Graduate Council Minutes 2017-04-03

Northern Illinois University

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Bond called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Barbe moved approval of the March 6, 2017, minutes; Howell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee: Bond reviewed the report of the March 8, 2017, meeting. The committee met to evaluate twenty-two applications for full-time fellowships and five applications for part-time fellowships. Full-time fellows receive a partial tuition waiver and stipend of $14,000; part-time fellows receive a partial tuition waiver. Six full-time fellowships were offered to students in the following programs: Economics; Geography; Geology and Environmental Geosciences; History; Political Science; and Psychology. Part-time awards were offered to students in Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; Curriculum and Instruction; Health Sciences; History; and Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations.

Bond acknowledged the two Graduate Council members who served on this committee: Beatrix Hoffman and Mark Van Wienen. The committee is comprised of one faculty member representative from each department that has a doctoral dissertation program.

Graduate Faculty Membership Committee: Bond informed members that graduate faculty membership reviews coincide with departmental program reviews. Full and senior members of the graduate faculty in seven departments were reviewed this year. He presented the following recommendations from the March 29, 2017, meeting for Graduate Council approval:
**Biological Sciences:** There were no full members to review. Twenty-one senior members were renewed. One senior member did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Chemistry and Biochemistry:** Nine senior members and one full member were renewed. Two senior members did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. Two full members did not meet the criteria and will have provisional status beginning this summer. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Electrical Engineering:** One senior member and eight full members were renewed. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Industrial and Systems Engineering:** There were no senior members to review. Five full members were renewed. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Mechanical Engineering:** Four senior members and four full members were renewed. One senior member did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. Two faculty members who retired will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Physics:** Sixteen senior members were renewed and one full member was recently promoted to senior status. Five full members were renewed. One full member did not meet the criteria and will have provisional status beginning this summer. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Technology:** One senior member and eleven full members were renewed. One faculty member who retired will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

Polansky moved approval of the recommendations; Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Bond acknowledged the Graduate Council members who served on this committee: Barnes, Gallaher, Kortegast, Olson, Polansky, and Sciammarella.

**Announcements**

**Support for Undocumented Students:** Hoffman informed Graduate Council members that she is part of a faculty group on campus that was established to support undocumented students. She stated that the faculty group is committed to educating themselves and colleagues about changing immigration policies, their effects on undocumented students, and how to support these students in the current climate.

Hoffman distributed a handout (attached) and reviewed the many things faculty can do to provide support to undocumented students. She emphasized how important it is for faculty to protect student privacy, and to know the rights of these individuals. She explained the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program, which is an executive policy under the Obama administration, that protects more than seven hundred thousand young immigrants from deportation. It also allows them
to obtain work permits and driver’s licenses. In addition, it has allowed many students to pursue higher education, including graduate degrees. Hoffman noted that the status of the DACA program is very uncertain at this time and, if taken away, would have a negative impact on these students’ ability to continue their education because many of them must work to pay for their education.

Hoffman indicated that, even though DACA students are protected from deportation, there have been at least three DACA students detained. She said they have all since been released, but it has added to the climate of fear among our students. And, many of these students have undocumented family members, which is also causing them tremendous stress. She stated that our students have rights that faculty should be aware of. The Illinois Dream Act states that anyone who graduated from an Illinois high school has the right to in-state tuition. However, undocumented students are ineligible for state or federal financial aid, which is why work permits are so important. She said there are private scholarships available for undocumented students and that she would be happy to share website and contact information with anyone interested.

Hoffman stated that, under President Baker’s leadership, NIU administration has been supportive of undocumented students (despite declining to name NIU a sanctuary campus) and has promised to take further steps to provide additional support, such as appointing a full-time liaison or advisor for these students. Hoffman indicated that the faculty group encourages NIU administration to make good on that promise as soon as possible.

Hoffman noted DREAM Action, an active student group on campus that meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. in the Campus Life Building. DREAM Action will also meet with departments or other groups to provide training on the issue and resources for undocumented students. The faculty group is called Faculty Advocates for Undocumented Students. Hoffman would like to encourage faculty members to get involved. She said one of the next steps the group is taking with administration is to meet with NIU and DeKalb police to talk about how they are going to approach any ramped-up immigration enforcement, should that happen.

So how can faculty help? Hoffman referred to the suggestions on the handout on how faculty can help support undocumented students. In addition, there will be more “Know Your Rights” workshops on campus, as well as some fundraising efforts to create private scholarships.

Brown commented on the BRIDGE Act. She stated that she was at an Advocacy Day with a professional organization associated with the ISFO, and the BRIDGE Act is one of the bills for which they were advocating. Although her office does not necessarily work with undocumented students, the organization advocates on all matters related to immigration. Brown stated that Senator Durbin was partly responsible for starting the BRIDGE Act/H.R.496/S.128 that now has an equivalent in the House of Representatives. Brown was informed that the bill is using a buddy system in efforts to make it bi-partisan. Apparently, there is a waiting list of democrats who want to sign the bill, but they are not allowed to sign without a republican “buddy.”


For additional information, please contact Beatrix Hoffman at beatrix@niu.edu. Bond noted that the International Student and Faculty Office is also a good resource for immigration issues.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.
DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program: Over 750,000 young people who were brought to the U.S. as children are participating in the program, which protects them from deportation and provides temporary work permits. The program was created by executive order and may be rescinded under the new administration. Approximately 40,000 Illinois residents are covered by DACA, including many college students. 93% of students in the DACA program say they are pursuing educational opportunities that would not have not been possible without their protected status.

How Faculty Can Support Undocumented Students

• Do not ask students to disclose their immigration status.
• If students voluntarily disclose their status to you, assure them that you will maintain confidentiality.
• Refer students to support services available on campus: DREAM Action, counseling services, Latino Center
• Use the word “undocumented,” not “illegal.”
• Put a statement in your syllabus, and/or announce in your class, that you support undocumented students’ right to pursue higher education.
• Display a sign on your office door stating your support for undocumented students.
• Schedule an “ally training” for your department or unit.
• Call your congresspeople and ask them to protect DACA against cancellation, and to support the bipartisan BRIDGE Act that would further protect our students.
• Donate to private scholarships for undocumented students (they are still not allowed to apply for state or federal financial aid)
• Get involved in NIU Faculty Advocates for Undocumented Students

Resources and Contacts pending undocumented student advisor

Advice and resources for students: Sandy Lopez or Kristin Huffine
815/753-1531 Latino Center (students do not have to be Latino!)

To schedule an ally training: dreamactionniu@gmail.com

Faculty advocates: Beatrix Hoffman, History Department  beatrix@niu.edu