MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

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Office of the Academic Senate ​​​​ Ext. 278-2743​​​​​​​

January 30, 2018

Members Present: M. Wilson (Chair), J. Marshall, K. Capehart, N. Mahalik, S. Tracz, D. Walker, N. Wang, S. Church

Members Excused: T. Lopez

Guests: S. Jimenez-Sandoval, H. Chapman, D. Fraleigh, M. Niles Goins

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in TA 117

1. Minutes: MSC to approve the Minutes of January 23, 2018.
2. Agenda: MSC to approve the agenda
3. Communications and Announcements
   1. Dean Marshall reminded members about this semester’s two Graduate Coordinators’ meetings: Wednesday, February 21, 8:00-10:00 a.m. and Thursday, April 19, 3:00-5:00 p.m. Both will take place in the Vintage Room.
   2. Tentative plans for the Graduate Student Recognition event are to schedule it on May 3rd in the Jordan Agricultural Research Center, 1st floor. Each program will get to nominate one student who can best be the cheerleader for the program. In addition, one thesis and project award recipient for each college will be recognized.
4. Program Review of M.A. in Communication

M. Wilson began the discussion by noting that the information on the Department of Communications website is current and useful. Updates and context were noted as follows: M. Niles Goins was coordinator for 6 years, but students saw two different styles of graduate coordination when she went on sabbatical. This may have impacted the comments to the program reviewers; M. Niles Goins has returned to the position. Recently faculty voted to change how they do the Graduate Writing Requirement, which students need to be pass to be advanced to candidacy. Questions arose about whether they were using a rubric, if there is a revised retake policy, and if there is a limit to the number of times a student can take the exam.

Students can take it two times which should decrease the likelihood of not passing.

D. Fraleigh indicated that they are working to minimize plagiarizing which had been an issue, and there were no issues this or the past year. M Wilson offered that Ida Jones offered workshops and there is a great deal of information on the web.

S. Church asked about updating their curriculum. D. Fraleigh said they took what they have now and added in new content and topics courses as regular courses. Also, they just hired new faculty specializing in science and the environment communications. M. Niles Goins redid the graduate course rotation. Chair Fraleigh said they were planning on having a retreat, which had been postponed because M. Niles Goins was on leave.

P. Mahlik asked about the dispute among faculty about diversity referred to in the team report. Dean Jimenez-Sandoval said they hired a mediator who has been working with the department to establish a common ground and goals. D. Fraliegh indicated that interpersonal relationships were good, but there were some stressful relations between dyads of faculty. Dean Marshall asked if these issues trickled down to students.

Dr. Chapman noted that graduate students were distressed about the Graduate Writing Exam, especially one student, which created tension among graduate students, so they were venting their frustration when the Program Review team came. Dr. Chapman said they didn’t expect that this problem were emerge again. As noted earlier, the department is making changes in graduate writing exam requirement so students don’t have to wait a semester to move forward.

M. Niles Goins noted more of their students are on track to graduate but some are still stalled. The faculty are now telling students individually what they need to do. Their graduate enrollment is down, so they are offering fewer courses per semester. The department is aware they need to form common goals and aggressively recruit. The chair and graduate coordinator are meeting with students, recruiting at a February conference and an open house, printing pop up banners, and updating their physical presence. Most current graduate students come from Fresno State and the Central Valley. Some of their graduates go on to Ph.D. programs, some into high school teaching, many want to teach at community colleges or at 4 year colleges, and some go into industry doing some sort of communication for a company.

When asked about the SOAP being updated, D. Fraleigh indicated it had been a few years, and they need a new SOAP with goals that are refined to a manageable number. They are doing fine with assessing student learning. It was suggested that redoing the curriculum and the SOAP, which is 10 years old, together would be simpler and better.

M. Wilson asked about the forensics program. D. Fraleigh said they had good competitive success, were in a national tournament, and were winning awards including 3rd place. D. Fraleigh said forensics was an instructional responsibility, and it impossible for one person to do it all. They are currently searching for a person to serve as a permanent coach. They don’t have a formal board, but alumni help out with forensics, and there is much alumni contact.

1. MSC to adjourn at 3:00 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the University Graduate Committee is Tuesday, February 6, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. in TA 117.

1.     Approval of the January 30th Minutes

2.     Approval of the Agenda

3.     Communications and Announcements

4.     Visit by M.A. in Deaf Education: 2:20

5.     Recommendations for M.A. in Communication