

# GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday, June 11, 2008

**ATTENDEES:** Beauchamp, Britt, Baumgarth, Kuhl, Gunion, Farnham, Gibeling, Knoesen, Mueller, Goodhue, Schank, Caswell-Chen, Farrens, Bhushan, Timm, Hunter

**NOT IN ATTENDANCE:** Leal, Macri, Golub, Hodgson, Aguilar, Mehta, Hirshen, Albrecht, Cuevas, Jurado, Shi

**GUESTS:** Phillip Martin, Subhash Risbud, and Alan Buckpitt

Meeting began at 1:10 p.m.

## SPECIAL DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

### A. Program Review – Economics Graduate Program

The review of the Economics Graduate Program was presented by the PRC Liaison for the review, Professor Phillip Martin. Professor Martin gave the Council highlights of the recommendations in the PRC Report. Professor Martin remarked that there has been an increase in faculty and graduate students by 50% since the last review, and that the program is now ranked in the top 30 programs nationally (largely due to the expanded faculty).

The Graduate Council concurred with the recommendation to increase the quality of students admitted into the program to match the rising quality of the faculty, and expressed concern that the Chair is responsible for making unilateral admissions decisions. Council also concurred that more admission-related events could take place to increase interest among qualified students, and that the program should invest in domestic versus international recruitment. Council also agreed with the recommendations to: explore ways of providing 3-year support; revise the preliminary exam (which results in a high failure rate); reduce the number of sub-fields that students can select to avoid small course enrollments; speed up time from coursework to exam; and increase the transparency of information given to current students through the Grad Adviser and website.

The Council gave its commendations to Professor Martin for his efforts on behalf of the Graduate Council. The program will be requested to respond to the Council on its progress towards the recommendations by mid-November 2008.

**ACTION: PRC report approved by consent**

### B. Program Review – Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering Graduate Program

The review of the Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering Graduate Program was presented by the PRC Liaison for the review, Professor Subhash Risbud. Professor Risbud gave the Council highlights of the recommendations in the PRC Report.

Council expressed serious concerns about this program's effectiveness. Just 6% of MAE students and faculty rated the program as "excellent," and another 14-18% thought it was "acceptable." Council was greatly concerned that while the program

has grown in the number of students admitted, the number of degrees granted has remained stagnant; this is especially true in the PhD, where the graduation rate is very low versus admittance rate.

Another area of discussion was financial support of graduate students in this program, due in large part to a quarter-by-quarter allocation in which students are not always sure what kind of support they will be receiving; even year-long commitments are not made regularly. Council put forth that according to the UAW contract, programs should be making yearly offers of TA-ships. Council was also concerned that the level of funding for this program was not adequate to ensure the program's health, but that the program was turning away TA appointment funds.

Council felt the program's culture is not geared towards supporting graduate students, and has serious concerns about the future of this program. Council felt the strengths do not outweigh the weaknesses of this program, and Council cannot support a program in which the quality does not measure up to UC Davis expectations of graduate education. Members felt that limiting enrollment should be considered, as well as an early review. Members also voiced that if Council concerns are not addressed, Council may vote to end admissions to the program.

The Council gave its commendations to Professor Risbud for his efforts on behalf of the Graduate Council. The program will be requested to respond to council on its progress towards the recommendations by mid-November 2008.

**ACTION: PRC report approved by consent**

**C. Program Review – Nutritional Biology Graduate Program**

The review of the [Nutritional](#) Biology Graduate Program was presented by the PRC Liaison for the review, Professor Alan Buckpitt. Professor Buckpitt gave the Council highlights of the recommendations in the PRC Report and stated that the program is certainly a strong and quality program. Professor Buckpitt went on to state that the students admitted are very strong academically, and the program is a large and collaborative group. The PRC review team thought that the addition of the Western Health and Nutrition Research Center, and the USDA adjunct faculty have added to the program's effectiveness. Professor Buckpitt also stated that the appointment of MRC Greenwood as Chair was a step forward in being able to garner support for additional faculty.

Council expressed some concern that issues from the last program review of this program are still issues now. Council seriously encourages the new Chair to finally address degree requirements and overhaul the core courses. Graduate Council requested that new degree requirements be submitted by Winter of 2009 for review, and that students in the program be involved in the revision process.

Council expressed concern regarding student financial support and the rotation system, and would like to see this addressed.

