Minutes/Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Executive Committee Meeting

June 11, 2010

Members present: Lisa Terre, Deep Medhi, John Laity, Wai-Yim Ching, Jeff Gorski, Rafia Rasu, Virginia Blanton, Charles Wurrey, Omiunota Ukpokodu, Dean Ronald MacQuarrie (Chair), Connie Mahone, Quincy Bennett (administrative support)

Excused Absences: Joe Singer, Joe Parisi, Deborah Smith, Alex Holsinger

I. Meeting called to order with minutes of the May 14, 2010 meeting approved.

II. Announcements

Dr. Gorski announced that the NIH T32 training grant had been submitted and that it was a true representation of interdisciplinarity.

III. Review Process for Plans of Study

Discussion regarding a letter and comments received after a request for revisions to a plan of study were made by sub-committee faculty reviewers. There was agreement amongst the committee that such requests were not attempts to assail Chairs or committees, but that of the committee accepting responsibility for evaluating and reaffirming student success. The review process is a learning experience likened to the external review process students undergo when submitting an article for publication. After receiving feedback from committee members, Dean MacQuarrie will prepare a letter of response to the concerned Chair.

After further discussion, copies of the committee bylaws were distributed by Dean MacQuarrie. Section 3c. of the bylaws as outlined below, specifically defines the responsibilities of the committee with regard to the review and approval process:

“The committee is charged to review and approve proposed programs of study for each Interdisciplinary Ph.D. student to ensure that each program meets the minimum requirements of the UMKC Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program. In these matters, the committee shall act on behalf of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. This process shall be administered by five designated subcommittees of the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Executive Committee.”

Revisions to the program of study were suggested by the committee in order to clarify information. A copy of the current plan of study along with a draft containing suggested revisions to the research proposal section will be sent out before the next meeting for review and additional feedback.

IV. Program Evaluation

Dean MacQuarrie advised that Dr. Deborah Smith had spoken with Dr. Larry Bunce, Director of Institutional Assessment and Research, who will be conducting the faculty and student focus groups. In an effort to gather data for the self-study, members were asked to help generate questions for the student focus group. A list of questions was prepared and will be sent to members for review and feedback.
V. Election Results
The following elections results were announced with a unanimous vote for confirmation:

Social/Behavioral Sciences – William Black (Economics)
Humanities and Arts – Virginia Blanton (English)
Biological and Chemical Sciences - Jeff Gorski (Oral Biology)

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.