

## Graduate Dean's Advisory Council

Meeting Notes

December 16, 2009

I. In attendance: Rose, Andrzejewski, Pfohl, Worner, Miller, Dahms-Walker, Bachrach, Fuller, O'Brien, Miltenoff (for M.A. Thompson), Hughes, Green berg, Bender, Zhang, Ahmed, Nunes, Guentzel

II. President Potter

a. Initial Remarks

Graduate education will continue to grow as a percentage of the university's enrollment. The development of the Twin Cities Graduate Center opens an additional market to SCSU for graduate education and we anticipate continued growth.

The IFO/MnSCU college bargaining agreement in some ways has a one size fits all agreement. It is in need of change so that we can provide good employment for faculty teaching in remedial education at one end of the spectrum. We also need a work agreement that recognizes variations in work load and expectations graduate faculty.

There are bad ways and good ways to build graduate education. Creating or maintaining a graduate program to only recruit faculty is a bad reason. Programs should be developed with an eye to the needs of the region, decisions based on the needs of students, employers, and the region. We will need to keep an eye on the marketplace as we develop or close programs. Another option is to look at collaborative programs within MnScu. We may be able to work together to offer a more robust program than we could as individual institutions.

There are a number of initiatives on campus to improve our work. One of these is the LEAN Management process that the Graduate School has engaged in. We need to be more efficient. In these economic times we are not going to be able to grow staff and so we will have to find ways to work smarter and improve efficiencies.

We had a budget problem last year and we have on this year as of result of the use of Graduate assistant tuition waivers. We also have a problem with the way we use graduate assistants to do university work. We need to consider the role of graduate assistantships in a student's education.

b. Questions asked

How do you anticipate addressing the Graduate Assistant issue? Will there be uniform GA job descriptions?

With regard to program appraisal, many of our small programs are going through this process. How will success be determined?

*The criteria have been identified and shared widely.*

*Strategic planning committee is developing rubrics for those criteria*

*They are on the website, but some important aspects are mission, academic strength of the program, the cost to income ratio, relationship to the College strategic direction.*

*Decisions will be situational, the process will be transparent.*

*We need to cut 20% from our budget in the next 3 years so it is going to require some tough decisions. We cannot do this by cutting at the margins.*

Graduate assistants are key for recruitment for graduate programs?

*We are just beginning the conversation and so I don't have an answer. However, we are exceeding our budget by about 1 million dollars so we need to bring this under control.*

How about the non-academic GA's? Is this a place for cost savings?

*Need to take a look at these positions and determine the value to the institution. As noted, we are early in the conversation so all measures are on the tables as strategies to cut costs.*

Any thought to having the community colleges being the entry point and having the universities focus on upper division and graduate education?

*The possibility is being discussed –the NEF enrollment is flat and the transfer enrollment is up. This is a departure from the past so can't draw too many conclusions. A certain shift in the enrollment patterns would be good for SCSU because we have capacity at the upper levels and an enrollment crunch at the first and second year levels. It would be nice if we could move remedial education to the community colleges so we are bringing in students who are prepared for college. There is a need for some rebalancing of our enrollments.*

Growth in graduate education – How do we expand our capacity in light of faculty staffing needs?

*Our budgeting process is not very well aligned in terms of revenue and allocation. The challenge with aligning revenue with program growth is that we will then need to take resources away somewhere else.*

Big picture of education in Minnesota?

*We are in a serious budget situation. Our enrollments have continued to grow even while our funding from the state has declined. There is no political will to decrease enrollment at the colleges and universities or to close or combine institutions. Successful institutions are propping up several underperforming colleges.*

*There are 4 MnSCU universities involved in the Bush Initiative to Transform Teacher Education, SCSU, Mankato, Moorhead and Winona. We have more in common with these four institutions than the institutions that are not involved but there are still very significant differences between the four institutions,*

What is SCSU's strength?

*To identify SCSU's strengths, we need to focus on the culture of the region. If as an institution we can focus on meeting our region's needs, we will develop a distinctive identity. Current strengths and areas for focus in the strategic plan include globalization, communications, sustainability in practice, and classroom Learning in action. We want to develop a rigorous and relevant curriculum that students can put into practice and be prepared for the workplace.*

What mix of education is needed?

*Programs in education will always be part of our base. We have added business and that is now a strength for SCSU. Applied science and engineering particularly in the biosciences and sustainability areas, and the applied disciplines such as Communication Sciences and Disorders, Mass Communications will also play a role.*

*The institution will remain a regional comprehensive institution. We will not be a first-class research institution. We will retain our focus on applied research. We are about making a difference. We will never be unique among our peers, but we can be the best.*

*Our core purpose is education for work and a focus on liberal learning for an engaged citizenry.*

*The growing role of graduate education is important for our future. We must remain intentional and focused.*

- III. Follow-up comments from the Dean and attendees  
The Graduate Dean addressed the issue of the tuition waiver deficit. He indicated the deficit has existed since the tuition waiver was identified as a budget line item several years ago. Only this year has it been labeled as a significant problem and a major contributor to the university budget woes. He is working with the central administration on this issue.
- IV. Conclusion
  - a. We will begin meeting again January 20, 2010.
  - b. International Orientation for Graduate Students is Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-12:30 in ECC 111 and ECC 103.