February 8, 2006
Approved: February 22, 2006

 Present: Thomas Blume, Claire Rammel, Dave Downing, Chris Kobus, Darlene Schott-Baer, Joseph Shively, Kris Thompson

Absent: Lisa Hawley, Mildred Merz, Meir Shillor, Lorenzo Smith, Mohinder Parkash
Guest: Cathy Cheal, Dale Nesbary, Donna Free
Staff: Julie Delaney, Lynette Folken, Eilene Lohmeier

 I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 pm by David Downing, Chair.

II. Approval of Minutes

Distribution and approval of minutes is being managed through email.

III. Report from Chair and Information Items

Mr. Downing thanked Ms. Schott-Baer for chairing the January 25th meeting.

Learning Management Systems (WebCT) bought out by Blackboard

Presentation by Cathy Cheal - Associate VP for e-learning and instructional support

Ms. Cheal reported Blackboard and WebCT have finalized a merger of the two companies. The new expanded Blackboard Company is planning to create a common architecture for both products. Effective June 07, OU will no longer be able to employ the current version of Web CT without purchasing a costly upgrade. Given the uncertainty of the future product and the upgrade costs, OU is looking at other e-learning options.

Ms. Cheal has been testing an alternative e-learning system called Moodle. Moodle is an open source software product, with no licensing costs, which provides: 1) university control (ability to alter codes) and 2) flexibility to provide user access to guests at off campus locations. Ms. Cheal noted Moodle does not force expensive client updates, thus OU could establish a more stable e-learning environment for their users. The software program is currently being tested by a small group of OU faculty currently using WebCT for credit delivery. Should Moodle be selected by OU, faculty instruction and training will be required. Ms. Cheal indicated OU does not currently have a programmer that is familiar with PHP language. Therefore, her office would need to create a position for a PHP programmer.

Ms. Cheal has been seeking input from various committees and faculty on the Moodle software. She reported Academic Computing Committee is expected to forward a recommendation to the Senate in March. A testing version of Moodle is available through Cathy Cheal at cheal@oakland.edu.

Supply Chain Management Concentration

The School of Business Administration has responded to an increasing request from their MBA students and created a concentration in Supply Chain Management. Students must complete three electives (9 credits) from the list of approved courses under the Supply Chain Management Concentration. POM 642, Supply Chain Management, will be required for all students who have not completed POM 642 or approved graduate course equivalent.

The Supply Chain Management Concentration appeared on Graduate Council agenda under "information items" at the final spring meeting. However, the action was not recorded in the final minutes. Ms. Rammel asked Graduate Council to formally recognize the Supply Chain Management Concentration at this meeting.

NRC Assessment Project

Ms. Rammel announced the National Research Council has launched its latest project to assess U.S. research doctorate programs. The new study is designed to help universities improve the quality of research doctorate programs through benchmarking; provide potential students and the public with accessible, readily available information on doctoral programs nationwide; and enhance the nation's overall research capacity. Ms. Rammel directed Graduate Council to the Graduate Study website for further details on the project.

Dissertation,Thesis or Project Grading

Minimum PhD requirements were briefly discussed. The committee was asked to review and note suggestions, changes and concerns. A recommendation will be formulated for the next meeting by Mr. Shively and Ms. Schott-Baer.

IV. Old Business

Joint MBA/JD program – Donna Free

Joint MPA/JD program – Dale Nesbary

Ms. Rammel reported that the MBA/JD and MPA/JD proposals were compared and modified to create greater consistency between the two documents. Mr. Nesbary reported that the recommended minimum 3.0 GPA was adopted by his department and reflected in the MPA/JD proposal. Ms. Rammel asked why the MPA program required a student to accumulate 27 credits toward the MPA degree before enrolling in the TMCL program and the MBA had no credit restriction. After lengthy discussion, Mr. Nesbary thought the 27 credit-hour requirement may be too restrictive and would seek department input.

The definition of degree completion was discussed. It was agreed that students enrolled in the partnership program must adhere to the university 6 year time limit on OU credits used to fulfill degree requirements.

Mr. Shively asked that the budget be amended to reflect the potential loss of revenue when OU students are enrolled at Cooley Law School. Mr. Nesbary agreed to make that adjustment.

Grad Council requested all references made to a "joint MPA/JD degree program" be removed and "MPA/JD concurrent enrollment program" be substituted. Ms. Rammel will submit a copy of the "Declaration of Intent" document to General Counsel for final review.

MOTION was made, seconded and passed to APPROVE an agreement between Thomas M. Cooley Law School and Oakland University that allows OU students, matriculated in the TMCLS program, to transfer up to 6 semester hours of credit earned at TMCLS, with a course grade of 2.0 or higher, to fulfill the OU MPA or MBA degree requirements.

MA in History program review

Mr. Downing informed members he had reviewed the Graduate Council's report, prepared by Mr. Blume and Ms. Merz, on the assessment of the MA in History external reviewer's report. Clearly the report prepared by Council supports the concerns expressed by the outside evaluator.

Graduate Council focused on the history curriculum as a major area of concern. In particular, Council strongly opposed cross-listing the majority of graduate history courses as 300/500 "slash" course. The proposed recommendation of Graduate Council involves the following:

1. Increase the number of stand-alone graduate courses to satisfy the 50% rule (this would require one additional stand-alone graduate course);

2. Eliminate the 300-level course components in the slash courses;

3. Determine which 300-level courses need to be changed to 400-level courses. The Graduate Council recommends that the History Department develop focus areas that will allow graduates with a BA in history to continue at OU for graduate study and gain additional expertise and depth in a specialty area of history. These focus areas can concentrate on faculty expertise or interest; and

4. For all slash courses, create two course syllabi, each clearly differentiating learning outcome criteria for 400- and 500- level credit.

Mr. Downing acknowledged the position Graduate Council had taken on cross-listing courses and will represent those concerns in his final report to the Provost.

V. New Business

Deferred to February 22nd meeting

VI. Adjournment