I. CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Provost and Dean Nancy Stamp called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

II. MINUTES:

The minutes of the March 14, 2011 were approved.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Academic Standards Committee
This committee has not met.

Advisory Committee on Scholarships and Research
The committee has been meeting to review the reports for the Organized Research Center and the Interdisciplinary Collaborative Research Grants. They have selected 2 proposals that were submitted for the Interdisciplinary Collaborative Research Grants; one was a study of expansion of China and Latin America and Africa through case studies in Peru and Ethiopia; and the other was a self-powered evolutionary wireless center network.

Budget Advisory Committee
This committee has not met.

Clark Fellowship Advisory Committee
This committee met on February 28 to review the Clark Fellowship Applications and decided to award six Clark Fellowship Awards. They will be meeting again to determine the students for the remaining awards.
Curriculum Committee

The committee approved the following course in Biology – BIO 534.

Grievance Committee

This committee has not met.

Strategic Planning Committee

This committee has not met.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

The Graduate School has been reorganizing due to budget cuts and attrition. It has reduced costs whenever possible, for example, not replacing office staff. The Graduate School has lost 38% of regular staff. However staff has figured out how to streamline and automate processes to continue to provide the highest level of quality.

Dean Stamp gave an overview of the newly implemented Electronic Graduate Admissions Decision System. All through the peak admissions period, graduate admissions have been running approximately 400 decisions ahead over previous years. As soon as the electronically submitted credentials are received, they are viewable by graduate programs within 24-48 hours. This means a faster turnaround time and decisions on these applicants are made much quicker.

Degree conferral has been streamlined in a way that allows early communication to the student and to the graduate directors on what requirements those students need to graduate.

Commencement happens twice a year, and there is a committee appointed to make sure everything is streamlined and runs smoothly. The Graduate School is now capturing electronically the titles of dissertations and master’s theses, which are archived and make it easier to locate in the future.

For next year, one of the Graduate School’s focuses will be on graduate student recruitment. Our new Assistant Dean for Recruitment and Admissions, Cheryl Fabrizi, brings an expertise in this field and will be overseeing this. Our goal will be to increase applications and at the same time, create a deeper pool of well-qualified applicants. Some of the ways we will be doing this is through the internet and social media. We will be looking at data analysis of our past patterns and figuring out how we can use web analytics to reach out to potential applicants.

Next fall’s projection for graduate students are right on target in terms of enrollment. The Graduate School has a virtual orientation for students and information will be available to students on our website sometime in June. Course registration for new graduate students will open up August 3rd. The Graduate School has a live orientation, one hour for doctoral students and two hours for new teaching assistants.

Professor Lander expressed concern regarding one of the emails sent to potential graduates stating that one of the steps for graduation is submitting the award of degree form. He felt it needed to be clearer to the student that the department can only submit the form after the student’s Dissertation/Thesis were complete. Professor Lander also stated that it was difficult to view credentials in the electronic graduate admissions decision system (e-GADS). The Xtender software converts pdfs to tif files, which make for cumbersome viewing. Dean Stamp said that the Graduate School would look into both concerns.
Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Florence Margai, gave an overview of the Graduate Community of Scholars (GCOS). GCOS is a support network for students that are in the Clark Diversity Fellowship Program and the NSF AGEP program. The program is an all-inclusive community that provides a rich environment for students to pursue their academic goals. This year, we have approximately 55 students who have been awarded Clark Fellowships. Eligibility requirements for Clark Awards are for those students who are underrepresented minorities who have a history of disadvantage and have overcome that disadvantage. NSF AGEP offers opportunities for students including career and professional development workshops, a co-teaching experience and funds for travel. Some of the successes of CGOS are our Clark Fellowship Awards. Some of these students are eligible for the NSF AGEP program which target the STEM discipline; science, technology, engineering, mathematics. One of the successes of this program is the co-teaching aspect. This entails pairing an AGEP scholar with a faculty member to co-teach and undergraduate course. As part of the process, we monitor the progress of the student and work closely with the department to ensure a successful experience.

This year, GCOS offered workshops that touched on 11 topics – two topics were geared toward the early level scholars, three topics for mid-level and 4 topics for the advanced level scholars. Some of the topics covered for the workshops were writing and research, fellowships and grant writing, job market for Sciences and Engineering and Women in the Sciences. Next year we hope to implement the PREP model which is critical for the success of graduate students. It stands for Planning, Resilience, Engagement and Professionalism. We hope to use the PREP model for the primary theme of our workshops. We want to teach students the best practices within their discipline and to learn the highest kind of morality and ethics to use throughout their career.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. on a motion by Professor Haver and seconded by Professor Merriwether.

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Minutes recorded by Cheryl McGowan, Secretary to the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School