Graduate Academic and Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes for February 28, 2011
9:00-10:00 a.m.
408 Rasmuson Library (Kayak Room)

Voting members present: Ken Abramowicz (Chair), Donie Bret-Harte (phone), Lara Dehn, Orion Lawlor, Anupma Prakash (phone), Sue Renes, Jen Schmidt (phone).

Ex officio members present: Anita Hughes, Laura Bender, Larry Duffy, Karen Jensen.
Guest: Jayne (notes)

1. Discussion/modification/approval of agenda
   Agenda was approved. Laura Bender mentioned the topic discussed last time about academic dismissal from a graduate program, and it was agreed to include this topic at the next meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for March 28.

2. Discussion/approval of minutes from 2-21-2011 meeting
   Minutes were approved without modifications.

3. Discussion item related to stacked courses (attached)
   Ken mentioned the most recent changes to Rainer’s document, which included taking out the content referring to workload credit and adding a statement (in caps) about the importance of stacked courses to master’s programs.
   Lara noted that it would only address new courses, not existing ones.
   Anupma felt there’s a problem with the stipulation that differences in level should be reflected by weekly assignments. A course might not have weekly assignments. Donie agreed, and there was consensus on that point. Homework may also not be given on a weekly basis. New language is needed for this point.
   Lara suggested getting student input. Larry mentioned graduate student organizations could be invited for discussion or included in a poll. It was pointed out that no question for student evaluations exists on current SOI forms. Could one be added? Or use SurveyMonkey? Anupma noted that there is a wide variety of reasons for students taking stacked courses. Ken acknowledged that, noting that stacked courses are a fact of life here at UAF. It’s a complex issue, particularly in light of the fact that new programs are not being encouraged right now and reallocation will be on the rise.
   Everyone agreed that a senate discussion is needed. Open faculty forums could be held down the line.

4. Review of GAAC proposals already discussed (review leader is listed first, followed by the secondary reviewers)

   • 19-GNC_ATM F666 - Atmospheric Remote Sensing (Donie, Jen, Xiong)
     Approved on the condition that the reading assignments be written into the syllabus.

   • 25-GNC_ATM F678 - Mesoscale Dynamics (Xiong, Jen, Sue)
     Numerous syllabus modifications are needed. Ken will contact course instructor to request needed changes. [Modifications were made after the meeting. Approved by email.]
• 38-GNC_EE F646 Wireless Sensor Networks (Orion, Donie, Lara)
  Revised syllabus was received by Orion, and looks good to both he and Lara. **Approved.**

• 39-GNC_EE F668 Radar Systems (Orion, Donie, Lara)
  The syllabus revisions were not made. As a result, the proposal was **not approved.**

• 40-GNC_EE F675 Robot Modeling and Control (Orion, Donie, Lara)
  **Approved on the condition that** the grading process be written into the syllabus. There was discussion about grading on a curve by the committee. Larry noted that the syllabus is very important and is used in a grade appeal.

• 27-GNP Master of Arts in Political Science and related courses [28-GNC, 29-GNC, 20-GNC] (Ken, Jen, Regine)
  The committee consensus was that the program needs more work at the department. **Not approved.** Concerns of the committee include:
  o Difficulty of passing new programs at statewide at this time.
  o Workforce development considerations.
  o Almost all the required courses for the degree are stacked.
  o Potential impact on NORS student numbers.
  o Issue of necessary internal allocation of resources (NORS support is conditioned on keeping all existing TA positions, but new PS degree will require three new TA positions) [especially considering the fact that CLA is currently searching for a new Dean].
  o Issues with using internship option in lieu of a thesis requirement.
  o Discrepancies related to number of credits required (30-33 for Concentration in Environmental Politics and Policy, 33-36 for Concentration in Arctic Policy).

  Larry suggested that Political Science might want to consider converting this new degree into a professional degree.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 AM.

(remainder of agenda items will be put on the agenda of the 3-28-11 GAAC meeting.)