

## GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday, May 20, 2009

**ATTENDEES:** M. Belmonte (PSA rep.), Buckpitt, Degnan, Farnham, Friesner, Gibeling, Gunion, Goodhue, Hurley, Knoesen, Martin, O'Donnell, Schank, Stimson, Weare

**NOT IN ATTENDANCE:** Holmes, May, Nincic, Singleton, Stott

**GUESTS:** T. Beauchamp (former Student Assistant to the Dean Graduate Studies), H. Frasier (OGS), C. Jurado (OGS), R. Shintaku (OGS), L. Timm (OGS),

Meeting began at 3:05 p.m.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Chair Gunion** discussed the Chair Notes which included: a request for subcommittee annual reports, notification that AS Executive Council will review Council's MOU policy, an update that letters are being prepared to notify programs regarding the oversight issues discussed at the last meeting, and various notes on the agenda items.

**Dean Gibeling** announced that the recent special election regarding the CA state budget will have an impact on higher education, but that there was no news yet regarding specifics. Dean Gibeling held a Chairs quarterly meeting in which he discussed the idea of the Program Review Criteria (on the agenda today) and received some preliminary feedback. He also announced that admission applications are still up 4%, admits are up 18%, and intents to register are up 25% from this same time last year. While there may be an increase in students, the Dean has received no increase in allocation for the coming year.

**Associate Dean Timm** announced that the Graduate Student Retention Taskforce has received nearly 1,300 responses to the PhD retention survey but would like to see an additional 200 responses come in. The May 15 deadline has been extended to May 29.

**Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) Representative Knoesen** had no new announcements.

**The Graduate Student Association (GSA) Chair Singleton** was not in attendance so Representative Hurley passed around the grad women's zine which was co-produced by the GSA, and announced that GSA held a networking/mentoring workshop for graduate students that was successful.

**The Postdoctoral Scholar Association (PSA) Representative Watts** was not in attendance, so fellow PSA member Mark Belmonte announced that Postdoc Recognition Day would be held on May 28, and encouraged Council members to attend events in support of the PSA.

### SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Academic Planning and Development** (Knoesen)  
No new announcements.
- **Administrative** (Gunion)  
No new announcements.

- **Bylaws** (Caswell-Chen)  
No new announcements.
- **Courses** (Goodhue)  
Chair Goodhue announced that Courses has 28 pending requests in the queue, which consist mostly of International Commercial Law and Nursing courses.
- **Educational Policy** (Farnham)  
Chair Farnham announced that EPC is very busy, with just one meeting left in the year.
- **Program Review** (Buckpitt)  
Chair Buckpitt announced that PRC is rapidly finishing its work for the year, with just two meetings left. He stated that there have been some late reports that he is working on getting in.
- **Support and Welfare** (Martin)  
Chair Martin announced that the work of the Committee is completed.

## CONSENT ITEMS

- A. **Minutes of the Graduate Council meeting of May 6, 2009** were approved by consent.
- B. **DE Classics and the Classical Tradition** proposal for a name change and revised requirements were approved by consent upon closure of the program review.
- C. Revised degree requirements for the **Cultural Studies Graduate Group, the Education MA & Credential Graduate Program, and the Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Physiology Graduate Group** were approved by consent.
- D. **Program Review Closures for Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering Graduate Program, the Molecular, Cellular and Integrative Physiology Graduate Group, and the Psychology Graduate Program** were approved by consent.

## DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

- **Graduate Program Evaluation Criteria/Metrics.**  
Council discussed the APD recommendations to Dean Gibeling's memo regarding program evaluation criteria. Council questioned whether this criteria would be used in allocation decisions, and the Dean affirmed that, yes, they would potentially be used for that purpose. Some of the criteria can be collected on an annual basis by OGS and some of the more qualitative data would be considered by the PRC during the program review process. The Dean stated that a specific mechanism has not been created yet for this, but that the criteria were the first step. The criteria could be used for resource allocations, and possibly for enrollment quotas. These indicators could help the Dean and the Council compare graduate programs across campus and across institutions (using AAU institutions as a reference). It is also possible that programs may get a base allocation based on their enrollment size (as is done now) and then there would be an additional increment based on quality. Hopefully, the criteria along with the program review reports would assist in judging quality. The criteria will be used more generally than in just the block grant allocation, as well, in order for Council to make serious decisions about the management of graduate programs.

