

UC DAVIS GRADUATE COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Room 203 Mrak Hall

ATTENDEES: Thomas Aguilar, Nicole Baumgarth, Toby Beauchamp, Anne Britt, Ed Caswell-Chen, Peggy Farnham, Matthew Farrrens, Jeffery Gibeling, Rachael Goodhue, Jack Gunion, Lynette Hunter, Andre Knoesen, Tonya Kuhl, Martha Macri, Hans-Georg Mueller, Jeffrey Schank, Lenora Timm

NOT IN ATTENDANCE: Steven Albrecht, Abhinav Bhushan, Hector Cuevas, Mari Golub, Annik Hirshen, James Hodgson, Cathy Jurado, Walter Leal, Rita Mehta, Flora Tassone, Yuhang Shi

GUESTS: James Griesemer, Barbara Sellers-Young, Bruce Winterhalder

The Graduate Council meeting began at 3:05.

SPECIAL DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

A. Program Review – Psychology Graduate Program.

The review of the graduate program in Psychology was presented by the Program Review Committee (PRC) Liaison for the review, Professor James Griesemer. Professor Griesemer told the Council that the Psychology graduate program is a very strong program which has experienced substantial faculty growth in recent years. However, the program now needs to attend to communication and governance issues. Professor Griesemer summarized the PRC recommendations for Council members.

The Graduate Council concurred with the recommendations in the PRC report. Council members expressed particular concern about: (a) the course buy-out process and its impact on the availability of courses for graduate students, (b) concerns about the single graduate mentor model, which – while providing significant faculty involvement for graduate students – could impact the breadth of the students' training, and (c) the need for greater cohesion between the five different sections in Psychology. The lack of cohesion manifests itself in variances in the academic experiences of students in different areas of the graduate program, and in confusion about expectations. Professor Griesemer noted that one of the most important recommendations of the PRC is that the program must engage in program-wide discussion about what it is trying to accomplish with the Graduate Program in Psychology, and how that can best be achieved.

The Council unanimously approved the PRC report for the Psychology Graduate Program, and gave its commendations to Professor Griesemer for the quality of his report and the clarity of his presentation. The program will be requested to respond to the Council on its progress towards the recommendations by mid-November 2008.

B. Program Review – Animal Behavior Graduate Program.

The review of the graduate program in Animal Behavior was presented by the PRC Liaison for the review, Professor Bruce Winterhalder. Professor Winterhalder identified the strengths of the graduate program including the high morale and large number of activities sponsored by the graduate students (lunches, picnics, annual symposia), the

strong new leadership and committee structure of the group, the improved guidelines for graduate students, and the better coordination of the group.

Professor Winterhalder also summarized the seven recommendations for improvement identified by the PRC. The Graduate Council agreed with the recommendations, and discussed several of the items in more depth.

Since this program is based in a graduate group, and is a small graduate group at that, it has some of the problems endemic to graduate group structures. The program is not able to promise its graduate students multi-year funding, and cannot guarantee Teaching Assistant positions as part of funding (because TA positions are assigned by academic departments, not groups). When students are able to obtain TA positions, they feel they do not receive the training they need, because TA training is also offered by departments. And the students feel that the Teaching Resources Center provides topical training, but not the specific training they need for their positions.

The small size of the program contributes to its uniqueness and its success, but may be impacting the visibility of the program, especially on the UC Davis campus, and may contribute to the fact that graduate students – while receiving job offers in government, colleges and business – are not being placed as often in Tier 1 academic research institutions. The “Animal Behavior” title is relatively unique across campuses in the country; more often students studying animal behavior are part of Ecology or Psychology graduate programs.

The Council also noted that the program’s website should be cleaned-up and given priority, so that communication across the program would be facilitated.

The Council believes this is an excellent, small graduate program that is making a positive contribution to UC Davis. It approved the PRC Report unanimously. The program will be requested to respond to the Council on its progress towards the recommendations by mid-November 2008.

