Members Present: Michael Amundson (History), Karen Applequist (Educational Specialties), Nadine Barlow (Physics and Astronomy), Steve Brown (Music), April Brown Judd (Mathematics and Statistics), Colleen Byron (Administration), Angelina Castagno (Educational Leadership), Niranjan Venkatrathan (Substitute; Engineering), Joe Collentine (Modern Languages), William Crawford (English), Evie Garcia (Educational Psychology), Stephanie Hurst (Chemistry), Ann Huffman (Psychological Sciences), Tom Kolb (Forestry), John Masserini (Ex-officio: Graduate College), Gretchen McAllister (Chair, Teaching and Learning), Marcia Metcalf (College of Business), Cathy Small (Anthropology), Anna Sosa (Communication Sciences and Disorders), Barbara Tomlinson (Nursing), Meghan Warren (Physical Therapy), and Maribeth Watwood (Ex-officio: Graduate Dean).

Members Absent: Emily Babcock (Physician Assistant Studies), Michael Costelloe (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Patrick Deegan (Extended Campuses), Amy Hughes (Ex-officio: Cline Library), Fred Hurst (Extended Campuses), Kooros Mahmoudi (Sociology), Stephen Nuño (Politics and International Affairs), Patricia Peterson (Faculty Senate Representative), Brant Short (Communication), Jim Sample (School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability), Erik Schiefer (Geography, Planning and Recreation), Emily Schnurr (Graduate Student Government), Steve Hempleman (Biological Sciences), and Nora Timmerman (Sustainable Communities).

Guests: Scott Galland (Curriculum and Assessment), Pamela Powell (Teaching and Learning), Jenny Scott (Extended Campuses), Kathy Wiebke (Arizona K-12 Center), Lisa Williams (Registrar), and Lisa Wischmeier (Extended Campuses).

Graduate College: Alex Coleman

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm by Gretchen McAllister.

I. Welcome, Announcements and Brief Reports

A. Chair’s Remarks – Gretchen McAllister

The UGC Chair, Dr. Gretchen McAllister, thanked the membership for their outstanding dedication and time offered to the mission of the UGC. The committee entertained robust and full discussions of the committee’s business and processed 135 curricular items alongside numerous other items, including policy, academic appeals, ACCA initiatives, Cline Library cooperation, and the Institutional Repository. The chair recognized the leadership of the new dean of the Graduate College, Maribeth Watwood, and offered thanks, especially to the Review Subcommittee and other subcommittee members. The chair further thanked the various support staff involved in the UGC’s operations, particularly Scott Galland and others. Finally, the chair announced that Dr. Brown Judd will be unable to fulfill the role of chair in the upcoming academic year, and that a call for nominations would be forthcoming.
B. Approval of the Minutes of the March 11, 2015 Meeting – Gretchen McAllister

The minutes were approved by all present.

C. Graduate Student Government Report – Emily Schnurr

The GSG representative was not present. Dr. Watwood noted the Graduate Student Government was recognized at the Louie Awards for their leadership and contributions to the university.

D. Associate Dean’s Remarks – John Masserini

Dr. Masserini explained the Graduate College is gradually moving towards paperless processing in an effort to streamline administration and conserve resources. A fully electronic system will, eventually, make life easier for all involved. With this initiative in mind, every student must have an advisor identified in LOUIE. The advisors should be systematically assigned during the first week of enrollment, rather than upon admission, as the function will not necessarily be available until enrollment. Ultimately, assigning the advisor electronically will allow the Graduate College to efficiently disseminate information and queries through the digital filing system.

Members asked for clarification on who can perform this function at the departmental level, and whether multiple advisors might be assigned for the sake of redundancy, co-advising, and the progression of advisors that students undergo when moving towards committee, candidacy, and matriculation. In general, the parties responsible for the assigning advisors varies between departments, and the Graduate College will investigate the possibility of providing multiple fields for advisors. The Graduate College will also explore creating more accessible e-forms.

The Institutional Repository (IR) is ready to come online this fall, but there are still some technical questions requiring the membership’s attention. Primarily, the IR will be addressed in the Oral Defense Part II Form, accommodating for considerations such as copyright and embargos. Also, the inclusion of past publications must be addressed while contingencies must be considered. For example, would students choose to embargo on ProQuest but not the IR, or vice versa and how would such situations be addressed? Dr. Masserini will consult with interested members and report to the committee in the fall.

Regarding the previous meeting’s discussion of the ACCA Master Syllabi initiative, the membership’s concerns have been acknowledged by ACCA. The committee should expect continued communication between the Provost and various stakeholders, and the UGC will form an ad hoc subcommittee to study the implementation of university-level practices designed to procure specific, but meaningful information required for the University’s accreditation. The objective is to guide ACCA in its effort to gather meaningful data, to provide a cultural reference, and to honor the considerable differences between undergraduate and graduate education.

Members sought clarification regarding the expectations formed in the March 11 meeting, asking whether the master syllabi program was still piloted at the undergraduate level. Dr. Masserini explained that the ad hoc subcommittee will allow the program to roll out on the undergraduate level while the UGC examines the graduate level approach. ACCA’s intent is to gather required information through the master syllabi program to use in our accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. The ad hoc
subcommittee’s role is to help programs fulfill their responsibilities through a learning-based outcome program that fits graduate education.

