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Academic Policy Committee Report - October 8, 2009

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Academic Policy Committee

Thursday, October 8, 2009

2:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

220 University Center

Present: Stefanie Ohnesorg (Chair), Ralph Brockett, Yanfei Gao, Robert Hatcher, LeAnn Luna, Trevor Moulden, Marian Roman, Matthew Scholz, Scott Wall, Songning Zhang, Kay Reed, Carolyn Hodges, Ben Blalock, Masood Parang, Michael Essington.

The meeting was called to order by Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair, at 2:15 p.m.

1. Readmission Policy.

Ohnesorg introduced topic as a continuing issue from the previous meeting.

Carolyn Hodges addressed the policy and the proposed change. She shared with committee members that she had met with the Graduate Student Senate on October 7 at their meeting in order to discuss the proposed change. She explained that the Graduate School and departments will have to report more extensively on retention in the future, and that the proposed readmission process will facilitate data collection. The Readmission Policy will allow the Graduate School and the departments to better monitor students' progress and retention. Hodges also addressed some misunderstandings regarding the proposed policy change, for example, the GSS' concern that it would be an onerous process. She emphasized that the readmission process will be expedient and much simpler than an admission process, and departments will be working with graduate students who need to be readmitted because of break in registrations that exceed the maximum allowed under the proposed policy.

Matthew Scholz, from the GSS, spoke about graduate students' concerns related to the possibility of not being allowed to come back into the program if readmission is required. Bob Hatcher addressed the relationship between readmission into an academic program and graduate assistantships, and it was clarified that readmission to an academic program is not (and never has been) linked to a department's ability to discontinue or reinstate a graduate assistantship after a break in registration.

The committee discussed the proposal and cast electronic votes by survey software (9 voting in favor, 0 voting against, and 0 abstaining) to recommend that Graduate Council approve the following change in policy for readmission of graduate students:

Graduate Catalog, 2010-2011, heading Readmission

"A graduate student who has not registered for graduate courses at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for one term other than summer must apply for readmission. A readmission

application must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions at least two weeks prior to the first day of class of the desired term of reentry. To assist the student and the department with planning for a break in enrollment and subsequent readmission, a leave of absence should be requested at least two weeks before the beginning of the semester for which the leave is requested.”

“International students must consult with an international student advisor to discuss how a leave of absence affects their immigration status.”

“For more specific guidelines regarding a leave of absence from continuous registration of course 600, please refer to the policy under that title.”

This change would be effective for readmissions in Spring 2011 in the Banner Student Information System. The Leave of Absence form will be available from the Graduate School web page.

2. 5-Year BS/MS degree programs – in Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, and Computer Science.

Masood Parang, Associate Dean of the College of Engineering, presented the basis of the program and the policy. The design of the proposed Dual BS/MS degree programs is identical to the design of currently existing Dual BS/MS degree programs in four other engineering majors, with the exception that only 6 hours (rather than 9) would be double counted in these three masters and bachelors programs. Parang talked about the success of the program in mechanical engineering. Following a brief discussion, the question was called and a vote was taken. The committee voted to approve the three programs - Vote: 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.

3. Change of registration deadline.

Ohnesorg introduced the topic as a continuing issue from the previous meeting.

The committee voted (7 in favor, 1 against, and 0 abstained) to recommend that Graduate Council approve a change in the change of registration deadline to eliminate the one deadline “Change of registration with signatures from 11 days to 42 days in the semester.” The Graduate School will handle any needed changes for individual students by exceptions on the “Late Change of Registration Request Form.” This deadline was found in the Graduate Catalog under the heading “Change in Registration.”

4. The committee will review other policies related to doctoral committee composition at the next meeting on January 28, 2010.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25.