C. Program Review – Art Studio Graduate Program.

The review of the graduate program in Art Studio was presented by the PRC Liaison for the review, Professor Barbara Sellers-Young. Professor Sellers-Young gave the Council highlights of the recommendations in the PRC Report. Council members agreed that some of the recommendations should be worded more strongly or changed, and that the PRC Report should be revised and submitted to the next Graduate Council meeting.

Among the Council’s concerns were: (a) The Council agrees with recommendation #1, and believes that the Visiting Artists experience is important for graduate students. The program should determine how it can continue Visiting Artists or, at the least, close it so that it can easily be restarted in the future. (b) The Council believes that the funding for graduate students should be addressed, and that new fellowships and/or a new endowment should be pursued. (c) The disposal of hazardous materials should be addressed immediately. (d) Recommendation # 5 should be worded much more strongly. Though the Graduate Council only has approval authority over academic issues, a social issue among the faculty that affects the graduate students is unacceptable. The program needs to deal with the dissention between the Chair, Graduate Adviser, and faculty, and separate the conflict from graduate students. Chair Gunion suggested that the program be asked to report back to the Council in a year on progress they have made in addressing this issue. (e) The Council asked that

recommendation #10 in the draft report be removed. The recommendation deals with course-release for the Graduate Adviser. (f) The Council accepts recommendation #11, and will consider the issue of including an external reviewer on the reviews of terminal master's degree programs.

A final concern of the Council is that the graduate program's Bylaws were not included with the program review. The Bylaws are currently in the hands of the Council's Bylaws Committee, and should be reviewed and returned to the program as soon as possible.

CONSENT ITEMS

A. **Move "Consent Items" to "Discussion/Action"**. Chair Gunion said that he had found a number of typographical errors in the consent item documents. He will submit a list of the errors to the Graduate Council Analyst, who will ask for revisions to the documents. The two degree requirement items (Statistics and Pharmacology/Toxicology) and the Animal Behavior Bylaws were moved to the Discussion/Action section of the meeting.

B. **Bylaws Changes.**

1. **Animal Behavior Bylaw Changes.** The Council agreed that an inconsistency exists in the number of members specified for the Executive Committee. The first sentence of Article V.A. "Executive Committee" should read "...at least *seven* voting faculty members and two graduate students", rather than "...at least *five* voting faculty members and two graduate students". The Council approved the Bylaws contingent on these changes.
2. **Immunology Bylaw Changes.** The Immunology Bylaws were approved by the Council.

C. **Degree Requirement Changes.**

1. **Statistics Degree Requirement Changes.**

Council members held a lengthy discussion about the modifications to the Master's degree comprehensive final examination proposed by the Statistics graduate program. The program would like to remove a preliminary "basic examination" from the requirements, and change the comprehensive exam from an oral exam to a written one. The problem noted by the Council members is one of timing; the current comprehensive oral exam is held in the fifth quarter of the Master's program, while the proposed written version is scheduled for the end of the third quarter of the program. This would mean that the comprehensive final examination will be taken, in most cases, prior to the completion of required core courses.

The Council agreed that – though the format of the exam can be determined by the program – the Council is responsible for approving the degree requirements document. The Council therefore decided to ask the program for its rationale and justification for having the comprehensive final exam before the completion of the required core courses. The policies in the next paragraph will be provided to the program.

The policy for Master's degree (Plan II) comprehensive final examinations is as follows. First, Davis Division Regulation 500(B), indicates, "A comprehensive final examination in the major subject, of such nature and conducted in such manner as

may be determined by the department or group concerned, is required of each candidate". However, the systemwide Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) states in its "Capstone Requirement"¹,

With regard to Masters Degrees, CCGA asserts that the norm should be for a thesis or for a comprehensive examination following the course work, both in order to integrate the intellectual substance of the program and also as a means of quality control. If changes are made in Masters program already approved, those changes must be authorized by the Graduate Council in conjunction with the Graduate Division. ... In particular, it [CCGA] considers that a capstone requirement, as defined in Plans A and B for the Master's program ... is essential to maintain the distinctive, research-oriented quality of a UC graduate degree. It has therefore been additionally resolved that: CCGA withdraws its approval from any Masters degree program that has dropped its capstone requirement or any doctoral program that has dropped its dissertation requirement without the approval of its Graduate Council.

