% time, with the exception that students could work more during the Thanksgiving, Xmas and summer breaks

MOTION: Continue deciding these situations on a case by case basis (details below), approved & seconded, no opposition

Guidelines for graduate student working greater than 50% effort:

1. Students holding positions of Graduate Assistant Teaching (GAT), Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT) and Graduate Assistant Research (GAR) are normally required to work 20 hours/week (50%)
2. Not allowed to work beyond 50% effort without approval of the Office of Graduate Studies
3. International students not allowed to work beyond whatever percent effort their assistantship is for fall and spring semesters, in accordance with immigration rules
4. Domestic students are allowed to work no more than 10 hours per week beyond the assistantship anytime during the semesters provided they are correctly registered and the department giving the assistantship approves the extra hours
5. As referenced in #2, a written request must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies from hiring entity through the department giving the assistantship (if hiring entity is not the department giving the assistantship)

V. New dissertation model proposed

Publication model (used at Harvard) -thesis is a collection of related papers, each a publishable quality paper. Basically, it has a title/signature page, a beginning & end, three articles. Should be an introduction & discussion, with an overarching theme linking the papers together

This model has not been discussed by the School of Business as a whole yet, should have additional discussion there prior to it being brought to the graduate committee

Debate as to if this should be the only model available to students or if the more traditional thesis should be still be an available option. Consensus is that this model should be considered as an option, but not be mandatory format for all theses and further discussion needs to happen within the PhD committee on this issue.

VI. Plagiarism in dissertation/theses, copyright

Post-graduation, a Kingsville student was found to have plagiarized in the thesis, and there is currently a legal battle going on to revoke the student's degree. They now have a committee chair form and put the thesis through plagiarism software before the graduate degree is awarded.

Does TAMIU want to require checking for plagiarism for our students? And if so, who is responsible and how do we verify this has been done?

Proposed ideas:

- a. screen capture of result of plagiarism software and submitted that along with the thesis. Plagiarism checking website: turnitin.com – is it discipline specific or could any thesis committee use it? Any text would be probably be fine but equations/diagrams/figures likely not possible to check with this website.
- b. Form stating student did not plagiarize in thesis be approved & signed by committee & student, not just the chair of the committee. The result of the plagiarism software (percentage similar to other works) should be discussed by committee when deciding to confer the degree or not

Dr. Brown will make and bring a draft of a form to use for this purpose for the next meeting.

MOTION: Propose to start using the form Dr. Brown will bring to the next meeting starting spring 2010. Motion passed. McReynolds stated he opposed this measure because he felt this issue had not been thought through enough, other member who opposed this vote did not detail why he opposed this issue

MOTION: PhD copyright form – based on College Station model with few TAMIU modifications. Proposed to adopt this form – moved, seconded, passed

VII. Admissions/Dropouts

When student drops out, how long before they need to reapply? Example: student attends for a semester, then drops out for 1 ½ years, need to reapply?

Current policy: if more than 1 year since taken class, have to reapply but any courses taken do count for 5 years

Student would have the same GRE & other application criteria but if greater than 1 year, have to go through the full application process. Their application is treated as a brand new application, as courses may have changed, and University or Department policies might also have changed

VIII. Program review schedule & Coordinating Board

Needs to happen every 5 years, how to identify when it needs to be done

Nursing – do this Spring, as they are going through external review now

COBA – do next, as they have accreditation coming

Provost suggests using program CIP codes that the Coordinating Board uses, problem with multiple MBA programs in School of Business

VIV. Coordinating Board - New rules for low enrollment programs

Every degree in arts and sciences has to graduate these averages over a 5 year period:

Undergraduate 5/year

Masters 3/year

PhD 2/year

It is not clear when our first 5 year period begins. Also unclear what happens if a university does not meet these guidelines

Lots of questions on these new rules, not many answers. Dr. Brown will update committee as more information becomes available.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 12:01

Minutes submitted by: Dr. Jeff Brown & Celeste Kidd
Minutes are pending approval by Graduate Council