MINUTES
UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COMMITTEE
August 28, 2013

Members Present: Michael Amundson (History), Karen Applequist (Educational Specialties), Steven Barger (Psychology), Colleen Byron (Administration), Joe Collentine (Modern Language), Michael Costelloe (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Kim Curtis (Sustainable Communities), Patrick Deegan (Ex-officio: Extended Campuses), Gary Emanuel (Educational Leadership), Crystal Ewen (Graduate Student Government), Evie Garcia (Ex-officio: Graduate College), Amy Hughes (Ex-officio: Cline Library), April Brown Judd (Mathematics and Statistics), Tom Kolb (Forestry), Alan Lew (Geography, Planning, and Recreation), John Masserini (Music), Gretchen McAllister (Teaching and Learning), Ramona Mellott (Ex-officio: Graduate Dean), Marcia Metcalf (College of Business), Catherine Propper (Biological Sciences), Jim Sample (School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability), Brant Short (School of Communication), Anna Sosa (Chair, Communication Sciences and Disorders), Kim Curtis (Sustainable Communities), Kerry Thompson (Anthropology), Barbara Tomlinson (School of Nursing), Niranjan Venkatraman (Engineering), and Meghan Warren (Physical Therapy)

Members Absent: Yuly Asencion-Delaney (Modern Languages), Emily Babcock (Physician Assistant Studies), Sibylle Gruber (English), Michelle Harris (Sociology), Fred Hurst (Ex-officio: Extended Campuses), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Mary McLellan (Educational Psychology), Carol Thompson (Politics and International Affairs), and David Trilling (Physics and Astronomy),

Guests: Scott Galland (Curriculum and Assessment) and Lisa Williams (Registrar)

Graduate College: Kirsten Slaughter-Rice

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Anna Sosa.

I. Chair’s Welcome and Introductions – Anna Sosa

Anna Sosa welcomed the new and returning members to the University Graduate Committee. The members and guests then introduced themselves to the Committee. Dr. Sosa outlined the Committee’s tasks, including establishment of program learning outcomes and assessment for every graduate program this academic year. She opened the floor to additional suggestions of what should be discussed by the UGC this year.

A. Approval of the Minutes of the April 24, 2013 Meeting

Minutes were approved by all present.

II. Graduate Dean’s Remarks – Ramona Mellott

Dean Mellott welcomed the new and returning members and noted her appreciation of their service to the Committee. She addressed her goals for the Graduate College, including the articulation of the
objectives for graduate study, the maintenance of standards and policies, and the consideration of new
guidelines. As an advocate for the Graduate College, Dean Mellott hopes to increase the visibility and
representation for the Graduate College.

Dean Mellott updated the Committee on her goals from last year:
(1) **Graduate Enrollment**: Graduate enrollment has been declining and continues to be an issue.
Slight decreases were noted for the Flagstaff Mountain Campus. Her goal is to have enrollment return to the 2006 levels.
(2) **Program Learning Outcomes**: Program Learning Outcomes were requested in May and continue
to be gathered. She has currently received 18 Program Learning Outcomes (~20%) of the 98 separate plans. Dean Mellott reminded the Committee that the Program Learning Outcomes are due by September 30, 2013. Program Learning Outcomes are the first step in the process, to be followed by curriculum mapping and then assessment.
(3) **The Research and Scholarly Integrity Training Plan**: The Graduate College is working with the Office of the Vice President for Research to develop a Research and Scholarly Integrity Training Plan for students involved in research.
(4) **Academic Catalog**: The Academic Catalog went live this past academic year. All departmental admissions requirements were included in the Catalog. Departments will have the opportunity to make changes to their requirements annually.
(5) **Program of Study**: This is a project that began a year ago, and the Graduate College now houses all programs of studies for graduate programs, including emphases. The Graduate College is currently collecting updated Programs of Study (POS). Dean Mellott reminded departments to submit their POS if they have not already done so. In response to a Committee member’s question, Dean Mellott noted that students will have access to archived copies of POS. She also noted that when departments update their POS before the UGC, the new copy will be added to the website and the older version archived. If there are no plan changes in an academic year, the old program of study will be updated with the new academic year and then archived. If departments only want to change the text on their POS, they should contact the Graduate College with their changes. The Graduate College will check the POS against the Catalog for consistency. Committee members were encouraged to print a POS directly from the website to avoid circulating old and possibly inaccurate POS.

Dean Mellott also discussed her goals for the upcoming academic year, which include:
(1) **Enrollment and Retention**: She hopes to return to the 2006 enrollment levels.
(2) **Satisfactory Academic Progress**: Dean Mellott will address the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) holds that many students have received. Continuing students often receive SAP holds because IP grades assigned to thesis and dissertation credits are an indication of a lack of satisfactory progress. She asked faculty members to notify her of any students with SAP holds, and she can facilitate the process or difficulties a student may potentially experience.

