

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL  
Minutes of Thursday, 24 September 2015, 3 p.m.  
Faculty Lounge, Bernhard Center

**Members present:** Julie Apker, Suzan Ayers, Michele Behr, Luigi Berto, Louann Bierlein Palmer, Scott Boerma, Amy Curtis, Janet Hahn, Michael Miller, Patricia Montilla, David Reinhold (for Provost Tim Greene), Susan Stapleton, Brian Young, and Amaury Pineda.

**Member absent:** Alhassan Mumuni

**Guests:** Regena Fails Nelson, Chair, Department of Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies; Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Associate Dean, Graduate College.

**Procedural Items**

Council Chair Amy Curtis called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

*Welcome*

Chair Curtis welcomed members and guests and introduced new faculty member Luigi Berto from History, and graduate student member Amaury Pineda.

*Acceptance of the Agenda*

A friendly amendment by Ayers to move review of council charges up, after the approval of agenda.

A motion was made by Bierlein Palmer and supported by Apker to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Charges communicated by Ayers on behalf of Faculty Senate Executive Board. Charges were accepted by the group.

*Approval of the Minutes of 28 May 2015*

It was moved by Bierlein Palmer and supported by Ayers to approve the minutes of 28 May. Motion carried.

*Chair's Remarks – Amy Curtis*

None.

**Action / Discussion Items**

*Curriculum Proposal – Department of Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies [CEHD 578] Establish a Certificate in Early Childhood Special Education – Regena Nelson*

It was moved by Ayers and supported by Behr to review the curriculum proposal.

Discussion ensued about the proposal. Suggestions were made regarding 1) content necessary for catalog copy and content useful to website, 2) remove the section “certificate program in HESA”, 3) make more evident that the SZ endorsement is from the State of Michigan, 4) clarify where masters and bachelors are required.

In addition, the following revisions are requested to the section “Certificate Program in Early Childhood Special Education:” #4 – add “of this certificate program;” #6 -- add “excludes students seeking SZ endorsement”

It was moved by Ayers and supported by Behr to table the proposal until above revisions are made. This motion carried.

*Discuss and Approve Final 2015-16 Council Charges*

Curtis explained the charges assigned to the council. Stapleton provided context for charge 5 “Examine policies and make recommendations regarding minimum and maximum of credits for both: a) Second WMU master’s degree; and b) Graduate certificate programs.” Stapleton explained the need for charge 1c to conduct a graduate faculty survey.

Ayers provided context for the 1e charge, “Investigating ways to engage faculty in recruitment and/or retention of graduate students with intentional focus on under-represented groups. Gathering information on best practices and ideas; providing opportunity for discussion.” This charge is assigned to all Faculty Senate councils.

*Assign Members to the Charges*

Subcommittees will be formed, chairs appointed, and will meet outside of council time. Subcommittees will report at each council meeting and let the Council Executive Board know in advance action items and any other items needed to be placed on agendas. Subcommittees must submit all materials and agenda items to the council two weeks before meetings. Membership is listed below, see the Charges document for full description of each.

Charge 1: Julie Apker, Suzan Ayers, Louann Bierlein Palmer, Scott Boerma, Alhassan Mumuni, Amaury Pineda

Charge 2: ALL

Charge 3: Luigi Berto, Patricia Montilla, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Michele Behr

Charge 4: Amy Curtis

Charge 5: Janet Hahn, Michael Miller, Brian Young

#### *Update of Graduate Student Survey*

Boerma received verbal feedback from council members and further feedback will be given by council members via email. There was discussion of target dates for council review and dissemination to graduate students. Boerma will work with the WMU survey coordination committee to distribute. Subcommittee will meet to discuss optimal dates.

#### *Transfer of Credit from One Program to Another within WMU – Graduate College*

Byrd-Jacobs presented potential policy change. Current policy pertains to students transferring into WMU, not to students transferring between programs within WMU. Currently programs/departments are seeking waivers. There was discussion of various issues such as giving autonomy to programs and departments, the need to have policy to deal with recurrent issues in a uniform way for accreditation as well as the need for flexibility and latitude. Discussion was held on revisions for recommendations from the council. Byrd-Jacobs will draft wording for the council to review. She will provide the council language from the Higher Learning Commission.

#### **Reports**

##### *Report of the Graduate Dean – Susan Stapleton*

Distribution of WE “heart” graduate students pins. The summer months were busy at the Graduate College. There is continuous quality improvement of ApplyYourself electronic admission process with more fully completed applications than in the previous paper system. Graduate College is now using RADIUS to track inquiries, prospects, virtual graduate fair registrants, etc. and monitoring conversion to applicants, admits, and enrollees. WMU is converting prospects to applicants in the virtual forums.

Curtis asked about how programs/departments can work with the Graduate College using these tools for specific recruitment. Faculty Fellow Browning is developing a list of feeder schools (in past five years, how many, from where) to target our recruitment efforts. From the program review

The Center for English Language and Culture for International Students curriculum change is moving forward. The change will require CELCIS graduate students to have a 3.0 (B) GPA or better to graduate from the CELCIS program and move into graduate programs

Starting this year, all NEW GAs are required to complete the Responsible Conduct for Research course as a condition of their appointment. General research integrity/ethics course. Students are already taking the course. It is anticipated to be long-term requirement for all graduate students. Discussion ensued about monitoring of beta phase and future course refinement.

Stapleton met with housing staff to discuss possibilities for graduate student housing. Changes will be made to phrasing in marketing content to be more inviting. The 700 students who applied and were admitted indicated on AY that they were interested in graduate student housing

Additional innovations are Interdisciplinary PhD up and running with one student admitted. Have 3 + 2 program with Dillard University.

Developing a Graduate College strategic plan. University Space Committee to move the Graduate College to the first floor of Walwood currently used by Development. Funding secured to renovate. Timing of move pending.

##### *Report of the Graduate Student Association President – Designee Amuary Pineda*

Designee Pineda reported on recent activities of GSA. Grad Talks will include 3 minute thesis competitions (November and March). Finalists with present final competition at Research Day in April. Criteria and information about the event is on the GSA website. Samples online via YouTube. Anticipate this will be a long-term event that has regional and national possibilities.

Targeting cultural, social and sporting events to reach out to graduate student population. For Fall – GSA coordinating Broadway show at Miller Auditorium and Homecoming Football Game. Social event is TBA.

#### **Other Business**

Bierlein Palmer requested an automated process by which time to degree information can be produced. Stapleton is having discussions with multiple entities to move forward on such a process. There are many tracking issues that pose challenges. Curtis requested official enrollment numbers for graduate education at a future meeting.

#### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Bierlein Palmer and supported by Curtis to adjourn.  
The council adjourned at 5 p.m.

Julie Apker  
Secretary