The Council gave its commendations to Professor Buckpitt for his efforts on behalf of the Graduate Council. The program will be requested to respond to council on its progress towards the recommendations by mid-November 2008. Professor Buckpitt will be Chair of the Program Review Committee next year.

**ACTION: PRC report approved by consent**

**CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. **Move “Consent Items” to “Discussion/Action”.**  
Chair Gunion moved to discussion: English bylaws, Neuroscience bylaws, and the proposal for a new Communication PhD program.
- B. **Minutes.**  
Minutes from the January 9, April 9, and May 14, 2008 Graduate Council meetings were approved as written.
- C. **Bylaws Changes.**  
**MCIP-Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Physiology.** Revisions to the Bylaws of the graduate program in [Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Physiology](#) were approved by consent
- D. **New Graduate Program - Second GC Review.**  
**Communication Ph.D.** See discussion below.
- E. **Degree Requirement Changes.**  
**Statistics Graduate Program.** Changes to the degree requirements for the graduate program in Statistics were approved. EPC Chair Peggy Farnham told the Council that the program modified its latest version of the requirements to shift its Master’s Plan II comprehensive examination from the spring of a student’s first year to the winter quarter of a student’s second year. This satisfies the CCGA “capstone” requirement.  
**Pharmacology and Toxicology Graduate Program.** Changes to the degree requirements for the graduate program in Pharmacology and Toxicology were approved, contingent on a revision to the Master’s Plan II capstone requirement. EPC Chair Farnham will work with the program to make the revision.
- F. **Program Review Guidelines 2009-10.**  
Including the addition of the new APD recommendations, the handbook for the 2009-10 program reviews was approved.

**DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

- A. **Graduate Commencement.** Graduate Council members were reminded that they should arrive at the ARC/Pavilion by 3:00 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, June 12, 2008.
- B. **APD Report on Graduate Education at UC Davis.**

**Section A.1. Amending APM210.**

Council members had a lengthy discussion about how to address the lack of resources for graduate education. In particular, the Council was concerned about the lack of faculty available to teach graduate courses, and the lack of funding available for graduate courses. The Council has observed this weakness in many program review reports. Members were concerned that graduate education is shrinking at the expense of undergraduate education at UC Davis.

The motivation of the Academic Planning and Development Committee in the crafting of this proposal was to bring forward graduate education on campus. APD members expressed that, in regards to faculty promotions and evaluations, there is very little in policy that relates to graduate education. Council members agreed that if UC Davis values graduate education, then faculty need to be given the opportunity to teach, and be evaluated and promoted, based upon on their commitment to graduate education. The Council agreed that for each faculty member to have a 20% graduate course teaching responsibility would be a more appropriate number than 25%.

**MOTION:** Approve A.1 APD Report with 20% (change from 25%), and corresponding change in Appendix E, section p. 17 in CAPS.

**MOTION PASSED:** 7 for- 2 against- 1 abstained

### **Section A.2. Requiring MOUs to staff courses for new graduate programs and encouraging existing programs to seek such MOUs.**

Council agreed that success of a graduate program is dependent upon the commitment of departments to providing instructors for graduate courses, and therefore MOU's would strengthen these commitments. In order to monitor and affirm that MOU's are beneficial, Council suggested that programs and departments comment on the success and effectiveness of the MOU's in the program review process (understanding review cycle, this change with take effect in two years: 2009-10 cycle).

Council recommended to Dean Gibeling that the Office of Graduate Studies monitor MOU's currently, talk with graduate program Chairs about the MOU's, and report back to the Council.

**MOTION:** Approve A.2 of the APD Report with inclusion into Program Review guidelines.

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

### **Section A.3. Requesting FTEs to strengthen graduate instruction.**

Council agreed that this recommendation empowers the Academic Senate to advocate on behalf of graduate education, and encourages departments to sign MOU's if faculty FTE are available. Council also agreed this would make a positive impact on the quality of graduate education.

**MOTION:** Approve A.3 of the APD Report with suggested language revisions.

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

### **Section A.4. Cross-Listing of Graduate Courses.**

Council discussed that is has sometimes been difficult to get graduate courses cross-listed because the Committee on Courses and Instruction doesn't necessarily know that cross-listing is important at the graduate level. For many departments this can be a way of teaming up and sharing resources. Council also discussed that as long as there are two faculty from two different departments, you should always be able to cross-list.