In response to a Committee member’s question regarding the implications of Incomplete (I) and In Progress (IP) grades on satisfactory progress and financial aid, Dean Mellott explained that I grades will still be a problem but hopes the issues with IP grades will be resolved. She added that taking research credits, instead of thesis or dissertation credits, helps students to avoid the SAP hold and receive credit for their research.

(3) **Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines**: Dr. Garcia will work with the Ad Hoc Dissertation Committee to establish guidelines for theses and dissertations this fall.
New Programs: Masters of Athletic Training and Doctor of Occupational Therapy are two new programs coming to NAU, and the UGC will be reviewing their curriculum plans in the coming semester.

Student Professional Development: Dean Mellott will host several workshops this academic year focused on professional development for students, including financial education and leadership development. She will also offer the 3 Minute Research Presentation (3MRP) competition among graduate students to promote their research. Dean Mellott has already gathered a group to help promote the 3MRP but is looking for additional volunteers. She hopes to have a call for proposals and training for students by the end of this semester. Ideas to showcase the presentations include a “People’s Choice Award” using YouTube and a graduate research day in April, an event where students present their 3MRPs in person before faculty and fellow students. Regents and legislative representatives will also be invited. She showed the Committee an example of a 3MRP on YouTube.

Policies: The Dismissal Policy will be finalized this year, and the Academic Dishonesty Policy is also being addressed through a university wide process.

III. Graduate Student Government – Crystal Ewen

Crystal Ewen is the new Graduate Student Government (GSG) representative to the UGC. The GSG will focus on a textbook adoption campaign this academic year. Ms. Ewen explained that members of GSG will meet with department chairs in individual colleges to explain the process and importance of early textbook adoption. The deadline to accept textbooks for the spring semester is October 15. Ordering textbooks by this deadline helps the bookstore and allows for cheaper books for students.

Ms. Ewen also mentioned the upcoming picnic on September 14 and social events at the 1899 Bar and Grill for graduate students.

Dr. Garcia also mentioned the new rolling monthly deadlines for travel grants, as opposed to bi-annual deadlines. Emails will be sent out about the deadlines each month.

IV. Elections/Selections

Dr. Sosa briefly explained the position of Chair-Elect and what is required by each of the subcommittees.

A. Election of Chair Elect
   1. Gretchen McAllister

B. Review Subcommittee Members
   1. Anna Sosa, UGC Chair
   2. Gretchen McAllister, UGC Chair-Elect (Fall only due to Spring 2014 sabbatical)
   3. John Masserini
   4. Colleen Byron
   5. Meghan Warren
   6. Niranjan Venkatraman
A motion was approved for the new Review Subcommittee members, allowing for six members for the Fall 2014 term due to Dr. Gretchen McAllister serving as Chair-Elect in Fall 2013, sabbatical in Spring 2014, and chair during the 2014-15 academic year.

C. Other Subcommittees
   1. Scholarships and Awards
      a. Michael Costelloe
      b. Marcia Metcalf
      c. Cathy Propper

      2. Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee
         a. Tom Kolb, Forestry
         b. –
         c. –
         d. –
         e. –
         f. –
         g. –
         h. –
         i. –
         j. –

Dr. Garcia will contact departments with doctoral programs and request representatives. Each doctoral program sends a representative to the Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee.

3. Policy Subcommittee
   a. Karen Applequist
   b. Amy Hughes
   c. April Judd
   d. Jim Sample

4. Appeals Subcommittee

The Appeals Subcommittee is formed as needed for non-grade academic appeals.

V. Provost’s Remarks

Provost Huenneke will make her remarks at the October UGC meeting.

VI. Agenda Items
   A. Informational Items
      1. UGC Forms and Revisions
      Dr. Garcia explained that forms are reviewed every summer to determine how to streamline the process.

         a. New Course Proposal
The change to item 13 on the New Course Proposal reflects the difficulty some departments have had with letters of support. With this change, departments will need to show that they sent a letter of notification to the other department if there is a twenty percent or greater overlap in course content between the two courses. Response from the other department is no longer required. This change was made to decrease the associated wait time with the notification and response process.

As an addendum to the minutes for clarification purposes: The change to Q13 on the New Course Proposal form is to address the need for letters of support from impacted units. At a minimum, any impacted unit needs to be notified of a proposed change. If the end result of the proposal impacts another department’s resources, then a letter of support may be necessary.

b. **Course Change Proposal**

The change to the Course Change Proposal also includes the letter of notification, as explained under “New Course Proposal.”

