

**Graduate Council
December 8, 2008
226 University Hall
Meeting Minutes**

Graduate Council Members Present:

Ana Azevedo, Jim Bartholomew, Mike Lairmore, Walter Lempert, Jason Marion, Anne McCoy, Ruth Peterson, Jim Phelan, John Sheridan, Harald Vaessin

Graduate School Staff Present: Patrick Osmer, Ann Salimbene, Elliot Slotnick, Kathleen Wallace, Susan Reeser (recorder)

Approval of Minutes

- The minutes from the November 24, 2008, Graduate Council meeting were approved as submitted.

A. Announcements –Dean Pat Osmer

- Pat Osmer attended the Council of Graduate Schools annual meeting from December 2-6, 2008, in Washington, D.C. and made a presentation on the assessment and review of graduate doctoral programs. He also made presentations at the National Science Foundation (NSF) and at Howard University on doctoral program review.
- It was announced at the Council of Graduate Schools annual meeting that Ohio State Assistant Professor Tanya Erzen, in the Department of Comparative Studies, had won the prestigious 2008 Gustave O. Arlt Award in the Humanities in the field of Religious Studies for her book “Straight to Jesus: Sexual and Christian Conversions in the Ex-Gay Movement.” Professor Erzen received her award at a luncheon during the CGS meeting.
- Pat Osmer has been elected for a three-year term as a member of the Board of Directors for the Council of Graduate Schools and attended the CGS Board meeting as an observer on December 2.
- Elliot Slotnick reported that he attended a meeting about the National Research Council (NRC) upcoming release of their long-awaited report while he was attending the Council of Graduate Schools annual meeting. The reports methodology may be sent to institutions on December 15, and the completed report is supposed to be released in mid-February. However, if the methodology isn’t available for distribution on December 15, it will be sent out in January. If this is the case, then the final report will be released sometime in March 2009.

B. Graduate Council Curriculum Committee Reports and Actions

Elliot Slotnick, Curriculum Committee facilitator, reported that Bobby Moser, dean of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, had submitted a letter of support for the proposal to deactivate the Soil Science graduate program and to create a soil science specialization track in the School of Environment and Natural Resources.

Also reviewed was a letter from Professor Jerry Bigham, director, School of Environment and Natural Resources, indicating that the Soil Science graduate students were first informed about the possibility of the elimination of the graduate program in a meeting on April 21,

2008. A second meeting with the students was held on December 5 detailing the deactivation of the Soil Science program and merger as a specialization in the School of Environment and Natural Resources.

- **The proposal to deactivate the Soil Science graduate program and create a specialization track was approved.**

C. Review Items:

- **Discussion of revisions to definitions and descriptions of candidacy and candidacy examination in the *Graduate School Handbook***

Council members discussed the proposed definition of candidacy and whether the language was ready to be incorporated into the *Handbook*. Council members indicated that the definition must be independent and broad enough to encompass the various and diverse fields of study. It also needs to address what the basic academic expectations are, normal practices, length of study, and still allow programs the ability to implement their own local policies.

Candidacy examination language was clarified to keep rules, policies, and procedures explicit while stressing the need to test the knowledge of material and set high standards.

- **Council agreed that the *Graduate School Handbook* could be updated with the revised language with minor emendations discussed during the meeting. Council also determined that the Graduate School will request that all graduate programs post their handbooks online. Assistant Deans Salimbene and Wallace will review these handbooks for how each program describes its candidacy and candidacy examination practices.**

D. For introductory discussion:

- **Appointment starting date for Graduate Associates and Fellows**

Dean Osmer brought up the issue of graduate students on appointment (graduate associates and fellows) who begin their autumn quarter appointments with an October 1 starting date. These students frequently experience financial hardships resulting from not being able to receive their first paycheck until October 30. It was agreed that this issue will be different when the university ultimately switches to the semester system. Jason Marion, president of the Council of Graduate Students indicated that he would ask the Graduate Associates Compensation and Benefits Committee (GCBC) to take up this issue to see if a solution can be found.

E. Other

It was proposed that the Graduate Council meet at the same time, i.e., 3-5 p.m. each month on Monday during winter quarter. The meeting dates will be sent out soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.