**MOTION:** Approve A.4 of the APD Report with suggested language revisions reflecting major and minor points.

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**Section B. Lead Dean Model**

Council discussed that when MOU's are included in the program reviews, Council will look for whether real effort has been made.

**MOTION:** Approve section B of the APD Report with suggested language revisions reflecting that MOU's will be assessed in program reviews.

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**Section C. Role of Graduate Programs in Faculty Hires**

Council discussed that APD was not a priori against the idea of graduate groups having FTE, but had concluded that assigning FTE to graduate groups would have many of the same problems that had arisen with respect to initiative hires. The uncertainty as to the wisdom of, and how to proceed with the FTEs assigned to EPM (Environmental Policy and Management) brought this into focus. It was also clear that the technical aspects of administering faculty hires and promotions for FTE assigned to graduate groups were quite significant. The final APD recommendation to not assign FTEs to graduate groups is not a statement that graduate groups have all the FTE they need, and Council proposed that be clearly stated in the revised document. Council agreed that allocating FTE's to graduate groups was not a viable option based on technicalities of management and general faculty opposition to such a "top-down" process. Chair Gunion clarified that the intention is that departments willing to sign MOU's will get the FTE and allocate to the graduate group.

**MOTION:** Approve section C of the APD Report

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**Section D. Planning for New Graduate Programs and Increases in Graduate Enrollment**

Council discussed that OGS needs more block grant funds in order to adequately fund new and existing graduate programs. Council discussed that if a new program comes forward there has to be adequate funds and support for that program before it is approved. UC Davis has identified enrollment growth in graduate education as a priority, so that priority needs to be funded. Council affirmed that funding for new programs must be consistent with funding for existing programs with increased enrollments. Council requested revision that section D.2. move to D.1, and that language stating that graduate education at UC Davis is underfunded.

**MOTION:** Approve section D of the APD Report with revisions

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**Section E. Graduate Group Administration and Support**

Council discussed that more information was needed to evaluate a graduate program's effectiveness and also in recruiting new students. To this end, APD has included this section regarding a data collection bank in its recommendations. Also,

part of the discussion was how to identify who actually teaches in graduate programs.

Council also discussed the importance of collaboration amongst graduate programs in sharing of resources administratively. Council suggested that perhaps an Ad Hoc committee could be formed to investigate ways certain groups could consolidate administrative needs in consultation with programs (especially in this era of diminishing resources). Council suggested that APD consider taking this on next year. Council affirmed that data from the proposed data bank was needed in order to reconsider clustering or consolidation.

Council suggested that the Dean of Graduate Studies work on getting a database functional while Council continues to implement the other recommendations of this proposal.

Council also discussed the issue of two-tiered membership for graduate programs and groups. While Council affirmed that some programs have members that do not administratively support the program, Council rejected the idea of a two-tiered system as every member should have full rights of membership. Council affirmed that in the bylaws, programs can address expectations of members.

**MOTION:** Approve section E of the APD Report with revised order

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

#### **Section F. Unresolved Items.**

APD Chair Mueller stated the items in this section could not be agreed upon by members of the APD.

#### **Appendix C. Input From Dean Gibeling on The Issue of FTEs for the Proposed Environmental Policy Graduate Group**

*Option: 1) A faculty position is made available to one or more departments that work to fill the position with someone who has expertise that is needed by the graduate group. Whichever department makes the hire would sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) promising that the department would provide an agreed upon number of courses to the graduate group each year in exchange for getting an "extra" FTE. These courses could be taught by any capable person from the department. The hired faculty member would teach undergraduate courses in the department as well to ensure that he/she has a balanced teaching load.*

**MOTION:** Approve section Appendix C, Option 1 of the APD Report

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

#### **C. Proposal to Improve the Status of Graduate Group Students Employed as TA's.**

Council discussed that this proposal would help graduate groups to plan in terms of making multi-year support packages. While groups would not make the appointment, they would certainly be able to put together recruitment package. The students would TA in the departments that the graduate group is serving.

