TO: Lynn Fisher  
Chair, Campus Senate

FROM: Elizabeth Kosmetatou & Hua Chen  
On behalf of Graduate Council (Sharron LaFollette, Chair)

DATE: February 26, 2013

RE: M.A. Legal Studies - Program review

The Graduate Council (GC) reviewed and discussed the M.A. program of the Legal Studies department at our January 28th meeting. Deborah Anthony, Chair of LES, and Kathryn Eisenhart, former Chair of LES, attended our February 11 meeting to respond to GC’s questions.

The GC found that the representatives of the LES department presented us with a comprehensive report about changes that were incurred in the last eight years. It is obvious that the department has shown steady improvement in redefining the curriculum and expanding their M.A. program online. A blended and online curriculum allow for optimizing resources for delivery of courses to both the on ground and online students. The program has established a niche outside of pre-law academic programs by focusing on the interface of policy and law. As a result, primarily of online curriculum, student enrollment has steadily improved in the last eight years.

The GC also noted that the faculty members of LES are accomplished in their respective fields and quite productive, with a desire to be involved in service. They should also be particularly commended for their collaborative efforts to improve their program and for their team-work ethic.

Based on our discussions, GC makes the following recommendations:

- The LES department representatives mentioned that their M.A. program is currently being studied by other universities who now model their programs after UIS. We would advise LES to document and elaborate on this important information in the next program review.
- LES has begun the assessment process through the use of the closure course for student assessment. GC recommends that LES work with the Committee for Assessment of Student Learning (CASL) to develop measurable graduate level competencies, assessment tools, and a well-documented strategy for assessment of the curriculum across students. LES should work with CASL to identify assessment strategies to evaluate curricular match with the professional development needs of the students and alumni.
• Turnover in the LES faculty of recent years means a continued effort in faculty development and retention is necessary to build a stable faculty in the department and to better serve the LES M.A. program.
• The LES department should continue to work on maintaining a distinction between their undergraduate and graduate programs. Assessment should be used as part of this evaluation.

cc. Deborah Anthony, Chair of LES
Kathryn Eisenhart, former Chair of LES
Will Miller, Interim Dean CPAA
Cecilia Cornell, Faculty Associate in the Provost's Office