Minutes

Dean Willoughby called the Graduate Council meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. An agenda with a packet of information was provided to each Council member. He shared fall enrollment information for degree seeking and post-graduate students for the fall semesters between 2003 and 2007.

Mr. Joe Meyer, from the Office of Institutional Research, gave a presentation on new ways of finding available data (www.ir.txstate.edu). He showed some of the pivot tables and how they can be changed to fit different data needs. He will offer more classes in how to use these tables or he offered to come to individual departments and give instructions on how to obtain the data.

Dr. Barbara Hatcher talked about graduate recruiting. She said 700 students had been contacted, so far this year, by internet or personal contact. Our office is working to send information obtained through recruiting events to departments within 24 to 48 hours. She referenced the Graduate College Information Day, held on 11/7/07 and she expressed appreciation for the assistance from each college at the event. She said there is a new opportunity for students to contact us on our website. Once the student makes that contact, they will receive an email from us. She mentioned a new contact piece, Graduate Study at Texas State, which contains information on different aspects of Texas State and our graduate programs. This piece is sent to graduate students after they have been accepted into a program to encourage them to register. She expressed appreciation to Dr. Mary Hoffman for presenting the “Recruiting Graduate Students Workshop” during the spring and fall 2006 and 2007 semesters. Dr. Hatcher said that the “keys” to recruiting are to contact potential graduate students quickly and to inform them about career opportunities their major may provide.

Dr. Cecilio Barrera discussed recruiting events. He showed our new Graduate College banner and table displays (suggested by University Marketing), which are used to attract students to our recruiting table. He drew the Council’s attention to several items on their tables, which were purchased to give away to potential students at recruiting fairs. He mentioned another new Graduate College contact piece, which lists all the programs we offer and other Texas State information. He spoke about having a good response at regional recruiting fairs at UT El Paso, New Mexico State University and University of New Mexico. He has also attended other events where our university is showcased (i.e., American Biomedical Research Conference for minority students held in Austin – where 1600 students, both graduate and undergraduate attended). He presented a workshop at the conference to 200 students on “How to Apply to Graduate School.” He gave the Council statistics on the number of doctoral and master’s students in our programs, and the schools from which they came.

Dr. Barrera also discussed our summer Pre-Doctoral Fellowship initiative. This program attracts ABD students to work with a mentor and become acquainted with Texas State. During the past two summers, nine Pre-Doctoral Fellowship students participated. This program has the potential to recruit these students as future faculty to Texas State.

Janet Moseley presented the Communication Flow in the Graduate College. The target date to implement the communication flow is the end of December 2007. On the “contacts” sheet, if a student applies to Texas State, the emails will stop. In looking at the “applicants” sheet, she mentioned that one of our goals is to provide a way for student applicants to check their application status online (where all of the department “needs” would also be listed). On the “accepted” sheet, she called everyone’s attention to the place in the flow when the Graduate College Welcome
Brochure would be mailed, followed by the “intent to enroll letter,” in which a Texas State decal will be included. She pointed out that students using electronic applications now receive the “incomplete degree seeking email generated after application received,” and students submitting paper applications will begin receiving this email sometime this week. She said that the “incomplete degree seeking letter generated after application entered into SIS” sheet was included in the packet so that departments may review their specific information (which is found after the Residency Questionnaire paragraph), to see if anything needs to be added.

Dean Willoughby mentioned that if a student applies after the deadline, and their admission is approved by the department, our office has begun sending the student an email to inform them they have been admitted, so they won’t have to wait for a “snail mail” acceptance letter.

Dr. Paula Williamson discussed the different workshops, for students and faculty, sponsored by the Graduate College during 2007. There were a total of 159 students who attended (some more than once) the Thesis/Dissertation Workshops this year. These workshops helped the students save preparation time. The advertisements for these workshops were emails sent to students enrolled in thesis & dissertation courses. She requested that the Council members let her know if they have suggestions for other workshops which may be helpful, and she encouraged Council members to inform their students about available workshops to attend.

Dr. Williamson presented results from the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 Survey. She said this is a high priority with the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), and was a survey of all faculty, and not just graduate faculty. Several Graduate Council members said they remembered completing the survey, and expressed concern about the survey answers. Several indicated that faculty in their departments abandoned the survey, since there were no examples given. Dr. Williamson is working with Gail Ryser to develop survey results by college, and find a way to deliver this information. She said that the majority of graduate students answered “don’t know,” on the 2nd and 3rd lines, and the survey revealed a “disconnect” in the areas of “Informal Discussion” and “Mentoring.” She said that an Advisory Council has been formed from the different colleges & departments to discuss the next steps. She requested that the Council members send suggestions for improvements on future surveys to her.

Dean Willoughby talked about the handout from the Graduate Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) entitled “Characteristics of Texas Public Doctoral Programs.” This information provides a profile of the university offering doctoral programs to prospective students. Texas State has been successful in the past in submitting proposals; however, the rules have changed. He discussed the Math Ph.D. and Math Ed Ph.D. proposals, which were submitted to the Coordinating Board in October, and the Coordinating Board’s decisions on each one (Math Ph.D. was withdrawn and Math Ed Ph.D. is on the agenda for January’s meeting). There are several questions on the Math Ed Ph.D. proposal that must be addressed in a short time frame. Dean Willoughby will continue to keep the Council updated on the activities of GEAC.

Dean Willoughby introduced Dr. Debbie Thorne, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs who supervises the Curriculum Office. She talked about the many changes that are rapidly coming our way from the Coordinating Board, and that Texas State is learning today what we need to do for tomorrow. She said that some of these items are filtering to the master’s and undergraduate levels. She indicated that discussion for potential new programs needs to begin very early (even before the pen hits the paper). Now, different questions are being asked in the development of new programs. Dr. Thorne, Dean Willoughby and Dr. Williamson work closely on new program proposals at the graduate level, and keep the Provost informed.
Dr. Thorne also informed the Council that she has oversight for the International Programs. They have recruiting money available and are willing to partner with departments who have a specific area in the world in which they wish to recruit students. She asked that departments get in touch with her to inquire about this recruiting money. She said that our graduate programs are stellar and thanked the Council members for all they do.

Dr. Williamson discussed the Graduate House, which is going into its third year of existence. Each college may have at least two representatives. The colleges, with only one member, may encourage other students within their college to attend the meetings. Once they attend, and if they are interested, the student may be elected by the House to serve as a representative for their college. She mentioned that the Graduate College is hosting a luncheon in the spring for the Graduate House members to meet the college deans.

She mentioned the Graduate Student Alumni Survey. The Graduate College is working with Susan Thompson and Beth Wuest on this survey, as well as looking at information other universities are gathering. She said they would like to see what is being done in Texas State departments with their graduate student surveys. She requested that copies of these department surveys be sent to her, so that some of the ideas may be incorporated into a large survey.

She drew the Council’s attention to The Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) Awards page, which lists the procedure for a committee review of master’s and EDT master’s theses for awards and an achievement award for new scholars. It is already past the deadline for the 2008 awards. In the past we haven’t participated in these awards, however, with research more prevalent at Texas State, we want to participate. We will seek nominations from the departments for these theses review committees and seek faculty nominations for the new scholar award, which provide internal and external recognition.

Dean Willoughby will request Council input on the role and meeting format of the Council. He said that some of the information discussed today could have been sent electronically for the Council member’s review. Our office will send out a questionnaire for opinions on how best to utilize the Graduate Council. He suggested that round table discussions may be useful.

Dean Willoughby adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.