Minutes

Dean Mike Willoughby called the Graduate Council meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. An agenda and several handouts were provided to each Council member or representative present.

Announcements

Scholarships

Dean Willoughby discussed the new process for Graduate Scholarship applications. Graduate Scholarship applications, except Celebrity Classic applications, will be sent directly to the seven academic colleges. This approach should improve the college’s awareness of students who have received assistantships or other scholarships and create more timely communication with the scholarship applicants. The academic colleges will send letters to applicants who do not receive a scholarship. The office of the Graduate College will send award letters. The Graduate College will continue to handle any problems associated with scholarship awards. An additional $50,000 is being distributed among the various colleges with allocation based on enrollment. Dean Willoughby reported the Celebrity Classic raised over $120,000 this year for scholarships, bringing the total collected to nearly $1,000,000.

QEP

Dr. Paula Williamson presented information regarding Texas State’s plan for QEP – Quality Enhancement Plan, which will be part of the SACS reaffirmation process. A marketing campaign for the QEP will begin in the Spring 2010 semester, so that everyone will learn about the program. PACE, which stands for Personalized Academic and Career Exploration, is the name of the QEP. Pending approval, the QEP will involve creating a new advising center, which will provide advising and career choice planning for freshmen. There will also be a new Dean of Advising, who reports to the Provost. Each of the seven academic colleges will have a faculty liaison, who will help students identify relevant student organizations and other activities in which they may want to become involved. QEP will be reviewed by the SACS Team, and the Team will conduct an on-site visit March 23-25, 2010. Dr. Williamson requested the council members to help spread the word regarding QEP.

75th Anniversary Celebration

Dr. Sandy Rao informed the council of different activities which have taken place and will be coming up in the celebration of the Graduate College’s 75th Anniversary (see handout). She mentioned the Graduate Orientation in August, where there was a record attendance of more than 450 students. The Graduate Information Fair was held in the Quad for the first time on Nov. 4th. The International Research Conference for Graduate Students, held on November 4-5, attracted about 80 submissions from Texas State and beyond. The Exhibit at Alkek Library (3/15 – 7/15/2010) was discussed and council members were requested to email Dr. Rao (sr02@txstate.edu) any suggestions for items which may be included in the exhibit. A commemorative poster will be mailed out to other universities and ads are being placed in publications (including Texas Monthly magazine). Dr. Rao also asked for suggestions to be emailed to her regarding a special event planned for the spring to mark 75 years of graduate education. There will be an ad in each of the commencement programs (12/09, 5/10 & 8/10), banners will be displayed and a slide show will run at the ceremonies. The slide show will also be placed on the Graduate College website. Each graduate degree student will wear a 75th Anniversary medallion in the ceremony (those unable to attend the ceremony will receive their medallion by mail).
Discussion Items

Vireo Focus Group
Dr. Williamson and Joan Heath, Asst. VP, University Library (including Margaret Vaverek and Stephanie Larrison from the Alkek Library), led a Vireo Focus Group discussion. Vireo is an Electronic Thesis/Dissertation online submission process available through the Texas Digital Library. Vireo is currently in use at UT, Texas A&M and Texas Tech, and will be implemented at other Texas universities this year. The groups at each table discussed the advantages, disadvantages, questions, and concerns of this electronic submission method. Questions were raised concerning the length of time before the work is posted to eCommons and how sensitive material would be handled. During the Spring 2010 semester, Dr. Williamson and Ms. Heath plan to hold focus groups of students, faculty, staff and administrators to determine if Texas State will implement the Vireo process. If the university decides to implement Vireo, the Graduate College would like to pilot the program in one or two departments as early as Summer 2010. Dr. Williamson plans to meet with people at the University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University, who are currently using this program, to see how they handle holds, sensitive material, and other aspects of Vireo.

New & Existing Master’s Degrees
Dean Willoughby directed the council’s attention to the handout entitled “New Programs, Minors, Certificates, and Certifications Activated from Fall 2006 Forward.” This information may be helpful as departments consider modifying existing master’s programs or preparing new master’s proposals.

Dean Willoughby adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m., so the council members could move to the JCK first floor foyer area where a photograph would be taken of the group. The photograph will be included in the Graduate College 75th Anniversary Exhibit, which will be located in the Alkek Library March 15 – July 15, 2010.

Minutes by Sylvia Mobley
12/8/09