

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE September 20, 2010 MEETING OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

- PLACE:** Couper Administrative Building - Room148
- PRESIDING:** Nancy E. Stamp, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
- MEMBERS:** Christopher Bishop, Junghyun Cho, Carmen Ferradas, Robert Guay, William Heller, Les Lander, Dina Maramba, Chuck Nelson, Thomas O'Brien, Beverly Rainforth, Dawnie Steadman, Mary Muscari, Wesley Saavedra, Latoya Lee
- EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:** Elizabeth Brown, Dara Silberstein, Lindsay Tremain
- EXCUSED:** Wendy Martinek, Andrew Merriwether, Pamela Mischen, Max Pensky, Gerald Sonnenfeld, Nan Zhou
- ABSENT:** Dina Maramba, Debi Mishra, William Haver, Olga Shvetsova, Pamela Stewart Fahs, Max Pensky

I. CALL TO ORDER:

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

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introductions of the members were made.

III. MINUTES:

The minutes of the May 10, 2010 were approved as written, with 3 abstentions.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Dean Stamp reviewed the purpose of Graduate Council as per the by-laws. Then she reviewed the charge of each committee.

V. OVERVIEW OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

In the last fifteen years or so, many major foundations such as the Sloan Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation, and various federal agencies have been focusing on graduate education. They are concerned with matters such as: are we implementing best practices, what do our graduate students get out of graduate education and how do our graduate programs fare internationally?

Internationally, The European Union is reorganizing its graduate programs. It is trying to make it easier for graduate students to move from one university to another across countries. Time limit for degrees are an undergraduate degree in 3 years, master's degree in 2 years and a PhD degree in 3 years.

Funding for the University has seen a decline in New York as well as other states. The actual cost of educating a graduate student is in excess of \$35,000 per year. The tuition for in-state graduate students is \$8,350 and approximately \$14,000 for out of state. At public institutions in the north east, we are still one of the lowest in terms of tuition.

Approximately half of the stipend fund comes from SUNY. The campus contributes the rest - several million dollars. In order to raise stipends and remain in the top 25% of public universities stipend levels, the number of TA lines has been flat. On average, over the last several years, we have supported about 500 GA/TA's and 50 Clark Fellowship students, and awarded tuition for external scholarship recipients and for students who are research assistants on grants.

The tuition scholarship Fund is partly funded by the university and partly funded by SUNY. In New York State there is no such thing as a tuition waiver. When students register for courses they get a tuition bill. When the Graduate School awards a tuition scholarship, the Graduate School is paying that student's tuition bill. The university has to send those funds to SUNY, and New York legislature decides how much the university gets back. One year ago, when tuition was increased, that increase was not returned to the university.

Other support money for graduate students includes travel awards, excellence awards and the National Science Foundation Grant for underrepresented minority graduate students.

The major issues for the Graduate School this year are the Graduate Admissions office implementation of electronic graduate admission decision system in Banner, the streamlining of degree conferrals, benchmarking graduate programs, and how to pay for the national annual rate of increase in stipends. The annual rate increase in stipends across the US is 3% in humanities, 4% in social sciences and 5% in sciences. Roughly, that means an increase of \$500 per year.

The major items for Graduate Council this year will be: 1) National Research Council 2006 Doctoral Study and other kinds of benchmarking that we need to do for our graduate programs and 2) The federal agencies are saying that on-line ethics training, (which is required for all our graduate) students is not enough. They are recommending that all universities also have live training sessions. We will use a grant to lay the foundation for a university-wide program.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Benchmarking tools are very useful in that it can help evaluate where we are and where we want to go with our programs. The National Research Council periodically does a study of graduate programs. They collected data in 1993 and published that data in 1995. NRC received a lot of criticism for that study because it was a reputational ranking. In the Fall of 2006, NRC collected data for a quantitative study. Participation in the NRC study included 212 institutions, 4,800 programs and 59 disciplines. Binghamton University submitted data from every graduate program that was included in this study. This study is a comprehensive data analysis of doctoral education in the U.S. It not only shows accomplishments but demonstrates the need for continued funding for research as well as support of graduate students.

Another benchmarking tool is called “The Delaware Study”. This is a study of public research universities that collect data on how departments are using their resources. The Academic Program Review is another valuable tool, where departments go through a self-study and an external evaluation process. Yet another tool is Academic Analytics Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index which focuses on research in graduate programs across universities. One of the most valuable ways to use this data is for programs to look at their peers, and identify areas of concern to address.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 on a motion by Professor Heller and seconded by Professor Nelson.

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