

## **Graduate Faculty Council Meeting**

21 December 2015

1:00-3:00 PM over IVN

### **Meeting Summary**

Participants: E. Houde (UMCES VP for Education and GFC Chair), D. Secor (Faculty Senate Chair), J. Schijf (CBL), C. Mitchelmore (CBL), B. Hilderbrand (AL), L. Ross (Director of Human Resources), R. Cho (Director of Facilities Administration), S. Siemek (student, AL), V. Cunningham (student, AL), T. Fisher (HPL), C. Palinkas (HPL), A. Priester (Vice-Chair Graduate Student Council, and HPL), R. Jagus (IMET), D. Marsan (student, IMET), Y. Zhan (student, IMET), A. Griffin (Assistant to the VP for Education)

### **GFC Membership**

Each UMCES Lab is represented by two faculty members. One member is the Chair of the Lab Unit's Graduate Education Committee. The second member is elected at her/his Lab Unit and serves for three years. Two graduate students, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Graduate Student Council, are full members of the GFC.

- Amy Griffin will notify the GFC of pending appointment terminations and need for new members to be appointed/elected by 1 July 2016.

### **Faculty Convocation and Commencement, and next Graduate Faculty Council meeting**

9-10 May 2015: UMCES has tentatively scheduled the Faculty Convocation and Commencement.

- The next GFC meeting is tentatively scheduled for the morning of 9 May 2015; mark your calendars.

### **UMCES Accreditation**

UMCES faculty, staff, and students have received the Self-Study that was completed in September 2015 for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and it will be placed on the UMCES public website. The outcome of the Self-Study and the Evaluation Team visit on and review on 1-4 November 2015 was favorable and accreditation is forthcoming.

Nevertheless, the Commission made many recommendations that UMCES must address. The GFC will have a significant role in addressing these recommendations, especially those on the education standards. After receiving the final version of the Commission's Evaluation Team Report, UMCES will respond to the Commission; the GFC will have opportunity to offer comments or responses to the final version of the Evaluation Team Report.

The Middle States' Standards 7, 11, 10, 13, and 14 make specific recommendations relating to activities and responsibilities of the GFC. Dr. Houde requests the GFC to review the Evaluation Team Report and the UMCES Self Study and to be prepared to participate in addressing recommendations. Recommendations from the Commission must be addressed over the next 2-4 years as UMCES prepares for future accreditation reviews.

- The Self-Study Report that was completed in September 2015 for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education to be placed on the UMCES public website.
- GFC members review the Evaluation Team Report and the Self-study, and be prepared to address the recommendations.

*Student Consumer Information:* Amy Griffin is developing and compiling consumer information pages on the UMCES website to comply with Federal Department of Education standards, a requirement of accredited institutions. The Department of Education requires a broad spectrum of information be available to potential and current students, and other interested parties. This document, including our “UMCES Education at a Glance” pages, can be used to promote graduate education in UMCES.

Among the recommendations made by the Middle States Commission Evaluation Team are several that will involve work by committees of the Graduate Faculty Council. The broad areas of this work, to be addressed in the next year, are likely to include:

- Institutional Assessment Planning,
- Improving Student and Institutional Services,
- Instituting and Managing Data Collection and Utilization,
- Addressing the Need for Procedures to Define Learning Outcomes and to Conduct Educational Assessment in UMCES, MEES, and at the Individual Course Levels.

### **Academic Data**

A Data Committee of the Graduate Faculty Council, chaired by Dr. Palinkas, produced a report on academic data needs and data flow to support graduate education in UMCES (April 2015). The report can serve as reference and will be placed on the GFC/my umces website. The UMCES Self-Study and the Evaluation Team Report identified areas of data needs and management, providing UMCES with a different perspective from which to move forward on this need.

- Amy Griffin to place the GFC Data Committee report on the my umces section of the UMCES website.
- Dr. Houde and Dr. Palinkas to meet early in the New Year to discuss future work of the Data Committee.

### **The New MEES Curriculum**

The revised MEES curriculum has cleared all hurdles and will be instituted in September 2016. Faculty members from UMCES who will teach core courses in the new foundation areas will be identified by Lab Directors. Many of the present MEES courses will continue to be taught. A new course numbering system will be proposed to align courses with foundation areas.

This year, applicants to MEES are applying under the present MEES curriculum and its expectations, but they will matriculate as the new system is implemented. All current students are grandfathered into the old MEES system and curriculum. The GFC questioned how new students will enter in fall 2016. Will they have a choice of the “old MEES” or matriculate into the

new curriculum? The GFC recommends that new students have this choice. A new MEES Program Committee will be instituted. Dr. Jagus argued for ensuring that the Committee be representative of level of participation by faculty and students in the five MEES institutions.

- Dr. Houde to communicate with Dr. Tom Miller and the MEES Curriculum Committee on the issue of new (2016) students will have the choice of the old vs. new curriculum.
- Dr. Jagus to communicate with Dr. Miller regarding protocols for appointment of faculty members to the MEES Program Committee.

