University Board of Graduate Studies Minutes
9/3/2015
Raynor Conference Center C

Present: Amy Blair, Margaret Bull, Sumana Chattopadhyay, Sharon Chubbuck, Robert Griffin, Kim Halula, Michael Johnson, Alison Julien, Kathleen McKeown, Stephen Merrill
Also Present: John Jentz, Mary Wacker (note taker), Carl Wainscott
Excused: T. Gerry Bradley, Kevin Gibson, Felissa Lee, Stephen Saunders

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 pm with a welcome from Dr. Johnson and introductions.

Minutes of the 5/7/2015 meeting were approved unanimously with minor changes.

Reports:

Graduate Interim Dean

No report.

Graduate Assistant Dean – Carl Wainscott

Mr. Wainscott reported that the Board of Trustees report will be submitted. Applications are down and the number of enrolled students is down. He cited the changes at Marquette as contributing factors in getting everyone on the same page, but moving forward higher numbers are anticipated. He reported that Katie Ruetz has joined the staff of the Graduate School as of July as the new Director of Graduate Admissions. The new Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Douglas Woods, comes on board in January, 2016.

Reporting on the status of INPR’s, Mr. Wainscott noted an uptick in interest from Concordia students seeking Ph.Ds. Concordia is starting a competing program in Speech Pathology, and we are not yet sure what impact that may have. Since this program requires clinical collaboration and leads to licensing, we are not yet sure what the future will look like.

Some of this board may recall the discussion last spring regarding a student from the Vatican seeking an INPR. He is currently working with Dr. Thorn and we should see an outline before our October meeting.

Dr. Johnson asked how low the numbers are, and it was reported that completed applications are down eight percent, admissions are down 15%, and new enrolled students are down 15%. We are still enrolling students, and students are still knocking at the door. Open enrollment will end on September 4, and we are doing all we can to get every last credit in the door. Dr. Johnson asked if this puts immediate pressure on the Graduate School budget, and Mr. Wainscott replied that he had no information on that, but there is a new provost in place who is making structural changes and there have already been changes in open faculty lines.
Mr. Jentz asked who from the Graduate School will be coordinating INPR applicants – in the past the assistant dean and associate dean have shared the task. He noted that the library has traditionally assigned a library liaison to all doctoral students. With a new dean arriving in January, the Graduate School is not yet sure how that task will be structured, but the office has been working without an associate dean since early in 2015. The associate dean position has recently been posted as a limited term opening at either 100% or 50%. Until that position is filled, he will be the point of contact.

Business:

1. **Update from Dr. Linda Salchenberger on Huron Consulting Review**

Dr. Salchenberger was invited to give an overview of the preliminary findings of the Huron Consulting Group’s review of the Graduate School. She presented a power point presentation on the background, process, and preliminary findings.

Dr. Salchenberger noted that Huron worked with Marquette on undergraduate strategies in 2013. A decision was made to seek assistance from an outside group to learn more about the market as well as how to make the best of what we have.

Huron submitted a proposal in 2015 to review the Graduate School, but this review excludes traditional Ph.D. programs, law and dentistry. The study was launched in July, utilizing a steering committee in the same format as the undergraduate process was conducted. The goal is to answer the question raised in regard to a university-wide enrollment plan.

The process has included the steering committee, the provost, graduate deans, and the offices of Marketing & Communication and Finance. The exploratory process has included interviews with internal and external constituencies to gather data and play it back to us.

The goal is not to restructure the Graduate School, but to explore how we can expand enrollment in existing program, explore possible new programs, and find out what is available in the employment marketplace.

Initial teams have met, and now they will go college by college for information. Huron asked for a lot of data – they are looking for enrollment trends and the decision-making process of our students. Financial support is being reviewed in all ways that we subtract from tuition.

Dr. Salchenberger presented initial findings to the board, then asked for the board’s reactions to these findings, and asked how the UBGS sees their role in this process.

Dr. Bull asked for clarification on how our marketing is not as good as competitors. Is it lack of resources, or lack of vision? It is seen as a combination of both, based on a review of Google metrics. We have marketing money sitting in small pools that may be more effective if combined. The question remains to be answered as to whether we are underinvested in
marketing, but we have to get the message straight first, and direct our focus from applications to yield. Follow-up work on this topic is important.

On the undergraduate level the use of metrics from improved software is helping to better understand where we are drawing our students from and where there is room to improve, to create a more customized and personal approach to enrollment.

The board noted that there has been a long-term lack of desire on the part of the university to push graduate programs, and asked if there were any findings on why the culture of this place – in terms of hiring for example – caused this lack of emphasis. The graduate school is 30% of the enrollment of the university, which is pretty good despite the lack of focus. Absent a commitment in the culture, what needs to change and how will that work? Is it faculty unwillingness to teach graduate courses? Is there insight in the findings? Dr. Salchenberger offered two findings. First she noted that we were on autopilot until the economy crashed and we dropped several percent. Second, she indicated that we aren’t getting the message out about why graduate programs matter. Do they enrich the university culture? Do they enrich the faculty experience? Are there five year program options?

Dr. Johnson noted that UBGS has had this conversation before. The board added that not only should the university see graduate studies as part of the mission, but also part of the incentive structure. Talking about professional graduate programs is disconnected from research. Graduate education culture here is relatively strong across the programs. We have young, energetic faculty interested in scholarship and research. Where there hasn’t been incentive is in the financial structure of the university.

Engineering was given as an example. There is a large market for graduate students, and enrollment is low enough that revenue would increase with increased enrollment, but none of that comes to the programs that generate growth. That culture needs to be encouraged. There won’t be a shortfall of faculty if there is reinvestment.

