Graduate Council

Meeting Minutes

February 12th, 2015 – Taylor 404

Supporting, facilitating and promoting excellence in lifelong education
through graduate programs of distinction, innovative outreach programs and a diverse student body.

Members present: Melissa Aleman, Michael Stoloff, Lynette Michael, Teresa Gonzalez (The Provost's Office), Diane Wilcox (Adult Ed/HRD), Christine May (Biology), Michael Busing (Business Administration), Ayasakanta Rout (CSD), Pete Bsumek (Communication & Advocacy), Hossain Heydari (Computer Science – Info. Sec), Lennie Echterling (Counseling & Supervision/Clinical Mental Health Counseling/School Counseling), Brooks Hefner (English), Holly McCartney (Exceptional Education), Robin Anderson (Graduate Psychology), Natasha DuMerville (Student Representative), David "AJ" Good (Student Representative), Jeremy Akers (Health Sciences), Brian Flota (Libraries & Educational Technology), Anthony Tongen (Math Education), Patty Hale (Nursing), Amy Russell Yun (Occupational Therapy), Jerry Weniger (Physician Assistant Studies), Michael Hall (Psychological Sciences), Fred Mayhew (Public Administration), Tammy Gilligan (School Psychology), Michael Klein (WRTC), Holly McCartney (Education), Henrique Batista (Music), John Scherpereel (Political Science-EUPS), Karen Ford (Strategic Leadership), Nancy Nichols (Accounting), Karin Tollefson (SADAH).

Guests Present: Kristi Shackelford (Catalog), Chris Arndt (CAL), Eric Dirth (Graduate Student Association), Sarah MacDonald (Outreach and Engagement), Janet Smith (University Communications), Paula Maxwell (CHBS), A.J. Morey (Cross-Disciplinary Programs & Curriculum Planning), Lisa Drake Davis (Libraries).

Graduate programs not represented: Art & Art History, Assessment & Measurement, Clinical & School Psychology, CSPA, Computer Science, ISAT, History, Kinesiology.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 15, 2015 were approved without revisions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Planning for the Graduate Showcase of Scholarship & Creative Activity (Graduate Symposium) to be held on Thursday, April 2, 2015 continues. Collaboratively produced by the JMU Graduate School, Graduate Student Association and the JMU Office of Research and Scholarship, this event celebrates 60 years of graduate education at JMU. Melissa encouraged program directors to attend, and noted that the Graduate Council meeting scheduled on April 2nd may be truncated to permit attendance.
- The final Travel Grants for Graduate Students of the academic year are due February 16th.
- The Cohen Center Speaker event, featuring Langdon Winner, will be held on February 19th in Taylor 306. This political theorist from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is the author of several works focusing on social and political issues surrounding modern technological change. The next Cohen Center event will feature James and Marci Day Childress on April 22nd.
- Thesis and Dissertation Projects are due in the Graduate School office on April 22nd for students graduating in May.
- May Graduate Commencement will be held on Thursday, May 7th, at 7 PM in the Convocation Center.
- Numerous course proposals and technical program changes are ready for review. An e-vote regarding these proposals will be conducted shortly after this meeting.
- New Graduate Student Orientation has been developed and will take place on August 20th. Please encourage your students to attend.

A-Team – Michael Stoloff

Michael noted that recent A-team discussions have focused on orientation and financial-aid compliance and standardized course start and end dates.

Honor Council – Nancy Nichols

Nancy shared that recent Honor Council discussions have focused on the issue of self-plagiarism. Currently, the Council is trying to make it clear that work developed for one class should not be submitted as responses to assignments in another class. Melissa asked if there has been discussion of the proper use some a portion of a prior work within a larger assignment in another course. Nancy explained that they will probably require students to get permission from their instructor in cases where students wish to use prior works.

GSA REPORT – Eric Dirth

Eric shared that the GSA held its last meeting on Sunday, February 8th. He noted that during the meeting, a Kinesiology student shared current program research and that a GSA group photo was taken. He thanked directors for continuing to support GSA efforts.

Eric echoed Melissa and Michael's announcement regarding the Graduate Symposium: The Showcase of Graduate Scholarship & Creative Activity. He asked that program directors encourage their students to attend. Additionally, Eric mentioned that the GSA is gearing up for elections of 2015-16 Executive Council. He asked program directors to identify students who would be willing serve as a program representative for the 2015-16 academic year and encourage them to participate. An email providing more information about the elections and program representation will be sent to program directors soon.

Melissa thanked the GSA for their efforts and encouraged graduate program directors to continue to support the organization.