2. **Pharmacology / Toxicology Degree Requirement Changes.** The Pharmacology / Toxicology graduate program requirement changes were moved to the "Discussion/Action Items" section of the agenda. However, due to lack of time, consideration of the changes will be postponed until the next meeting of the Council.

- D. **New Graduate Program – Communication Ph.D.** The Council conducted an initial review of the proposal for a Ph.D. program in Communication at its meeting on April 19, 2007. The proposal was then submitted to the Academic Senate's Library Committee and Committee on Planning & Budget, as well as to the academic dean, for consideration. The final proposal package, including the letters of support from the committees and the academic dean, will be considered at the next meeting of the Graduate Council.

E. **Program Review Committee.**

1. **Reduction of Workload 2009-10; Proposal for Rescheduling Reviews.** The Program Review Committee, under the leadership of Professor Andre Knoesen, conducted a study on the staff workload associated with the program review process. The study indicates that the current workload is uneven from year-to-year, and could be rebalanced by moving some of the scheduled reviews up or back a year (or in a few cases, two). The current 8-year review cycle will not change, however some shifts in the reviews will occur.

The immediate impact will be that the onsite reviews for three graduate programs, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Computer Science, and Civil & Environmental Engineering, will be not be scheduled until Fall 2009 (moved from Fall 2008). In addition, the reviews of the Designated Emphases in "Feminist Theory & Research" and "Social Theory & Comparative History" will be delayed one year. See Attachment 8.13 for further details.

The Council agreed by consent to both the immediate shift of program reviews and the revised schedule for future reviews.

¹ From "CCGA Handbook". The Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) is the systemwide Academic Senate committee responsible for reviewing and approving graduate programs for the UC system. The Capstone Requirement is in Appendix K.

2. **Initiation of Graduate Program Reviews.** The Council approved by consent the initiation of the following six graduate programs:
 - a. Cell & Developmental Biology (M.S./Ph.D.)
 - b. Forensic Science (M.S.)
 - c. Comparative Pathology (M.S./Ph.D.)
 - d. Neuroscience (M.S./Ph.D.)
 - e. Feminist Theory & Research (DE)
 - f. Social Theory & Comparative History (DE)

F. Academic Senate Action Items.

1. **Rescission of Academic Personnel Policy 350 – Postgrad Researcher.** The Council approved the letter drafted by Chair Gunion (Attachment 8.15) by consent. Chair Gunion will send it to the Academic Senate.
2. **Proposed UC Davis Calendar 2011-2016.** The Council approved the modifications to the calendar by consent.

DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

- A. **APD Report on Graduate Education at UC Davis.** This item was postponed until the June 11, 2008 meeting of the Council.
- B. **Proposal to Improve the Status of Graduate Group TAs.** Council members did not have sufficient time to discuss this item, so it was deferred until the June 11, 2008 meeting of the Council.
- C. **Proposal for Multi-Year Student Funding Safety Nets.** Council members did not have sufficient time to discuss this item, so it was deferred until the June 11, 2008 meeting of the Council.
- D. **Diversity in Graduate Programs.** The Council unanimously approved the proposal by the Program Review Committee for a revision to the policy statement “Guidelines Evaluating and Prioritizing Graduate Programs” that will include a strategic footnote reference to the University of California Diversity Statement adopted by the Assembly of the Academic Senate and UC Regents (see attachment 8.7). Council members commended PRC and its Chair, Andre Knoesen, for making this proposal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – Deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

As a final administrative item, Chair Gunion asked Council members if they would put a hold on their calendars for Friday morning, June 13, 2008, for a final Graduate Council meeting. The Graduate Council Analyst will contact all Council members by email to determine their availability.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.