Professor Knoesen affirmed APD's position that in light of these criteria, it is the right time to revise the program review process in concert. Currently, program reviews are geared towards diving program-specific recommendations for improvement to the program themselves, but do not generally conduct comparisons across programs (which may be needed in the era of diminishing resources). This is also an opportunity to relieve some of the more onerous facets of the program review process—OGS can collect data so that the program staff can focus on the other materials. A priority for APD when considering the criterion was that no *additional* burden be placed on the programs and program staff to collect the data noted. In the PRC revision process, one area to look at would be the requirement to list faculty research funding, which is difficult for programs to get, and relatively useless to the PRC without the correlation of how many graduate students benefitted from the funding. Additionally, in preparing the self-reviews a lot of time is spent on establishing the quality of the faculty, which does not necessarily tell us how good the training of the graduate students. Removing some of the more onerous data collection like this would allow PRC to focus on the training of the graduate students. Yet this key issue of the quality of the training of the graduate students is very hard to get at using data. If Council wants to play a role in the allocation of resources, we better get our Program Review Committee reviews better angled toward the purpose of conducting cross-comparisons. It may be that an ad hoc committee will need to specifically look at the program review process, because the PRC cannot simultaneously revise the guidelines and conduct the number of reviews on its plate, the workload is too high. Also, APD affirmed that it was very important to get grassroots support from the programs for these changes and the criteria/metrics in order to reduce anxiety and gain support before the resource allocation mechanism is changed.

Chair Gunion mentioned that in the CAC discussion of this, the APD insertion of the criteria "students per faculty" was really focused on, and the CAC thought this should be strengthened. The measure of student mentorship was important in measuring the quality and training of the graduate students.

Professor Knoesen commented that previously, APD has recommended that "students per faculty" and "active faculty members" be collected on an annual basis.

Program/Group membership is supposedly reviewed on a 3-year basis, according to bylaws, but when talking to Chairs, in reality, removing a member from a program is difficult as you are colleagues, perhaps in the same department. In department-based programs, the bylaws almost always say that membership in the graduate program is automatic for department faculty, but perhaps this should be revised? Are all faculty really suited to mentor graduate students? Perhaps, like in a graduate group, all members must apply and be elected. It's possible that if this was implemented, it would have to go to Privilege and Tenure Committee systemwide to make a decision about whether faculty in departments, by virtue of their appointment, is guaranteed access to the graduate students in that department.

Council discussed that there seemed to be three problems with mentoring: 1) not mentoring, 2) bad mentoring, and 3) too many students to mentor. These are very different problems, so what is the primary problem? Bad mentoring is probably the primary problem. Some felt it was not the place of the graduate program to impose discipline, that discipline wasn't the role of the faculty. Council also discussed that by purely looking at a specific faculty member's time to degree for their students,

you might misinterpret the reality. A faculty who takes on “rescue cases” is an example of this. Faculty in the programs know which mentors are good, not so good or even bad, so it does seem that it is the responsibility of the faculty or Chair to “resolve” the bad cases. Council espoused the opinion that Graduate Group Chairs have almost no influence over a member of the group. Despite that these are the realities, APD, CAC and Council agreed that “students per faculty” was still a legitimate measure of student training.

Council discussed the Retention Taskforce survey will elucidate some of the problems, and the Taskforce will have some recommendations that might inform or influence the data we collect to analyze programs.

APD identified that two of the criteria were “generally problematic”:

1. Percentage of doctoral students receiving full support. This is taken directly out of the NRC assessment in which each institution defines full support. (There are some individual programs at UCD that do define full support.) APD considered that it would be difficult to get RA/TA/Fellowship information easily. Dean Gibeling affirmed that actually it was possible to see on both an individual student level, and a program level, all support for students (Dean Gibeling has access to ORMP reports with this information).
2. Placement data. Certainly need to do a better job of getting this information. Right now, this data is dependent on individual programs and faculty establishing and maintain relationships with the students in order to continue being informed about placement years down the line.