A member reminded the committee that the master syllabi program is a product of the nature of shared governance, where aspects of policy will be both autonomous and subject to external authority. The UGC must consider how to best exercise its role in this governance, and may consider the work of the ad hoc subcommittee as a best case solution vis a vis arbitration from an external authority. Another member noted that the ad hoc subcommittee lends a sense of investment to the program that would otherwise be absent. Indeed, faculty investment in the goals and implementation of ACCA initiatives are key to the success of any such enterprise, as evidenced by other examples of compliance that have remained unsatisfied.

A member reminded the committee that the origin of the ACCA initiative was the Faculty Senate, and that the topic remains a faculty-driven issue. Dr. Masserini reiterated that the ad hoc subcommittee’s purpose is to honor the academy and disciplinary approaches, while providing the information to facilitate the programs.

Discussion, formation, and potential approval of the ad hoc subcommittee will be included on the first fall meeting agenda.

E. Dean’s Remarks

Dean Watwood extended her thanks to all involved in the 3 Minute Research Project (3MRP). The event went especially well, and many students rose to the challenge and progressed beyond any personal inhibitions. The event showcases NAU research, scholarship, and creative activity, but also underscores how well NAU prepares students to influence policy, legislation, and public opinion through effective communication of science and research. The Dean hopes that 3MRP will only continue to grow in its participation and influence.

The Graduate Student Government hosted a poster event featuring 30 presenters and faculty mentors. The event included prizes and recognition for outstanding scholarship, and the dean hopes to see the event grow in the future. The vision is a graduate version of the Undergraduate Research Symposium (UGRS) and will hopefully expand either in tandem with or juxtaposed against the UGRS.

Dean Watwood has immensely enjoyed her first sessions of the UGC and looks forward to continued growth and learning within her capacity on the committee. She thanked the membership for their unparalleled support.

II. Consent Items

There were no Consent Items.

III. Curricular Items for Review

A. College of Education
   1. Educational Specialties
      a. Educational Technology GCRT, Fall 2016 – Certificate Requirements-Course(s) Added
In the absence of a representative from Educational Specialties, the Educational Technology graduate certificate was tabled.

2. Teaching and Learning
   a. ECI 610, “National Board Certification Pre-Candidacy Course,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   b. ECI 611, “National Board Certification National Board Institute,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   c. ECI 612, “National Board Portfolio Assessment: Component 1 Content Knowledge,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   d. ECI 613, “National Board Portfolio Assessment: Component 2 Differentiation in Instruction,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   e. ECI 614, “National Board Portfolio Assessment: Component 3 Teaching Practice and Learning Environment,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   f. ECI 615, “National Board Portfolio Assessment: Component 4 Effective and Reflective Practitioner,” Fall 2016 – New Course
   g. Early Childhood; M.Ed, Fall 2016 – Major Requirements-Course(s) Added, Course(s) Deleted; Major Requirements-Unit change, New Subplan; Subplan Requirements-Courses
   h. Elementary Education; M.Ed, Fall 2016 – Major Requirements-Course(s) Added, Course(s) Deleted; Subplan, Subplan Requirements-Course(s); Major Requirements-Unit Change, New

Pamela Powell, Chair in the Department of Teaching and Learning, and Kathy Wiebke, Executive Director of the Arizona K-12 Center, presented the proposal for new tracks within the Masters of Education in Early Childhood and Elementary Education programs that will prepare students to pursue National Board Certification (NBC). National Board Certification is an advanced certification requiring proven, accomplished, and effective teaching across 27 different content areas. It reflects a “deep dive” into teaching, centered on research and reflection. Arizona teachers have been seeking this certification for many years, understanding that no other program is as thoughtful in preparation and study. Implementing it at NAU will likely attract a higher caliber of education student, especially while Arizona comes under increased scrutiny regarding public education. The program builds upon a foundation of 25 years of literature and research.

Membership sought clarification on the action item. Items a-h on the agenda are for consideration as a package.

Members were immediately concerned that the program appears to be an instance of “teaching to the test.”

Drs. Powell and Wiebke immediately reiterated that the program is a) a track within the core of the master’s level work and b) is a research-based curriculum demanding outstanding and original scholarship. To teach to the test would be unethical and not representative of the program. While every component of the NBC coursework prepares students for certification, the student is not obligated to seek certification. Even without certification, they will be better teachers having completed this
program, as the curriculum challenges teachers to reflect upon practice and research, to apply evidence to their own practice, and to measure outcomes in teaching success – research and scholarship informing praxis.

Committee members were concerned that the documentation does not adequately reflect the articulated goals of the program, especially where the documentation fails to emphasize course content. Dr. Wiebke informed the committee that the content is based in the literature supporting the National Board Certification, and that it is extensive and exhaustive. Certification requires the substantiation of research and data, but allows for content to be student-specific, rendering broader summaries less relevant.

Finally, Drs. Wiebke and Powell addressed members’ concerns regarding the outsourcing of instruction and reassured the committee that this remains a faculty-based program.

