

UNL GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
Meeting of March 10, 2011

The UNL Graduate Council convened at 3:30 p.m. in Room 206 of Seaton Hall. Present were: Professors Andrea Bolland, Elizabeth Jones, Jon Pedersen, Mark van Roojen, William Wagner, Mark Walker and Thomas Zorn; student representative Laura Lynch; Ex-officio members: Acting Dean Kim Espy and Assistant Dean Laurie Bellows; Jane Schneider, Office of Graduate Studies, Jan Hostetler, Director of Graduate Admissions and Suzi Tamerius, Office of Graduate Studies. Acting Dean Kim Espy presided.

January 13, 2011 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written. Motion passed unanimously.

Proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Grassland Management

A motion was made and seconded to approve a new graduate certificate in Grassland Management administered through the Department of Agronomy and Horticulture. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of proposal to increase Graduate Studies minimums for IBT/PBT TOEFL

Following overwhelming response from Graduate Chairs who responded with feedback, the Council discussed raising the IBT minimum to 79, rather than the previously discussed 71. A motion was made to re-query the Graduate Chairs of the 5 departments who currently have minimums lower than 79 and will also state that exceptions to the TOEFL minimum are possible in individual cases. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion of proposal to expand exemptions from the English Placement Exam

After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to table the proposal until it is rewritten to include individual department ability to set their own requirements for the EPE.

Announcements

- Acting Dean Kim Espy reported RCR online training was completed. 153 PostDocs and 2623 Graduate Students completed the training.
- Assistant Dean Laurie Bellows announced the unified Doctoral Engineering program will de-unify and each of the seven departments are working on their own proposals for their respective PhD program. Dr. Elizabeth Jones added that this has been in the works for several years and this will enhance the Engineering Departments to look more like a Tier 1 program than they currently do.
- Assistant Dean Laurie Bellows announced nominations are being sought for the two seats that will be opening on the Graduate Council. Physical Science and Business are submitting their nominations, currently two are in and there may be a third. Following the deadline on March 25, all graduate Faculty will vote on the nominations.
- Acting Dean Kim Espy announced the speaker for Graduate Commencement will be Patrick Dussault from Chemistry.
- Acting Dean Kim Espy announced the search for the Dean of Graduate Studies is moving forward. Paperwork has been filed for an internal search and she hopes to have the new Dean in place by Fall 2011.
- Assistant Dean Laurie Bellows announced the Office of Graduate Studies has hired an assistant director for graduate student recruitment, Justina Clark.

GSA Report

Reported by Laura Lynch, GSA President

- Graduate Student Appreciation Week is April 4-8. Governor Dave Heineman will recognize the GSA and as another part of their celebration they will be featuring a speaker, Dr. Susan Basalla May, author of "So What Are You Going to Do With That?: Finding Careers Outside of Academia". Dr. Basalla May will also offer a roundtable for Faculty to discuss this topic.
- The GSA has conducted informal research on travel funds available for Graduate Students at UNL. The results concluded that roughly one third of departments budgeted for travel funds and of those numbers about half of those funds come from endowments. Other departments do not necessarily budget for these funds but have funds available through research grants and royalties from books. They are planning to share this information at an upcoming Deans meeting.
- The annual book drive will begin soon. This year the GSA is partnering with the bookstore for this annual fundraiser.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.