### **UMCES Presidential Fellowships**

The Presidential Fellowships, administered by the Vice President for Education and the GFC, were discussed. The deadline for applications for the fellowships to be awarded in 2016-17 was 15 December 2015. A timeline for actions and GFC involvement was distributed to the GFC. Applications will be uploaded to MOODLE for evaluation by the GFC's Presidential Fellowships Committee. The Committee consists of Drs. Jagus (Chair), Palinkas, Hilderbrand, and Schijf. Amy Griffin will provide the Committee with directions on how to access the applications on MOODLE. The GFC recommended that a link to the Presidential Fellowships be placed on the MEES website. Amy Griffin will insure that this is done before next year's application process begins in September 2016. The Presidential Fellowship is included in UMCES budget plans for the foreseeable future.

- Amy Griffin will provide the Fellowship Committee with directions on how to access the applications on MOODLE.
- The UMCES Office of the Vice President for Education will request that a link to the Presidential Fellowships be placed on the MEES website next year.

### **Prospective Student Travel Funds**

These funds are available to faculty members who wish to bring prospective graduate students to visit UMCES. Dr. Houde had distributed directions and information on these funds to the faculty in September 2015. To receive travel funds, a student must have applied to the MEES or GPILS Program and must be personally invited by an UMCES faculty member who may supervise the student if she/he comes to UMCES.

### **Activities of the VP for Education Office**

A document listing activities and the role of the Office of the VP for Education in UMCES was drafted by Dr. Houde and was discussed at the most recent Executive Council meeting. The role of the Office could expand, particularly in light of recommendations made by the recent MSCHE Evaluation Team and the UMCES desire to develop and administer professional certificate programs. Dr. Secor noted that the UMCES Faculty Senate will consider the role and activities of the Office of the VP for Education, and will weigh-in at an appropriate time. The GFC also will have opportunity to express its wishes.

### **Student Issues**

This meeting of the GFC and its Graduate Student Council representatives was the annual meeting of students with the UMCES administration that is mandated in UMCES policies.

*Meet and Confer.* Adjunct faculty and graduate student assistants must decide annually if they wish to inquire about or contact labor representation. This is USM policy as well as UMCES policy. The GSC will conduct a vote or inquiry on this question by 10 January 2016. Lisa Ross (UMCES Human Resources) will provide information on the total number of Graduate Student Assistants. Jenna Luek (Chair) and Anna Priester (Vice-Chair) will conduct the inquiry or vote of graduate student assistants to determine interest in labor representation. Dr. Houde referred students to the UMCES Grad Student Assistant policy, which provides details.

- Jenna Luek and Anna Priester will conduct the vote of graduate student assistants to determine interest in labor representation. The answer will be provided to Dr. Houde by 10 January 2016.
- Lisa Ross will provide information on the total number of Graduate Student Assistants for CY2015.

*Graduate Student Handbook.* The graduate student handbook, last revised in 2013, needs to be updated. Amy Griffin, Anna Priester, and Jenna Luek will meet early in the New Year to discuss and develop a plan for updates. An April-May completion date was proposed.

- Amy, Anna, and Jenna will meet early in the New Year to review and edit the Graduate Student Handbook, to be completed by April-May 2016.

*New Student Orientation.* The GSC (with concurrence from the GFC) recommends that Student Orientation be improved and standardized among the four Labs. Anna Priester noted that there is no central information source to support new-student orientation. She proposed that all incoming students participate in an orientation meeting. Dr. Secor suggested that the MEES Colloquium might be a good venue and time to do this. Dr. Houde will appoint a committee of the GFC (two GFC faculty members and two students) to explore and propose a standard student orientation protocol. Any proposed protocol must be developed in communication with the Laboratory Directors and UMCES Administration for their approval and recommendations.

- Dr. Houde will appoint a GFC committee (two students and two faculty members) to explore and propose a standard student orientation protocol.

*New MEES Curriculum:* Dr. Houde invited students to communicate with him or the GFC regarding the new MEES curriculum. Anna Priester noted that it is the decisions yet to be made about which students have the most questions. For example, present students want to know how the new program may affect their proposed and ongoing academic coursework; will some courses now offered not be offered as faculty shift their teaching to the new curriculum?

*Graduate Student Health and Counseling Services.* Jenna Luek produced a document that was distributed at the GFC meeting on mental health services and questions. Lisa Ross noted the INOVA Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides 24-hr access for various needs, including mental health. The EAP serves faculty, staff, students, and immediate family members. Lisa has informed UMCES of the EAP but not everyone in UMCES is aware of it.

The students requested better dissemination of local and institutional information on health care services. Additionally, new students would benefit greatly from improved communication on this

need. Anna Priester also noted a need for preventative mental health services and suggested information on it could be delivered at a student orientation.

*USM Student Council.* An UMCES student, Jenna Luek, has been appointed to this system-wide student body. Dr. Secor confirmed that Jenna was appointed at the last Faculty Senate meeting. Dr. Houde noted that UMCES also is represented by a student, Emily Liljestrand, on the Student Advisory Council to the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

*GSC Elections.* Dr. Houde reminded the GSC representatives that the GSC holds an annual election of its members and its chair and co-chair. The election generally is conducted in January.

- GSC to hold its annual elections in January.