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Graduate Council Minutes 2017-03-06

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Minutes Approved at the 633rd Meeting – April 3, 2017

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
632nd Meeting
March 6, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Barbe, Beyer, Bond, Clark Bremer, Collins, Diccar, Gowen, Hoffman, Howell, Kortegast, Mantzke, Olson, Osorio, Polansky, Smith, Van Wienen, Wilkins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Arado, Barnes, Gallaher, James, Jones, Luginbill, Nimbekar, Sciammarella, Silver, Weier

GUEST: Baker (Co-Coordinator, Graduate Career and Professional Development)

OTHERS PRESENT: Hughes (Secretary), Klaper (Ombudsperson), Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator)

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

Approval of Minutes

The Graduate Council did not meet in February due to a lack of agenda items. Minutes from the last meeting on December 5, 2016, were approved electronically and distributed in January.

Committee Reports

Graduate Council Curriculum Committee: Howell reviewed the minutes of the February 13, 2017, meeting. He stated that the committee met briefly to approve items on the consent agenda, which included some new courses in computer science and sociology that needed approval in order for the departments to offer them in the Fall 2017 semester. Howell noted that, while the courses would not be in the 2017-2018 Graduate Catalog, the departments would still be able to offer them. Gowen moved approval of the minutes; Mantzke seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (Curriculum Committee minutes and catalog changes are available at: http://www.niu.edu/u_council/committees/minutes/gccc/index.shtml.)

Graduate Council Standards Committee: Bond reported on the February 20, 2017, meeting. He reviewed proposed changes to the front matter of the Graduate Catalog. Bond stated that the modifications reflect accelerated degree programs (dual undergraduate/graduate degree programs) that were recently approved through the undergraduate curriculum process. The changes allow dual admission for advanced undergraduates (90+ hours) in specific programs for up to 3 terms and enrollment in up to 18 credit hours of graduate coursework that may be applied to a baccalaureate degree. Howell moved approval of the modifications; Barbe seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (See attached document.)
University Fellowship Committee: Bond reported on the March 2, 2017, meeting. The committee met to review thirty-six applications on behalf of sixteen departments. Awards were made to six students in the following programs: Art & Design, Biological Sciences, English, History, Philosophy, and Psychology. University Fellowships include a stipend of $9,000 and a partial tuition waiver. Bond acknowledged the Graduate Council members who served on the committee: Beyer, Collins, Osorio, Smith, and Van Wienen.

New Business

Authorship Policy and Guidelines: Bond informed members that the Graduate School has been working with the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity, and Safety to address questions and complaints that both offices receive each year pertaining to authorship, particularly with regard to journal articles. To address the issues, the two units have devised a draft policy document and guidelines. Bond noted that, with permission, the draft documents lean largely on similar policies and procedures at Rush and Washington University.

Bond asked members to provide feedback on the documents that were distributed for review prior to the meeting: “Authorship Policy” (for proposed inclusion in the APPM); and “Guidelines for Conducting Responsible Authorship.” Discussion ensued about qualifications for authorship. Ultimately, Graduate Council made a few suggested revisions to the document for clarification purposes and noted some minor corrections. Bond thanked everyone for their input and asked members to email him with any additional thoughts or suggestions. He stated that he wanted to share it with the Graduate Council before turning it over to the Vice President for Research for further review and approval by a shared governance committee in RIPS.

Announcements

Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor: Klaper informed members that the Faculty Senate is currently looking for a Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor. She stated that the position is for a tenured faculty member, who does not hold membership on any university personnel committees, to work with faculty and SPS on personnel matters. Klaper indicated that this person serves as an advocate and attends hearings involving tenure decisions, pre-tenure issues, faculty/SPS disputes, and other personnel-related matters. She stated that the position is a 2-year appointment with a 3rd year option and is paid one month of the median salary of all tenured professors on campus each semester and summer. Klaper encouraged members to apply or to share the information with colleagues who may be interested in applying. To apply, please send a letter of interest to Greg Long, Faculty Senate President, before March 21.

Graduate Career and Professional Development: Wilkins stated that she and Baker, who are the Co-Coordinators for Graduate Career and Professional Development in the Graduate School, welcomed the opportunity to share with Graduate Council the progress that has been made over the current academic year with efforts related to graduate career and professional development.

Baker expanded on the initiative to enhance graduate career and professional development opportunities at NIU. He indicated that he and Wilkins identified a number of issues that needed to be addressed early on, such as the need for centralization. To address these issues, Baker said
they built an online community portal using Office 365 SharePoint to provide graduate students, faculty, and staff with centralized access to graduate career and professional development resources and services across academic programs. Community tools also allow members to share resources, participate in discussions, post questions, register for events, and more. Baker showed a brief video, available on the portal’s home page, which describes the initiative and how to navigate the graduate portal. Baker also highlighted the Graduate School’s professional development programming being offered for the first time this spring.

Baker discussed the career resources section on the portal by noting that the Graduate School has access to Labor Insight software by Burning Glass Technologies to advise graduate students and academic programs on top employers, job titles, industries, and regional trends for respective disciplines. A new Career Development Pathway framework was also showcased that engages graduate students throughout their degree programs in self-discovery, career exploration, and skills building. New professional development programming, to be launched this fall, will connect students with real-time job analytics and alumni.

