Interim Dean Wendy Crone called the meeting to order.

The minutes of February 13, 2015 were approved as written.

Information Items:

1. Interim Dean Wendy Crone introduced Marty Gustafson, the Graduate School’s new Assistant Dean in the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment.

2. Interim Dean Wendy Crone asked that GFEC members hold their calendars for a possible June 5, 2015 GFEC meeting.

3. Interim Dean Wendy Crone updated the GFEC on the searches for the Dean of the Graduate School and the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education.

4. Jocelyn Milner, Associate Provost and Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research, presented data that had recently been presented to the University Academic Planning Council. Milner shared two documents titled “Five-Year Average Degrees, by program, for Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Ph.D. programs” and “Fall 2014 Count of Faculty by Department“, and noted that small programs are susceptible to increased public attention given the programs’ cost-to-benefit ratios and the university’s budget. Milner pointed out that there are increasing efforts on campus to consolidate units to more efficiently support smaller programs. Dean Crone asked the GFEC to consider Associate Provost Milner’s reports with an eye to data representative of programs’ degrees earned across all levels (bachelors, master’s, doctoral).

Approvals:

1. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman introduced the request to discontinue the doctoral minor and graduate/professional certificate titled “Humans and the Global Environment” (CHANGE). There are no currently-enrolled students pursuing the doctoral minor, and all current students enrolled in the graduate/professional certificate have already completed all requirements and have had the credential posted to their transcripts.
Motion: Moved and seconded to approve the request to discontinue the doctoral minor and graduate/professional certificate in Humans and the Global Environment (CHANGE). The motion was passed unanimously.

2. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman introduced the request to discontinue the M.A. in Kinesiology. There are not any students enrolled in the M.A., nor have any students earned the degree in decades. The Kinesiology program will continue to enroll and graduate students in the existing M.S. and Ph.D. degrees.

Motion: Moved and seconded to approve the request to discontinue the M.A. in Kinesiology. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman introduced the request to discontinue the named option titled “Energy Systems” in the Mechanical Engineering M.Eng. degree. Mechanical Engineering reported that all three students currently enrolled in the named option will graduate by the end of the Spring 2015 (current) term.

Motion: Moved and seconded to discontinue the named option titled “Energy Systems” in the Mechanical Engineering M.Eng. degree. The motion was passed unanimously.

Program Reviews and Updates:

1. Motion: Moved and seconded to untable the February 13, 2015 Institutional (10-Year) Review of the Environment and Resources M.S./Ph.D. program. The motion was passed unanimously.

Dean Crone told the GFEC of her discussion with Director of the Nelson Institute Paul Robbins expressing the GFEC’s concerns regarding the review of the Environment and Resources M.S./Ph.D. program. Dean Crone noted that Director Robbins expressed appreciation of the GFEC members’ concerns, and committed the Nelson Institute to structuring future program review committees with faculty members who are not affiliated with the program under review. Dean Crone noted that there are a couple in-progress reviews of Nelson Institute graduate/professional certificates; those reviews will continue with their currently-assigned review members.

The GFEC appreciated the new narrative explanation Director Robbins provided regarding Environment and Resources’ enrollment and attrition data. The GFEC discussed tabling the review so that in the time before the review is untabled the Nelson Institute might provide more information on the admissions process used by the program. The GFEC also suggested that before the review is untabled the Graduate School Dean leadership and Lisa Martin begin efforts to conduct focus-group interviews of graduate students who left the Environment and Resources program for another graduate program on campus.

Motion: Moved and seconded to table the Institutional (10-Year) Review of the Environment and Resources M.S./Ph.D. program. The motion was passed unanimously.

2. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman introduced former GFEC member Aparna Dharwadker, who presented the Institutional (10-Year) Review of the Special Education M.S./Ph.D. program. Addressed were the program’s strengths, including excellent national rankings, value of scholarly training, high student satisfaction, and perseverance in ever-evolving requirements in providing Special Education training. The GFEC also discussed the review committee’s recommendations to eliminate the
comprehensive exam for the MS teacher certification track students, to assess need for both a qualifying examination and preliminary examination at the doctoral level, the need for an improved research environment for Ph.D. students, and to consider phasing out the non-teacher certification track in the M.S. degree. The GFEC will look to receive a response to the review committee’s recommendations in time for the December 2015 GFEC meeting.

Motion: Moved and seconded to accept the Institutional (10-Year) Review of the M.S. and Ph.D. in Special Education, with a request the program report back to the GFEC regarding the review committee’s recommendations by April 2015. The motion was passed with 16 for, 1 technical abstention.

3. Dean Crone introduced Food Science’s Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Kirk Parkin, who provided information to the GFEC regarding Food Science graduate students’ funding external to UW-Madison sources, noting that those students recorded as “No/Low/Other Funding” in the Graduate School program profiles are often funded by 3rd parties, like students’ employers or foreign governments. Parkin also passed around information detailing the Department of Food Science social and professional development activities for graduate students. The GFEC members were appreciative of Professor Parkin’s presentation, and asked that the program continue to strengthen diversity efforts beyond Advanced Opportunity Fellowships; Dean Crone encouraged Professor Parkin meet with LaRuth McAfee, Assistant Dean of the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Funding in the Graduate School towards this aim.

4. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman presented the program review follow-up for the Energy Analysis and Policy graduate/professional certificate, in response to the certificate’s GFEC review on April 11, 2014. The GFEC requests that Energy Analysis and Policy faculty leadership attend a GFEC meeting in the Spring 2015 term to discuss and elaborate on the program’s progress on the committee’s recommendations from April 2014.

5. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman presented the program review follow-up for the M.A. and Ph.D. in Communication Arts, in response to the program’s review on March 27, 2014. The GFEC is impressed with and commends the program’s efforts and progress.

6. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman presented the program review follow-up for the Patient Safety graduate/professional certificate, in response to the certificate’s GFEC review on September 12, 2014. The GFEC acknowledged the program’s strategy to set up a faculty committee to address the September 2014 recommendations, and asks program faculty leadership attend the October 2015 GFEC meeting to report on the faculty committee’s conclusions and plans for moving forward.

7. Associate Dean Daniel Kleinman introduced GFEC member Steve Quintana, who presented the Institutional (10-Year) Review of the Educational Policy Studies M.A./Ph.D. program. Addressed were the program’s strengths, including the national reputation of faculty, graduate students and alumni, the interdisciplinary and international foci of the program, and the recent increase in percentage of funded graduate students. The GFEC also discussed the review committee’s recommendations that the program maintain and extend recent increases in funding student percentages – including addressing students’ semester-to-semester funding insecurities, continue to improve recruitment and retention of diverse students, address the disproportionate faculty advising loads, and increase the departmental
cohesiveness across disciplines. The GFEC commends the program on their program strengthening efforts thus far, and encourages the program consider the review committee’s recommendations.

Motion: Moved and seconded to accept the Institutional (10-Year) Review of the M.S. and Ph.D. in Special Education. The motion was passed with 16 for, 1 technical abstention.

8. Due to time constraints, the First Review of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) graduate/professional certificate will be rescheduled for the April 10, 2015 GFEC meeting.