

Graduate Faculty Council Meeting

Meeting at Horn Point Laboratory

1 May 2014

10:00-12:00

Meeting Summary

The first meeting in 2014 of the Graduate Faculty Council was held in conjunction with the UMCES Faculty Convocation.

Participants: Ed Houde (UMCES Vice President for Education and Chair of Graduate Faculty Council, CBL), Feng Chen (IMET), Mike Wilberg (CBL), Johan Schijf (CBL), Bob Gardner (AL), Andrew Elmore (AL), Tom Fisher (HPL), Ming Li (HPL), and Emily Flowers (Graduate Student Council Chair, IMET)

GFC Membership

Each UMCES Lab is represented by two faculty members. One faculty member is the Chair of the Lab Unit's Graduate Education Committee. The second faculty 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. There will be changes in membership of the GFC in FY15. Bob Gardner (AL) will step down and Bob Hilderbrand (AL) will replace him. The Chairs of the HPL and CBL Graduate Education Committees (Ming Li and Johan Schijf) expect to step down from their Chair positions, probably effective early in FY15. Their replacements will automatically become members of the GFC.

Internal Management and Evaluation of UMCES Education, Information, Statistics, and Data

The GFC continued its discussion of data and information to be collected and held by the UMCES Office of VP Education. It was agreed data on students and faculty involvement in education (teaching and mentoring) should be obtained and held by the UMCES Office of Education. In addition, data on enrollment, retention, and graduation

of graduate students advised by UMCES faculty should also be managed by the Office of Education.

Houde will begin a planning process to identify kinds of data to be managed. He will be assisted by members of the Graduate Faculty Council. An existing GFC Committee, appointed to this task in 2013 (Elmore, Jagus, Ming and Schijf) will work with Houde. A specific charge to this committee is needed and will be developed and provided by Houde.

To assist the data gathering and analysis work of the VP Education, a Faculty Activities Report (FAR), similar to the UMCP annual faculty assessment may be useful and important. The FAR would include information on faculty teaching, mentoring, service, and productivity. These standardized forms, to be completed online, could be used in annual merit evaluations. They would provide a convenient source of information for statistical analysis, for example in accreditation requirements, including self-study and annual reporting to accreditation bodies.

UMCES Environmental Science Fellowships

Protocols and procedures used to describe the fellowships and develop application and evaluation procedures in 2014 were discussed. No changes were recommended. The GFC did recognize the need for effective advertising of the availability of the fellowships, beginning in September 2014.

There was agreement that early offers must be made to students selected for these fellowships. Offers should be made in early January to insure that we are competitive with peer institutions in recruiting the very best students. In the discussion, it was noted that many academic institutions with graduate programs are bound by agreement with the Council of Graduate Schools. Under this agreement, fellowship acceptance deadlines cannot be set earlier than 15 April. However in this regard, it was noted that UMCES is not a member of the CGS and so may not be bound by its rules.

The GFC discussed the desirability of naming the Fellowships. There was broad support for "Presidential Fellowships" to emphasize the prestige and thus help to attract outstanding applicants. The Executive Council and Faculty Senate should weigh in on a proposed name and, with input of others in UMCES; the GFC should make a decision before 1 September 2014.

Marketing and Branding

Houde informed the GFC about the new marketing and branding initiative. The Hatcher Group is contracted by UMCES to conduct a marketing and branding activity. A substantial part of the broad activity is directed at graduate education with an aim to increase our visibility and assist in student recruiting. Market surveys, stakeholder surveys, and focus group interviews will be conducted in May to August 2014. Completed analysis and reports are anticipated by 1 September 2014.

Accreditation Activities

The status of the accreditation process and activities planned for the next year were discussed. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education requires a Self-Study Design and Self-Study that UMCES will undertake in 2014-2015. It is anticipated that members of the GFC will have important roles in these activities, including appointments to, and participation in, a Steering Committee and in three or more Working Groups. Houde will provide MSCHE reference materials and information to the GFC that describe Self-Study.