All graduate students have access to the portal via SharePoint in 0365 using their Z-ID. Faculty and staff can request access by sending an email to either gbaker@niu.edu or ewilkins@niu.edu.

Wilkins asked members to share the information with graduate students, especially new incoming students, and encourage them to join the community and get involved. Baker stressed the importance of engaging students early in their degree programs. Some Graduate Council members expressed interest in having access to the portal. Baker said he would give all Council members at the meeting rights to the community, thereby encouraging them to become more aware of the portal and to become active members. Wilkins encouraged members to share the information about the new community with their colleges and area representatives.

Beyer noted that the video pointed out that some academic areas were not yet represented under Career Resources and asked how faculty members could help create content for those areas. Bond responded that it was a tedious process for Baker and Wilkins. He said they have had to work closely with faculty and students in departments to create the content. Baker agreed that the process is time consuming. He indicated that faculty members must either reach out to them, or they must reach out to departments and faculty members to initiate the process. The intention is to have every program represented, eventually. Baker and Beyer agreed to connect to begin building content for the School of Music.

The Graduate School partners with the Writing Center, Sponsored Programs Administration, the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity, and Safety, Career Services, and other units on graduate career and professional development matters.

Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.
General Regulations

Undergraduates in Graduate Courses for Undergraduate Credit

Undergraduate students at NIU may complete a maximum of 6 semester hours of 500-, 600-, or 700-level course work for undergraduate credit, if they have completed 90 semester hours of credit towards their baccalaureate degree with a GPA of at least 3.00 or have previously completed a baccalaureate degree. They must also obtain, in advance, written approval from the instructor, the chair of the department offering the course, and from the office of the dean of the Graduate School to enroll in the course for undergraduate credit. In addition, for a 600- or 700-level course, the approval of the department offering the course is required. Exceptions to these limitations may be granted to students to take courses in the department administering the accelerated degree program.

Undergraduates in Courses for Graduate Credit

Seniors in their final semester at NIU who want to take courses for graduate credit (any 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses) must apply for and receive early admission to the Graduate School, which requires the same documents and approvals as regular admission. No student may enroll more than one term under early admission status. (See “Early Admission of NIU Undergraduates to the Graduate School.”) Exceptions to these limitations may be granted to students to take courses in the department administering the accelerated degree program.

Admission to Graduate Study

Early Admission of NIU Undergraduates

Early admission to the Graduate School is available to seniors in their final term of undergraduate enrollment at NIU. Students who apply for and receive early admission may take courses for graduate credit. The student granted early admission must be enrolled for all courses necessary to complete the baccalaureate degree (as determined by the undergraduate graduation-evaluations area in the Office of Registration and Records).

Application for early admission is made through the Graduate School. A student applying for early admission must have applied to graduate from the baccalaureate program at the end of the term for which early admission is sought. No student may enroll more than one term under
early-admission status. If a student is granted early admission and fails to graduate from the baccalaureate program at the end of the term for which early admission was granted, admission to the Graduate School will be terminated until baccalaureate degree requirements are met.

Students receiving early admission are ineligible to receive graduate assistantships or graduate tuition waivers. Their eligibility to receive financial aid and scholarships may be adversely affected by early admission. Students admitted early are admonished to consult a financial aid or scholarship counselor prior to enrolling in graduate level courses.

**Admission to Accelerated Baccalaureate/Master’s Degree Programs**

Accelerated baccalaureate/master’s degree programs allow advanced undergraduate students at NIU to enroll in up to 18 credits of graduate course work, some or all of which may be applied to a baccalaureate degree with the consent of the student’s undergraduate adviser. NIU undergraduate students may apply to enter an accelerated program once they have achieved 90 hours of credit and a 3.00 GPA. Check with individual departments for specific requirements.

Application for early admission is made through the Graduate School. No student may enroll more than three terms in an accelerated program without completing all requirements for the baccalaureate degree. If a student is granted early admission and fails to graduate from the baccalaureate program at the end of the third term, admission to the Graduate School will be terminated until baccalaureate degree requirements are met.

Students receiving admission to accelerated programs are ineligible to receive graduate assistantships or graduate tuition waivers until they have received a baccalaureate degree. Their eligibility to receive financial aid and scholarships may be adversely affected by early admission. Students admitted to an accelerated program are admonished to consult a financial aid or scholarship counselor prior to enrolling in graduate level courses.

Accelerated baccalaureate/master’s degree programs are available in the following majors:

- Political Science
- Public Administration
- Sociology
- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Industrial and Systems Engineering
Descriptions of program and admission requirements for these programs are available in the Undergraduate Catalog.

**Justification:** Three programs (the first three listed above) have recently been approved through the undergraduate curriculum approval process as accelerated degree programs. There are more programs that are considering this scheme as a method of increasing their graduate student enrollment and as a method of retaining their best and brightest students. The Graduate Catalog has limited undergraduate students from being simultaneously admitted to a graduate program until their last semester. The new programs envision a two semester + dual-admission process with more than 9 hours of graduate courses being double counted to satisfy undergraduate courses. This policy opens double counting to 18 hours and opens dual admission for certain programs at the 90 plus hour mark. This policy with modification is in keeping with long-standing proponents of accelerated degrees, like the policy at University of Florida.