Dr. Salchenberger noted the chicken-and-egg relationship between good ideas and funding. She indicated that the finance department would be willing to work on this, and that not all faculty are interested and/or free to do this. She hopes that improving this situation will be one of the strong recommendations from Huron.

Dr. Bull reflected that this has been discussed frequently at the UBGS, and that there is a strong commitment to generate new ideas here. The challenge has been getting a commitment at a higher level. The Academic Senate worked extensively to get the word “research” into the mission, which is an important element in reflecting our commitment to graduate education. She suggested that other levels beyond this body need to be at the table.

Dr. Johnson responded to the manner in which Huron has conducted this process, and that much has happened without shared governance. This (the UBGS) is the group that is tasked with this role, and one would think this body would have been approached. Dr. Salchenberger responded that the request for this process originated with the UBGS, and that she is aware that this group is
clearly supportive of efforts to enhance the profile and support for graduate growth. She asked the group to offer ways in which support can be generated for these conclusions.

Dr. Salchenberger closed by informing that there will be a campus-wide open meeting to see the results, and that the UBGS should be represented at that meeting. She asked that the board review the recommendations and think about which are priorities, encouraging the group to speak up by sending their comments to the graduate dean and the provost.

It was noted that requests have been submitted in the next Graduate School budget for many of these initiatives, and reported that the marketing budget for the Graduate School has not been increased in twenty years and represents a fraction of the undergraduate recruiting budget. Integration is needed on projects like web presence, which is hard to manage when funding is coming from different places. Dr. Salchenberger noted that we need to reach out and find students rather than sit back and wait for them to come to us, and we need to actively provide career support.

The board asked for more information about what data was used in analyzing student outreach. Was feedback solicited from students who were accepted and chose not to attend? The Graduate School provided the data, as it surveys all applicants. When an applicant declines an offer of admission they are directed to a survey regarding their reasons for declining. The data has indicated that reasons students come to Marquette are reputation, location, financial aid, and “other factors.” Reasons given for not attending are that they found other programs more closely aligned to their needs, attended other schools with better reputations, and received better aid awards.

Dr. Johnson closed the discussion by inquiring about the timeline for this report. Dr. Salchenberger said the reporting phase will conclude by mid-October, and it will take a campus conversation to move forward. Further, she pointed out that we still don’t have an enrollment person in place. Dr. Johnson suggested follow-up in the spring semester, and thanks Dr. Salchenberger for her time in presenting to the group.

2. Organization and Role of the UBGS and Selection of Officers for 2015-2016

Dr. Johnson sent out information on the roles and responsibilities of the UBGS. The intent of selecting leadership is to have a two year officer term – a chair, and a vice-chair who then becomes chair the following year. Dr. Johnson offered to serve as chair this year, but opened the floor to others who may be interested. Dr. Bull endorsed Dr. Johnson to serve as chair for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Dr. Bull asked for clarification on the duties of secretary of UBGS, specifically asking if note-taking was a requirement. Dr. Johnson noted that the secretary takes responsibility for assuring communication with the group, and after assurance that the Graduate School will continue to provide a note-taker, Dr. Johnson noted that there is not a lot of difference in the roles played by the three officers, with the chief shared duty in thinking strategically about what needs to be
done to improve graduate programs on campus and setting the meeting agenda on a monthly basis.

Dr. Bull volunteered to serve as vice-chair of the UBGS for the academic year. Dr. Halula also volunteered her services as UBGS secretary for the year, noting that Academic Senate guidelines preclude her from serving as chair. With no further nominations put forward, the membership voted unanimously for the Dr. Johnson as chair, Dr. Bull as vice chair, and Dr. Halula as secretary.

3. Brainstorming A Direction for the Year

The floor was opened to discussion about priorities for the group in the coming year, and the board returned to discussion about the Huron report. There is an issue to consider between emphasis on terminal master’s programs and other graduate programs, and noted that it is tricky to consider graduate enrollment in the absence of review of Ph.D. programs.

While the reporting language noted enrollment as down over time, the graphs presented showed relatively flat enrollment across the board with few exceptions. The board asked whether or not five year programs were factored in. Mr. Wainscott said that the data would not have excluded graduate students.

Mr. Wainscott did affirm that mobile access to the graduate web information is important. The Graduate School has been holding in anticipation of the upcoming change in content management software, a project that has been ongoing for four years and has stalled frequently.

Dr. Johnson noted, in discussions to look forward to in the upcoming months that Interim Dean Gibson noted we may be looking at some graduate certificate programs, and noted that there have been discussions in this group in the past on that subject.

The board asked if they might be receiving some agenda from the incoming dean. It was reported that Dean Woods has a Marquette email and is already using it. Dr. Halula suggested that the group pursue a dialogue with the Office of Marketing and Communication – perhaps inviting them to discuss plans moving forward.

Dr. Johnson noted that with the VP for Research and Graduate Dean positions separated he is not sure how research and the Graduate School are tied going forward. He suggested that some discussions with the new dean and Vice President Hossenlopp would help to clarify how program and research are tied so that we are not inefficient. There were once joint meetings, and it might again be helpful to be part of those discussions. It will take time to work out these relationships going forward, but it was noted that many of the discussions of this board involve research programs as much as graduate programs.

A board member found it interesting that departments are not incentivized and wondered if that has been discussed with the finance department, noting that finance people think about things differently than other constituencies. Dr. Halula suggested that this first be discussed with
Interim Dean Gibson, to clarify the role of the provost and the finance department in future planning.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary C. Wacker

Upcoming meetings for the 2015-2016 Academic Year:
(All are on Thursdays, 2-4 pm)

10/1/2015
11/5/2015
12/10/2015
1/14/2016
2/4/2016
3/3/2016
4/7/2016
5/5/2016