A motion was conditionally approved for the changes to the plans and new courses, with two abstentions, pending the identification of program learning outcomes. The program must consult with Dr. Masserini and other members to conform the plan’s documentation to the goals articulated at this meeting by the end of summer 2015. In the interim, the possibility of piloting the program before the 2016/2017 academic year will be examined.

B. College of Engineering, Forestry, and Natural Sciences
   1. Biological Sciences
      a. BIO 565, “Advanced Clinical Exercise Physiology,” Fall 2016 – Co-convene, New Course

Tinna Traustadottir, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, presented the proposal to provide a permanent course number and co-convene with the undergraduate capstone course. Whereas courses co-convening with undergraduates can present challenges in terms of learning-goals, in this instance undergraduates will be expected to exceed undergraduate standards and function at the graduate level.

The motion was approved for the new course.

IV. Informational Items

There were no Informational Items.

V. Discussion Items
   A. GPA Requirements for Graduate Students Policy Clean Version
   B. Requirements for Master’s Degrees Policy Clean Version

Currently, there are three different policies stating slightly different outcomes regarding GPA requirements for Master’s students. To standardize policies, the information about GPA requirements from the recently approved Academic Continuation and Dismissal, Graduate policy has been cut and
pasted into the two GPA Requirements for Graduate Students and Requirements for Master’s Degrees policies.

Members were concerned that the dismissal policy strings along students who are simply not qualified to complete graduate level work. Academic improvement plans and other forms of intervention, in some instances, simply delay the inevitable dismissal of certain students at great cost to the students themselves. Members would like to examine potential methods of reducing the inefficiencies of these policies – to include the examination of dates and deadlines policies designed to prevent prolonged dismissal procedures.

Members also expressed concern regarding the auto-application of probation in the LOUIE Student Record System. Unfortunately, this is a measure tied directly to GPA, and it is currently not possible to apply any other relevant factors.

The policy changes were moved to Action Items, and the policies were approved.

C. 2015/2016 University Graduate Committee Chair – Gretchen McAllister

In the absence of a successor to Dr. McAllister, the UGC is soliciting nominations for the position of chair. The chair must have previously served on the Review Subcommittee at any point during his or her membership. A formal solicitation will be sent by John Masserini, and members were reminded to consult potential nominees before naming them.

D. 2015 Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) Conference – Maribeth Watwood and John Masserini

Drs. Watwood and Masserini recently attended the WAGS 2015 conference.

Dr. Deb Stuart, senior scholar at the Council of Graduate Schools, discussed common themes in graduate education. Primarily, funding is flat and should be expected to remain so. This underscores the importance of initiatives, such as 3MT (a lot of other students use 3MT created by University of Queensland; 3MRP is NAU’s creation based on the 3MT presentations but not affiliated, similar to 3MRP at NAU, where scholars must hone their abilities to influence policy and emphasize the importance of education and research to a wide range of audiences.

Another presentation/speaker encouraged graduate programs to consider the very relevance of their existence. Programs are graduating students at all levels with the promise of subsequent careers that simply are not materializing. As such, innovation is required to prepare students for jobs that do, in fact, exist. This entails reversing the culture of the academy as the “Golden Fleece.” From the perspective of the academy, it is clear that there are other careers that exist, but scholars are not always effective at identifying them. Although practice is difficult to change, programs are beginning to see the need to respond with innovations, such as Professional Science Masters degrees and even professional humanities degrees.
A matter related to available jobs and employment is debt. Debt is too frequently regarded as an undergraduate problem, while graduate students continue to accrue crippling debt loads. Graduate programs must consider the level of debt associated with their programs when assessing the relevance of a program to a student’s career.

A third theme presented mentorship, and the formal efforts programs make to provide students with guidance to succeed academically and professionally. Some programs are seeking formal leadership from practitioners to train faculty whom are quite often inexperienced in mentorship, having only recently emerged from studies themselves.

Finally, Dr. Watwood reflected on the challenge of diversity and how it is perceived. In particular, she took note of Oregon State’s strategies recruiting LGBTQA students that go beyond simply providing safe zones and a culture of civility. Universities keen to attract LGBTQA students are particularly focused on regional recruiting, seeking students from areas where their talents and contributions are not necessarily universally appreciated.

While attending the WAGS conference, Dr. John Masserini co-presented a session surrounding ideas on the relevance of interdisciplinary studies, challenging attendees to consider what exactly it looks like and how it adds value to campus communities and scholarship. Radical integration seeks to include the arts as productive partners in other fields, but interdisciplinary studies occur across a broad spectrum of integration. The challenge is to move administrators beyond the restrictions of policy and think about the potential of outcomes. Dr. Masserini enjoyed the opportunity to speak with National Science Foundation about the prospects of his concepts.

On the institutional level, there is already evidence of interdisciplinary collaborations. MIT and other institutions have hired interdisciplinary faculty who have been asked to simply justify their approach as a standard for hire – some institutions are very interested in unleashing the potential of these approaches. This represents a change in which institutions are beginning to recognize the value of knowledge and scholarship beyond just probing the knowledge of a single subject matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:48pm