Minutes/Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Executive Committee Meeting
October 12, 2012

Members Present: Virginia Blanton, Dianne Smith, John Laity, Joe Singer, JeJung Lee, Wai-Yim Ching, Joe Parisi, Dean Denis Medeiros (Chair), Sherenna Clinton, Colleen Kelly (administrative support)

Excused Absences: Harry Bhat, Jeff Gorski, Jim Sturgeon, William Black, Rita Barger, Jared Carr, Joan Dean, Deep Medhi

Guests: Dr. Nathan Lindsey, Dr. Ted Knous

I. Meeting called to order at 2:02pm, with minutes of the May 23, 2012 & September 14, 2012 meetings approved.

II. Announcements

III. Discussion about the Responsible Conduct of Research course offerings listed under the School of Graduate Studies. The School of Graduate Studies offers 6 one-hour courses on this topic, 4 of which are taught by Dr. Julie Banderas in SOM. Julie is unable to continue to teach 4 of these courses due to other obligations. Ted Knous from the Office of Research Services has been giving Julie a stipend to teach some of these courses. The question posed is whether we should continue to offer these courses or develop an alternative three credit hour course to replace them? Discussion: students are not meeting requirement of conduct through these courses as the enrollment has been consistently small.

A motion was made: Move that we dispense offering courses and use other forms of instructions to have PhD students meet these competencies including taking the CITI courses offered on line; , and other courses currently taught by the disciplines that contain this material. It was further moved that each primary discipline send to the SGS how the discipline meets this requirement. The document sent in will be posted in the primary discipline’s website. If there is an issue with the substance of the document, the iPhD Executive Committee retains the right to oversee the process, especially in cases where this requirement appears lacking or is unclear.

The Motion Passed

IV. Nathan Lindsey reported on the assessment of the iPhD program and went over the findings of the assessment outcomes. He noted that students scored lower
in 3 areas: 1) writing; 2) interdisciplinary research; and 3) knowledge of the co-discipline. A discussion followed as to whether there were any ways to address the lower scores in these 3 areas?

Dean Medeiros suggested that there were other parts of the doctoral program where these items could be measured earlier on, especially for writing and the interdisciplinarity of the research to be conducted for the dissertation. It was suggested that the Plan of Study preliminary proposal have the same rubric as in the final exam for the iPhD committee reviewers to evaluate both writing the interdisciplinarity of the preliminary proposal. It was further requested that a section of the preliminary proposal ask the student to specifically address this issue:

Dean Medeiros & Nathan Lindsay will revise the directions on the POS and the rubric to assess writing & interdisciplinarity and bring it back to the iPhD committee for further discussion

V. Graduate Student Funding
Dean Medeiros announced he plans to discuss with the Graduate Council how to allocate anticipated funds to Graduate students for next year. A document that detailed possibilities was developed by Dean Medeiros, at the request of the Graduate Council as a starting point. This document was discussed at the iPhD executive committee meeting. The Graduate Council suggested that some of the funds be used as leverage with departments. Dr. Laity suggested that if we have a fellowship program we may want to allocate partial awards to those that do not rate as high in the review process. Dean Medeiros will also meet with other Associate Deans in obtaining their insight into how these funds should be allocated for next year.

VI. Other: minutes were approved from the May and Sept. meetings.
VII. Meeting adjourned at 3:45