As an addendum to the minutes for clarification purposes: The change to Q9 on the Course Change Proposal form is to address the need for letters of support from impacted units. At a minimum, any impacted unit needs to be notified of a proposed change. If the end result of the proposal impacts another department’s resources, then a letter of support may be necessary.

c. **Course Delete Proposal**

The change to the Course Delete Proposal also includes the letter of notification, as explained under “New Course Proposal.”

As an addendum to the minutes for clarification purposes: The change to Q6 on the Course Delete Proposal form is to clarify the need to notify any impacted unit. A letter of support from them is not necessary.

d. **New Academic Plan Proposal**

The change to 8c on the New Academic Plan Proposal reflects the need to include summary text for each emphasis. This text will then be included in the Catalog description.

As an addendum to the minutes for clarification purposes: The change to Q11 on the New Plan Proposal form is to address the need for letters of support from impacted units. At a minimum, any impacted unit needs to be notified of a proposed change. If the end result of the proposal impacts another department’s resources, then a letter of support may be necessary.

e. **Plan Change or Delete Proposal**

The change to the Plan Change or Delete Proposal also includes the letter of notification, as explained under “New Course Proposal.”

As an addendum to the minutes for clarification purposes: The change to Q11 on the Plan Change or Plan Delete Proposal form is to address the need for letters of support from impacted units. At a minimum, any impacted unit needs to be notified of a proposed change. If the end result of the proposal impacts another department’s resources, then a letter of support may be necessary.
B. **2013-2014 UGC Meeting Calendar**

The meeting calendar is available online. The last date for academic proposals to be included in the 2014-15 academic catalog has been moved up to the February 12, 2014 meeting. Items would be due for review by January 17, 2014. The earlier date is due to the time it takes to make the catalog available by July.

C. **By-laws**

The by-laws were revised last year and have been updated to reflect those changes.

D. **Procedures for Review Curriculum/Policies** and **Tips for New Members**

Dr. Garcia met with the new UGC members at the end of the meeting to discuss UGC processes.

E. **Dissertation Procedures and Checklist for UGC Representatives**

The checklist is distributed to UGC members when they serve on dissertation committees on behalf of the Graduate College.

F. **Dismissal Policy Vetting Process**

Dr. Garcia explained that the Dismissal Policy will be formally vetted this fall. The policy will be distributed to each of the departments for review. A representative from the Graduate College will be available to meet with each department separately. A table will be created to show the comments and feedback from each department offering input. She reminded the Committee of the importance of and need for this policy, as the University has had a dismissal process but not a formal dismissal policy in place for graduate students. She also requested that any departments considering dismissing a student contact her regarding the process.

G. **Thesis and Dissertation Committee Roadmap**

Dr. Garcia discussed the previous charges to the Committee and what was left to complete. The Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee created this document as a best practices guide for dissertation committees.

This roadmap explains what is expected of the committee chair and members and the student. For example, previously, there was no clear process changing committee membership or suggested timelines for submitting drafts to the committee. Dr. Garcia hopes to approve this roadmap by December. It will be discussed at the September meeting.
Dr. Garcia stated that she will continue to evaluate the impact and quality of theses and dissertations. While UGC representatives do attend dissertation defenses, there have been no guidelines for what the representative can question. There has been no true data to collect and no guidelines to measure the quality of theses or dissertations. Dr. Garcia is looking at where departments should step into the process.

The Recommendation of Dissertation Committee Form has been revised to collect data. The old form did have the conflict of interest statement to address possible conflicts of interest, including having family, friends, or cohort members on a committee.

The new form is fillable and allows the committee chair to initial to confirm the conflict of interest statement. On the old form, students only have to submit a 2-3 paragraph summary of their dissertation, which varied widely in its content and layout. There was no structure to insure uniformity of information provided.

The new form addresses these issues by asking for basic information about the dissertation and providing a structure for information is provided. The Graduate College has always collected this information and is merely adding structure to what is being submitted.

The committee discussed the need for the format of the form to allow for a variety of dissertation formats/approaches in the most efficient manner and whether the form might eventually be used by departments to gather data on dissertation information, including topics, methods, etc. Dr. Garcia stated that the form would go to the Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee for further development and would then come back to the full Committee. Dr. Sosa reminded the Committee to think about representatives for the Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee.

Dr. Sosa asked the Committee if there were any other items that should be addressed by the Committee this academic year. One member suggested that the Committee look at the correlation between low stipends for graduate students and low enrollment. Dean Mellott suggested that the Ad Hoc Dissertation/Defense Subcommittee collect data and address the issue.

I. Tour of the Graduate College Web Site

This item was tabled.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.