Graduate Committee Minutes

9-9-15

Treise welcomed all Graduate Committee members to the first meeting of the 2015-2016 academic year.

Public Interest Communication Distance Proposal

First order of business was a presentation by Ann Christiano regarding development of a new distance program in Public Interest Communication. The program would be off-book and would be a specialization within the existing MAMC distance program.

Ferguson asked about an overlap between students in the strategic communication and public interest communication. Christiano believes the programs are complimentary but different and will not attract the same students.

It is expected that students in PIC will attend part-time—six credits or less per semester—because they hold full-time jobs while pursuing the degree.

Students in existing distance programs could possibly take electives from PIC.

Molleda asked for clarification between the new distance Master’s program and this new specialization in the existing MAMC distance program. He suggested some statements need to be revised and he will meet with Christiano to review the proposal.

Christiano suggested that the biggest difference between PIC and PR is that PR is more organization driven and PIC is more about individuals.

Ferguson asked how they are developing a body of knowledge and Christiano said “frank 2016” is an example.

Ostroff expressed some concerns regarding marketing. It was suggested in the proposal that the program is unique, but Ostroff pointed out that we should sell it on its own level, not as if it’s completely unique. He would like some evidence of enrollments.

The proposal will be revisited after Molleda and Christiano meet.

Discussion of certificate admissions

Treise asked the committee if the Fundraising certificate program, and all distance programs, should have criteria in addition to the GPA, on which to base admission decisions. She cited a case from this semester when an applicant had a 2.3 GPA from the 1970s and currently works at the UF Foundation. The student petitioned to be admitted with the low GPA.

Walsh-Childers said it would make sense to have more than one criterion, not just GPA.

Spiker said we should not hold people to 30-year-old GPAs. He would like to revisit the criteria and not have admission based only on the GPA. He suggested having the Graduate Committee determine those students who have “redeeming qualities” and could possibly succeed in the program now.

Treise said she would want to be able to tell the certificate students who are admitted with a low GPA that there is no chance they would get into the Master’s program with the low GPA.

The number of exceptions should be limited and the committee should revisit after the students are admitted to see how they’ve done.

Molleda asked how many petitions have been sent to the Graduate School over the past five years asking for exceptions to the admissions criteria. Treise will ask Sarah Lee to furnish those numbers for the next meeting.

International Student award nominees

Treise distributed a list of all students eligible for the International Student award. Due to time constraints she asked committee members to email her their recommendations. We can give five awards.

Next meeting is Wednesday, 9-16-15 at 11:45 a.m. in room 2008.

ATTENDING: Treise, Ostroff, Babanikos, Kelleher, Goodman, Spiker, Walsh-Childers, Molleda, Ferguson, Selepak and Hedge.