University Board of Graduate Studies Minutes
of the 2/14/13 meeting


Also Present:  Melody Baker (note taker), Kevin Gibson, Natalie Wickman (UG Journalism major), Carol Ferrara (Trinity Fellows Program), Megan Petrik (Grad Stud-GSO)

Excused:  Stephen Saunders

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. and the agenda was approved.

Reports:
Graduate Dean –

Dr. Hossenlopp pointed out that today is Tuition Runs Out Day and explained that as of today donor financial aid takes over the remaining costs of education. Budget discussions for next year are currently underway and decreased enrollment for the last three year must be taken into consideration.

In response to a question regarding accelerated degree programs, Dr. Hossenlopp said there is a question of whether approval for a new program is needed in a regularly scheduled UBGS meeting in spite of the fact that UBGS review is needed. It may be possible to review and submit comments electronically. Another topic being considered is when, and if, it is appropriate to occasionally wave deadlines.

Graduate Associate Dean –

INPR program review is still being discussed and Dr. Gibson may call on members for some historical information.

Business:
Research in Action Joint Faculty Discussion: Feb 19th, 3:00 – 4:30pm -

RSVP’s are still coming in for the forum. Round tables will be set up with a different topic at each table; people will have the opportunity to change tables. A member from either UBGS or COR is needed at each table to take notes. The ideas gathered will be shared with Fr. Pilarz and Dr. Pauly to be considered in strategic planning.

Dr. Hossenlopp reported that the recent all-university strategic planning workshop gathered over 400 people and was very successful.

Discussion with Carole Ferrara, Director of the Trinity Fellows Program –

Ms. Ferrara described the history and purpose of the program, also sharing handouts with that information. The program is available to students working on a master’s degree and who have a focus and passion for social justice. They are expected to complete their degree within 2 years based on an average total of 36 credits. She went on to describe what some of the program’s graduates are doing.
Ms. Ferrara encouraged members who would be interested in having their department become involved in the program to contact her. She also asked members to consider ways that nonprofit agencies could benefit from a student who may not fit the criteria of the Trinity Program.

Update by Megan Petrik, graduate student representative on the University Strategic Plan Coordinating Committee, on graduate student strategic planning discussion.

Ms. Petrik reported on the sessions offered to graduate students, one for law students, and one with UBGS and Campus Ministry. In summary, many students felt engaged, and were positive about engaging with departments across campus. Last week, a discussion on the goals of the GSO went very well also. Some themes that were contributed by the grad students were: increase MU’s academic excellence by involving alumni in the mentoring process or professional development opportunities (probably on a departmental level); increase MU’s reputation for academic excellence by recruiting top candidates – achieved by offering stipends, and/or offering interdisciplinary collaborations; increase opportunities for formation of the heart and mind within the curriculum (grad level theology electives); incorporate service into graduate training; establish a greater sense of community for grad students (housing, community options). They also discussed ways the GSO can serve online students, and acknowledged that the graduate student body is much more diverse (full time employment, families, homeowners, wide age variance) which affects the ability for some students to be involved.

Dr. Hossenlopp shared that there is some space available on the 4th floor of Holthusen that the GSO may want to consider. In regard to heart and mind development, some grad students feel that spirituality is not recognized as being part of the graduate student curriculum, as it is with undergraduate students.

Dr. Johnson asked whether grad students have funding for activities, or student fees as with undergrads, and if not, how can this be addressed. Dr. Gibson stated that the Graduate School and Office of Student Life contributes some funds towards activities. One big issue for some graduate students is a bus pass. This will not likely be resolved due to the transit authority requiring that all graduate students would have to contribute a fee even though not all would use the buses.

Ms. Petrik agreed to send the list of themes that the graduate students came up with to the UBGS.

The regular meeting adjourned at 3:00pm. Ex-officio members were excused for an executive session that followed.