University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC)
Graduate Program Reviews Subcommittee
Monday, January 25, 2016
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Mitchell Hall 245

MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Barbara Bales, Chair

Present:
(Committee Members): David Allen, Barbara Bales, Sheila Feay-Shaw, Shelleen Greene, Seyed Hosseini, Maureen Zell
(Non-Committee Members): Vicky Everson, Marija Gajdardziska-Josifovska, Tracey Heatherington, Tiffany Nation
Absent: Miren Boehm, Martha Carlin, Jennifer Jordan, Jenny Kehl, Hamid Quali
Guests: Michael Newman

II. Welcome
Barbara Bales welcomed the committee and thanked them for dedicating their time to serve as members on the Graduate Program Reviews Subcommittee.

III. Approval of the Draft Minutes from the December 21, 2015 Meeting
A motion was made and seconded to accept and approve the minutes as recorded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Media Studies MA Program Review Report
Barbara Bales called for the 3rd item on the agenda, the Media Studies MA program review internal report. Barbara Bales opened the floor to Shelleen Greene who served as internal reviewer for the Media Studies MA program review site visit.

Shelleen Greene began her internal review report by stating that the MA program has a very strong reputation in JAMS (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies). She stated that the program has successfully trained MA students whom have been accepted into some of the top university’s PhD programs.

She reported that there were several very serious issues and concerns that were uncovered during the internal and external reviews. She reported on the serious issues and potential destructive challenges the department is facing and how the climate of the department has produced a hostile work environment.

Issues of Concern:
Serious Understaffing of the Graduate Faculty and the Academic Staff

➢ According to the self-study, the graduate faculty has depleted in numbers from ten to seven graduate faculty members and academic staff from seven to five staffing members within the last few years.
The graduate faculty staffing continues to decline due to retirements.

The undergraduate program’s student to graduate faculty ratio is 58 to 1. This calculated ratio does not include the graduate program’s student to faculty ratio.

Recommendations:

- More support should be offered in the hiring of graduate faculty and academic staff.
- It is recommended that the program needs five or six new hires.
- It is recommended that the department be authorized to make at least one hire per year for each of the next five years.
- It is recommended that the department provide more structured feedback to the graduate students about their teachings, provide professional development workshops, and host and sponsor Alumni events.

Issues of Concern:

Communication between Administration and the Department

- During the internal review, communication problems were witnessed between the Dean’s Office and the department regarding positions available to the department for hiring.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that an internal committee be established to help resolve and correct any communication issues so that hiring issues could be addressed immediately.

Issues of Concern:

Non-Communication between the Graduate Faculty and the Academic Staff

- A very serious and concerning division among the graduate faculty and the academic staff.
- The Dean’s Office has proposed several approaches to mend this divide but has been unsuccessfully.

Recommendations:

- The division among the graduate faculty and the academic staff needs to be addressed immediately.
- The Dean’s Office should work proactively to address this issue immediately.
- It is recommended that an internal committee be established with representatives from the graduate faculty, the academic staff, other faculty from other units, and from the College of Letters & Sciences’ Dean’s Office.

Shelleen Greene recommended that all measures should be taken to ensure the continuation of the Media Studies MA program.

Seyed Hosseini questioned many of the issues and concerns that Shelleen Greene internally reported on. His suggestions for a solution to the division among the graduate faculty and the academic staff would possibly be to invite the academic staff to the graduate faculty meetings and be given voting privileges within the meetings. He suggested for the undergraduate program’s student to graduate faculty ratio would be to hire more graduate faculty. He suggested that the graduate faculty could possibly teach more courses. He also suggested the possibly of creating universal courses. He expressed that he thought that the program should be more creative in finding solutions to these issues and concerns. Seyed Hosseini was very interested in hearing directly from the program’s representative Michael Newman, Chair and associate professor to hear what the program’s plans were to resolve the reported issues and concerns.
Michael Newman responded to the many issues and concerns that were put forth by the internal review report and questions of the committee members. He expressed his concern of the courses that will be offered this fall and if there would be sufficient staff to teach these courses. He stated that the program had set forth a proposal for possible course and curriculum solutions but the proposal was rejected. He explained that the program is struggling with the issues and concerns that were reported and that they are in desperate need of assistance and suggestions for solutions.

Tracey Heatherington suggested more understanding between the departments. She also offered the assistance of the Graduate School to assist with students. She also suggested presenting changes of prerequisites and syllabuses to the Subcommittee on Graduate Courses and Curriculum (GCC) to remedy course and curriculum issues and concerns.

The committee also brought up the issue of parallel courses from cross classes.

David Allen gave the committee a summary of the program. He explained and defined some of the issues and challenges the program has experienced and is currently facing.

Barbara Bales presented to the committee the suggestion of what kind of clearinghouse that could set up to elevate this information to the Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC). She noted that all programs are under extreme pressure.

V. 2015 – 2016 Graduate Program and Certificate Program Review Site Visit Assignments

Barbara Bales directed the committee to the next agenda item of assignments for 2015 – 2016 graduate program and certificate program review site visits. She requested that the committee review their assigned program review site visit. She asked that the committee take a moment to review the internal reviewer’s process and responsibilities.

David Allen questioned the tentative statuses listed on the assignment sheet. Vicky Everson explained to him that the internal reviewers were listed as tentative due to not having specific dates from the programs for site visits and also due to the possibility of scheduling conflicts.

There were questions from the committee on the writing structure of the internal report. Barbara Bales defined the internal report as a 2-page internal prospective of an external reviewer’s insight.

Sheila Feay-Shaw gave her insight on her experience of writing internal reports.

Seyed Hosseini gave an insight on his experience of writing internal reports. Seyed Hosseini recommended that when writing internal reports to please give both a negative and a positive view of the external and internal review to ensure a balanced report.

Barbara Bales recommended attending all scheduled meetings that included students and all scheduled meetings that were scheduled with the external reviewers.

VI. Other Business

Barbara Bales opened the floor to the committee for any other business. There was no response.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.