Council had a lengthy discussion regarding this proposal and expressed that the lack of TA-ships is one of the biggest problems that graduate groups have; departments that used to give TA-ships to students in graduate groups are now

less willing to do so, implying that fewer such TA-ships are readily available and that the system is not working, nor are TA-ships fairly distributed. Council expressed the concern that some TA's are expected to deliver undergraduate courses, that they are unionized workers; on the other hand, some TA's are given the TA-ships as a form of graduate support. Council affirmed that currently, UC Davis is on the side of treating TA's like workers, and that Council would like to move more towards TA-ships being a form of graduate support. Council suggested that because 60% of graduate education is in graduate groups, then 60% of TA-ships should be for graduate group students. Council affirmed that all students should be able to compete for TA-ships.

**MOTION:** Adopt Part 1

**MOTION PASSED:** 4-3

**MOTION:** Adopt Parts 2 & 3

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**D. Proposal for Multi-Year Student Funding Safety Nets.**

Council discussed that in order for programs to offer 3-4 year funding commitments to students, OGS will sign MOU's with programs to provide a "block grant backstop" in case the program can't find the resources. While the program certainly has to repay the block grant, it will help programs to offer multi-year funding. Council affirmed that it should be the practice and culture of programs to make multi-year support agreements to graduate students. Chair Gunion proposed a change in the language in this proposal to "inform groups about OGS MOU's" and charges Dean Gibeling to do his best to advertise this option. Council agreed this is a good initiative for programs to move towards multi-year funding.

**MOTION:** Approve with suggested language changes regarding informing graduate programs of MOU's with OGS

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**E. ORU Air Quality Research 3-Year Review.**

Council discussed that they want to see graduate education addressed and Chair Gunion's letter will address this and restate the guidelines Council approved.

**MOTION:** Consent for Chair to send back comment

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

**F. EPC General Discussion Items on Degree Requirements.**

Educational Policy Committee Chair Farnham told the Council that programs submitting revised degree requirements under Masters Plan II to Council are having some trouble with the capstone requirement as expressed by CCGA. (*Comprehensive exam should follow completion of coursework.*)

Chair Farnham went on to state that the problem is that many programs with Masters plan II want their written comprehensive exam at the end of year one after

core courses; the question raised is whether that meets the CCGA requirements? Council discussed and interpreted the phrase "follow the coursework" to mean either at the end of core courses, or the end of all coursework (electives included). CCGA stated that there must be a capstone event; so you can have a written comprehensive exam at the end of core courses, but then you must also have a capstone event *at or near the end of program*.

Council agreed that Chair Farnham should submit viable options at the next Council meeting (June 13, 2008) that would meet the capstone requirement as expressed by CCGA.

#### **G. Neuroscience Bylaws.**

Council questioned whether the "qualifying examination" mentioned in Articles V.d. and V.f. of the bylaws is actually a preliminary exam. Article V.f.2. indicates that the exam is "for the first-year students" In addition the program needs to distinguish between the exams for masters and doctoral students." Council also expressed concerns about a discrepancy regarding the Quorum portion of the bylaws and the ; Amendments portion (Article XI). The Amendments state that two-thirds of active members must approve a change, but the Quorum portion specifies that passage requires "greater than 50%" of the members who actually vote. Finally, in Article IX it is stated that bylaws can be modified following 50+% quorum procedures. Assuming that article XI is the actual intention, Council recommends the "active" phrase be replaced in the Amendments portion with "membership". The bylaws should be corrected and resubmitted for approval to the Graduate Council.

#### **H. English Bylaws.**

Council expressed some concerns about the fact that the bylaws indicate the Chair appoints the Executive Committee and that the decision is not made by a vote of the faculty. As this issue is part of the PRC recommendations, Council agreed to refrain on voting on the bylaws until after the English program review is completed in the Fall 2008.

#### **I. Communications New PhD.**

The proposal for a new Ph.D. program in Communication was tentatively approved by the Graduate Council a year ago, and went forward to the Academic Senate Library and Planning & Budget committees, and to the relevant academic dean. Council was told that a clear library response supporting this program has not been received. Council instructed OGS to work with the Library Committee and the program to obtain such a letter. The authors of the proposal should also strike some language on pages 12 and 13 regarding the terminal M.A. degree. It should not be automatically awarded to a student who fails his/her qualifying examination, but should be considered a significant degree in its own right.

**MOTION:** Approve contingent on receiving positive letter from Librarian and Academic Senate Library Committee, and terminal master's degree language revisions.

**MOTION PASSED:** Unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.