

**MINUTES  
GRADUATE COUNCIL  
June 13, 2007**

**PRESENT:** *Members:* N. Baumgarth, A. Britt, J. Gibeling, J. Gunion, W. Leal, J. Mechling, H. Mueller, M. Macri, M. Farrens, L. Hunter, J. Schank, S. Upadhyaya, R. Wu

*Representatives:* E. Caswell-Chen, C. Hom, C. Simmons, K. Thompson

*Graduate Studies Attendees:* Kathy Garcia, Annik Hirshen, Cathy Jurado,

**GUESTS:** Professor's James Shackelford and Kathryn McCarthy

**ABSENT:** *Members:* M. Golub, T. Kuhl,  
*Representatives:* B. Pande, J. Hodgson

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Announcements from the Chair (Upadhyaya)**

Chair Upadhyaya deferred all comments to the June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting except for the following announcement:

- Graduate Studies commencement will take place on June 14, 2007.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

Minutes of May 17, 2007 were approved

**ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Maternity leave – Professor Britt**

Professor Britt reported that MIT, Stanford University and UC Berkeley have developed mechanisms to support their students who are having babies. UC Davis does not have a maternity policy. In some cases advisers continue to pay their students. The Support and Welfare Committee is developing a proposal for an insurance fund in order to pay graduate students while they are on leave. It would eliminate the need for the major professors to provide the funding. Professor Britt told Council that in the proposal they are not suggesting to pay

students who are not already on payroll as GSRs or TAs, or those who adopt. She said that a questionnaire that was designed to find out how many students give birth while they are students at UC Davis was sent out under the guidance of Hector Cuevas. This survey provided the information on how many students on average would be giving birth in a given year and what the potential cost would be. This program will not be called a “maternity leave” because then the students would lose their student status. Council members felt that it may be relatively easy to administer maternity benefits for GSRs. However, it may be much more difficult to deal with TAs who are expecting. Council wondered exactly how the situation was handled at UC Berkeley and Stanford University. Professor Britt told Council that she would gather more information from these campuses and report back to the Council next academic year.

**PRC Chair Mechling introduced Professor Kathryn McCarthy**, the PRC liaison for the review of Human Development. Professor McCarthy summarized the review and invited questions. Council members felt that it wasn't clear whether or not faculty from departments other than Human and Community Development were a part of this group and wanted to know what brings the group together. Specifically, they wanted to know if the members of the group get together for seminars. Professor McCarthy informed Council that there's a colloquium but the group is not making best use of their annual meeting. There was also some discussion about the students and whether or not they understand the program requirements. PRC Chair Mechling advised Council that there was a delay in preparing the review because they are looking for a new chair. They also plan to have a retreat in order to develop strategic plans for this program. He also told Council that the program has some strength, but they do not seem to be following their bylaws. Another Council member said that her graduate group interacts with the Human Development group and they have a successful relationship. Professor McCarthy informed Council that the group does have a newly revised PhD handbook on the website, but the master's handbook has not been updated. Council members felt that there's participation from other departments, but there's a lack of communication between the students and the faculty. The group doesn't seem to have a plan on what they want to do or become in the future, and Council was concerned whether or not this program can actually survive. Professor McCarthy told Council that the morale among the faculty and the students should improve and they should be given a realistic time frame for making improvements. Council recommended an early review date because there was some concern from people in the group who felt they weren't being heard although; the executive committee felt that everyone was invited to provide feedback. The group is making some progress, but it may not happen within the next three years. The candidates for the chair position said they would like to grow the program and would like some direction. Many of the suggestions in the report are doable. The executive committee is very involved in keeping the program moving. The senior potential candidate might be able to move the program forward. Council recommended that PRC inform the program that

they will have an early review and they will need to follow the guidelines as stated in the report (see the time table). Kathy Garcia informed Council that she will include the time frame in their letter. A vote was taken to accept the report; motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**PRC Chair Mechling introduced Professor James Shackelford**, the PRC liaison for the review of Biophysics. Professor Shackelford summarized the review and invited questions. The report was very positive and better than the last report. The Dean said that the statement about their block grant was incorrect because the program cannot increase their block grant funding. This program was asked to update their web site which has been done with the help of Graduate Studies. The content of the web site vs. its appearance was discussed. The program was praised for getting students out on time. There is a need to increase the core courses offerings. The additional courses, particularly a colloquium series, would help bring the students together and help to strengthen training grant proposals. Professor Leal motioned to accept the report and the motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

#### **Diversity Report - Hector Cuevas**

Mr. Cuevas reported that he was asked to give some preliminary findings from Proposition 209 report released by UCOP and his presentation was an overview of what will be presented next year. He said that they are still gathering more data. The data are broken down by ethnicity or discipline. He also reported that we haven't progressed much in terms of graduate student diversity within the past ten years, and if we look at the groups or by discipline the changes are either nonexistent or very small. He told Council that there was a lot of misunderstanding about Proposition 209, especially regarding what we can and cannot do. Diversity has to be broader than just race and gender and should be better defined. Mr. Cuevas said they are going to continue to gather information, and told Council that what they are seeing is just preliminary data.

The meeting was adjourned.