PRESENTATIONS

Engagement Scholarship Conference – Melissa Alemán

In place of Nick Swartz, Melissa presented information on the Engaged Scholarship Consortium Conference being held at Penn State from September 29th – 30th, 2015. Melissa stated that the conference will be a great way to highlight JMU graduate education. This conference will focus on the rigor and impact of community partnerships that contribute to student learning. She explained that they are accepting a variety of work, including: papers, posters, workshops, and symposia. She noted that the conference would be a wonderful networking opportunity. Melissa encouraged program directors to ask students to submit proposals. There is funding support for students and faculty interested in attending the conference, as well as the preconference. Melissa also mentioned that a special preconference workshop will be held from September 27th – 28th. This workshop is designed for junior faculty and doctoral students who have been nominated by their department to participate. Travel and participation in the pre-conference workshop will be paid for by The Graduate School. Proposals for the conference will be due March 20th.

More information about this conference can be found here: http://engagementscholarship.org/conference/esc-2015-meeting

Scholarly Commons – Laura Drake Davis

Laura began her presentation by noting the value of the JMU Scholarly Commons portal for students to deposit their theses and dissertations. As the Library has expanded, the Scholarly Commons Task Force identified a growing need to store and disseminate student scholarship. The JMU undergraduate research journal is currently published using the Scholarly Commons. Laura noted that the Scholarly Commons provides the infrastructure necessary for students and faculty to submit their work, editors can be assigned and can submit their reviews, and acceptable works can be published. Laura explained that the Scholarly Commons portal also enables users to organize the work necessary to plan and conduct conferences, and publish their proceedings. This portal also can be used to highlight faculty research interests and curriculum vitae. Hossain Heydari asked Laura if the content on Scholarly Commons was publicly available. Laura stated that everything is publicly available, but that an embargo feature will allow you to postpone publishing to the site if

a delay is required by an external publisher. Hossain also asked what would happen to works that have been published through the library before the initiation of this new system. Laura explained that all previous works would be migrated to Scholarly Commons. Jeremy Akers further inquired about the publishing of student work. Laura explained that all student work needs to be vetted before publication. For example, for thesis and dissertation projects, student material first goes to The Graduate School, which must approve before works are published on the site. Melissa asked if published content could be linked from other sites. Laura stated that students can still only deposit into Scholarly Commons directly. Lastly, A.J. Morey inquired if one-on-one support was available. Laura explained that the Library welcomes close collaboration, which usually involves working directly with her. Faculty who are interested in learning more about Scholarly Commons should contact Laura Drake Davis at the Library.

Thesis and Dissertation Submissions – Laura Ryman

Laura Ryman discussed the guidelines for Thesis and Dissertation Submissions. Laura noted that the thesis/dissertation manual for program directors has been revised. She explained the importance of the Thesis/Dissertation Approval Form, because this is the primary way TGS knows which students are completing a thesis or dissertation. TGS attempts to assist students completing these projects, and we have no way of communicating students or committee members unless the form is submitted. Laura stressed that this document should be submitted within two weeks of the start of the semester in which the dissertation or thesis will be submitted.

Graduate Council members asked if department heads need to sign off on projects if they are not available. Laura stated that signing off is a departmental decision, thus, appropriate faculty may do so in their absence.

Laura pointed out that the roles and responsibilities of committee members are available on line, including a form that allows TGS committee member credentials to be vetted. Laura closed by thanking those present added that she is the main point of contact for any questions (rymanle@jmu.edu).

ISAT Curriculum Change – Maria Papadakis

Maria provided an overview of the Environmental Management & Sustainability concentration of the M.S. ISAT program operated in collaboration with the JMU Office of International Programs and the University of Malta. This new concentration will be unique because students would receive degrees both from JMU and the University of Malta. The degree will now require 42 credit hours. The revised program is more structured than the previous version. Students will have the option to complete a thesis. The revised concentration will be subjected to an electronic vote that will include the overall concentration change and 16 course revisions.

Procedures for Appointing Graduate Faculty – Michael Stoloff

To streamline the Graduate Faculty appointment process, the graduate school recommended that the current process of qualifying newly hired faculty to teach graduate students be expanded to include all faculty. The process would replace the current application form process and would be simple: A letter would be sent by the faculty member's department head to Dean of their College, and with their approval, this letter would be forwarded to the Dean of The Graduate School. The letter would explain how the prospective graduate faculty member qualifies for the recommended graduate instructor or faculty status. The faculty member's curriculum vita would accompany the letter.

Hearing no objection, Kristi Shackelford agreed to work with Michael to develop the policy document that would need approval from Academic Council to implement this procedural change.

Michael Hall stated that the criteria for appointing graduate faculty is problematic because highly-qualified faculty are excluded from serving as chairs of thesis or dissertation committees because they don't qualify to be appointed to the role of Graduate Faculty until they have taught graduate students. Melissa and Michael agreed that this issue be given further consideration in the future.

Concluding Remarks

Melissa thanked program directors and guests for their attendance, and highlighted that two more graduate dean candidates will be visiting campus in the coming days. She encouraged those present to attend one of the three venues available for them to be present.

Remaining 2014-2015 and Future Meeting Dates:

Thursday, April 2, 2015 – 2:00 p.m. – Taylor 404
Retreat: Friday, May 15, 2015, 9:00 a.m. – noon – Montpelier Room