Minutes of CGSR Meeting #2 on 9/12/2019

The Committee on Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) held its 2nd meeting of AY '19/'20 on September 12, 2019 (Thursday) in the 50 Prescott Street (2nd floor, BETC Conference Room).

Present: G. Fischer (ME; Chair), K. Gandomi (RBE, GS), D. Korkin (CS), M. Rolle (BME), H. Walker (CEE), T. Camesano (Dean of Graduate Studies)

Guests: S. Miles (Registrar), K. McAdams (Director, Academic Programs)

Absent: S. Johnson (FSB), M. Demetriou (ME), B. Vernescu (Vice Provost for Research), M. McGrade (Dean of Graduate Enrollment Services)

Professor Fischer called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM

1. The committee welcomed a new Graduate Student representative, Katie Gandomi (PhD student, RBE).

2. Learning Outcomes for Graduate Programs. The committee discussed development of learning outcomes for graduate degrees to align with undergraduate programs in anticipation of upcoming accreditation. Discussion included:
   a. Whether these outcomes should be universally applied to all graduate programs and degrees, or whether they should be degree (i.e., Master's v. PhD) and program specific.
   b. Whether there should be metrics assigned to each outcome, and how to track that outcomes are met.
   c. Data collection needs associated with tracking metrics associated with graduate learning outcomes. What should we track and why? Are there relevant institutional data that could be used for this? Which office(s) would collect, keep and report this data?
   d. Should every student meet these learning outcomes? How to measure whether individual students meet every outcome (similar to ABET for engineering programs). It may be possible to link specific courses to learning outcomes in Workday Student to facilitate tracking that outcomes are met.
   e. Benchmarking graduate program learning outcomes with those of other peer institutions.

3. Prof. Fischer presented a list of business items for CGSR communicated by ~~COG~~ Secretary of the Faculty, Prof. Dominko.
   a. COG inquired about an annual report from the Research Development Council (RDC) which was reconvened last year. We will ask Bogdan to give an update on last year's accomplishments and this year's goals. Prof. Rolle served on RDC last year, and provided examples of RDC meetings and activities last year (reviewed institutional data on research awards and expenditures, reviewed and refined plans for the TRIAD seed grant program, served as peer reviewers for internal limited submission proposals, and external seed grant program with UMass-Lowell, etc.).
   b. Revisit a FAP proposal for changing indirect cost return allocations. Specific issues include IDC return to programs (e.g., Robotics, Bioinformatics and Computational Biology) and investment in research centers (e.g., PracticePoint) and equipment.

c. Policy on graduate students teaching courses. Giving graduate students training and opportunities for teaching is an important part of their professional development, especially if preparing for faculty careers. The Certificate in College Teaching will no longer be offered through the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, but WPI is working on a replacement program to offer to WPI graduate students interested in developing teaching skills.

4. Standardization of ETD procedures and thesis/dissertation templates (Latex and Word templates), and additional meta data – what other fields should we have to make ETDs searchable. Could link meta data to and align with learning outcomes metrics. Invite Anna Gold (University Librarian) to a future meeting.

5. Prof. Johnson will continue to serve as the CGSR representative to the online steering committee (OSCAR). Need to collect graduate student feedback on online course evaluations to address low response rates.

6. Prof. Fischer presented a motion from RBE to add a certificate program to the graduate catalog. The certificate will provide a framework for customizable certificates in Robotics driven by student demand and industry needs (e.g., autonomous vehicles). The motion was reviewed and approved.

7. The RBE Certificate discussion raised the need to review university-wide procedures and policies for certificates, to add back information about certificates that was removed from the Graduate Catalog, and standardize procedures, criteria and catalog content for proposing new certificates, and for admissions to certificate programs.

8. Prof. Billiar will bring a motion to CGSR for a new UMMS-WPI joint program in computational biology. Prof. Korkin is preparing the motion. Targeting December WPI faculty meeting for a vote, pending outcomes of CGSR discussions.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Rolle
Secretary (Fall 2019)