Dean Gibeling stated that the data isn’t going to be collected immediately, but designing the process for collecting/storing/using the data will begin, so he would need to know if Council endorsed going down this path of specific criteria. Obviously some criteria will be abandoned along the way, the program review process will be revised, and all will have to be coordinated effectively. In the future is the possibility that on the OGS individual program pages, this kind of information might be posted (time to degree, completion rate, etc.).

Council espoused that moving in this direction was supported, but that the asterisks in the APD recommendation document should be recognized as very important: “most of this criteria does not directly reflect the research quality and training of the graduate students” and the “stature of the faculty does not necessarily correlate to student success”. A nuanced understanding of the data is required.

After the data is collected we’ll be able to further see what is purely interesting, and what is pertinent.

**ADD TO CRITERIA:** A suggestion was made to add post-graduation awards and publications to the student publications criteria, and adding gender to both the faculty and student characteristics sections. Also suggested was renaming the mission as **Graduate Program Evaluation Metrics.**

**MOTION TO ENDORSE** the evaluation metrics and endorse the Dean of Graduate Studies to continue forward in this manner with further Council consultation.

**MOTION PASSED:** unanimously

- **Proposal for a new Graduate Group in Energy.**

Council reviewed and discussed the revised proposal and generally agreed that the academic rigor and appropriateness had been greatly improved. Although the campus financial situation is unpredictable at the moment, Council affirmed that holding back new ideas that are timely and current would be a mistake. Council agreed that new programs should be ready to be implemented (i.e., fully approved at the divisional and systemwide levels) when the funding becomes available, or when the financial situation of the campus improves.

**MOTION TO APPROVE** the proposal upon the submission of updated letters of support from the Energy Institute (Jenkins) and the Dean of Engineering (formerly Lavernia, now White), and an assurance from the Provost for a commitment of block grant funds.

**MOTION PASSED:** unanimously

- **Graduate Student Bill of Rights.**

Graduate Council reviewed the revised Graduate Student Bill of Rights presented by the Graduate Student Association, Representative Degnan and former Representative Beauchamp.

**MOTION TO ENDORSE** the revised Graduate Student Bill of Rights with minor revisions

**MOTION PASSED:** unanimously

- **LATE ADDITION TO THE AGENDA**

**Response to Academic Senate: Proposed BOARS Guidelines for Non-Resident Enrollment.**

Graduate Council had a number of serious concerns regarding the nonresident enrollment principles for undergraduate students. Council discussed that the introductory statement "UCOP allocated NRT revenue to campuses in 2007-08 in exchange for general funds, notes that campuses may retain any revenue generated from NRT, and instructs them to develop plans to either increase non-resident tuition revenue or handle shortfalls on their own." This, in association with the severe budget shortfalls here at Davis and at other UC campuses, suggested to Council that a modest increase in non-resident students is both needed and appropriate. Council affirmed that an increase in non-resident students to a level of about 10% is a reasonable target.

Council agreed that principle #5, stating that non-resident and international students should "demonstrate stronger admissions credentials than California resident students by generally being in the upper half of those ordinarily eligible, as stated in the Master Plan", is not actually found in the Master Plan, and is inadvisable.

Council also found principle #7 inadvisable. Council affirmed that funds generated by NRT should be available for the general campus good to replace cuts in state funding, and that it is not advisable to restrict an individual campus in the ways it might employ NRT money.

In converse to the implication of statement #6, Council discussed that it may be quite crucial in the coming years for campuses to increase NR/international enrollment precisely so that the excess of NRT over actual costs can be used to subsidize the enrollment of, course availability for, and services to California resident students.

Overall, Graduate Council rejected the entire document and affirmed that it was unwise to bring this issue to a formal and public status.

**The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.**