

## GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

**ATTENDEES:** Buckpitt, Degnan, Farnham, Friesner, Gibeling, Gunion, Goodhue, Knoesen, Martin, Stimson, Stott, Weare

**NOT IN ATTENDANCE:** Hurley, May, O'Donnell, Schank, Singleton, Tassone, Watts

**GUESTS:** Cuevas (OGS), Frasier (OGS), Jurado (OGS), Marquez (OGS), Timm (OGS)

Meeting began at 3:05 p.m.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Chair Gunion** discussed the Chair Notes which included: notes on the agenda items; instructions regarding the program reviews and conflict of interest during those discussions; Graduate Council input into the campus strategic planning; and that Executive Council will be considering the MOU requirement for new proposals Graduate Council put forward (most likely in May).

**Dean Gibeling** announced that the Office of Graduate Studies has hired Richard Shintaku as the new Assistant Dean (replacing Annik Hirschen). Rich began work this week at OGS, and he has substantial experience in graduate education at Oregon State University. Dean Gibeling also announced that Associate Dean Caswell-Chen will end his term this year, and so he is seeking nominations to replace him. He is also seeking nominations for a commencement speaker. Regarding the budget, Dean Gibeling had no new information, but expressed some concern that the Graduate Council was not represented on any of the budget committees. Membership information can be found at [http://budgetnews.ucdavis.edu/2009\\_budget\\_committee.lasso](http://budgetnews.ucdavis.edu/2009_budget_committee.lasso). Dean Gibeling also announced that in his annual allocation request to the Provost with supporting documentation is due April 1, and a graduate student support plan is due July 1; he will bring his budget request to the Graduate Council at a future meeting for consultation.

**Associate Dean Timm** had no new announcements.

**Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) Representative Knoesen** announced that at the last CCGA meeting, Steve Beckwith (VP, Office of Research and Graduate Studies, UCOP) announced that he will become more involved in the UAW (United Auto Workers) Postdoc contract negotiations due to the implications of a 48-hour work week (with overtime, etc.), which will have a profound impact on the ability of units to hire and support postdocs. Representative Knoesen also announced that the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accreditation commission is becoming more involved in reviewing graduate programs, whereas in the past, they have focused mostly on undergraduate reviews. WASC has asked UC Merced to provide accreditation information for their graduate programs, which has significantly slowed and complicated the process. CCGA is concerned with this apparent change in direction by WASC, and will be coordinating a unified response by the campus Graduate Councils. Dean Gibeling stated that he has heard that there is no change in the policy of the WASC commission, and that it may be the staff initiating these requests.

**The Graduate Student Association (GSA) Chair Singleton** was unable to attend, so Graduate Assistant to the Dean, Cynthia Degnan announced that GSA is hosting an early April meeting conference for UC GSA's, focusing on green planning, mentoring, and

diversity. Ms. Degnan welcomed the participation of any faculty who are interested in those topics to present during the conference. Ms. Degnan also announced that the GSA participated in Education Lobby Days in Washington, D.C., where our GSA met with 15 CA representatives. GSA is also submitting a letter of support for the Gender Education Program on campus, located at the Women's Resources and Research Center (WRRRC), which provides self-defense workshops, and various educational workshops promoting gender equity on campus for all constituencies. This program was initially supported by a VAWA grant, and has had its funding cut by the campus; GSA will recommend the campus institutionalize the funding.

**The Postdoctoral Scholar Association (PSA) Representative Friesner** announced that she will be attending the National Postdoctoral Convention in Houston, TX and hopes to bring back information to the campus. She also announced that the Postdoc Travel Grant Awards were awarded to five recipients recently, and that the annual Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research is seeking nominations. There will be two awards, funded by the Office of Graduate Studies for \$500, and certificates will be awarded at a reception in the Spring. Representative Friesner requested that a member for the Support and Welfare Committee of the Graduate Council serve on the award committee, and Chair Martin agreed to suggest possible faculty. Nominations are due April 10, and information can be found at

<http://postdocs.ucdavis.edu/awards/Award%20for%20Excellence%20in%20Postdoctoral%20Research%202009.pdf>.

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Academic Planning and Development** (Knoesen)  
Chair Knoesen mentioned the Diversity Memo to Graduate Chairs on the consent calendar for today's meeting, and drew Council's attention to the importance of diversity in graduate education. He also announced that Regent Eddie Island has emphasized there is a big gap between the UC Statement on Diversity and the reality on campuses, so he will focus in the future on graduate student diversity.
- **Administrative** (Gunion)  
No new announcements.
- **Bylaws** (Caswell-Chen)  
No new announcements.
- **Courses** (Goodhue)  
No new announcements.
- **Educational Policy** (Farnham)  
Chair Farnham opened discussion about the BMB/CDB consolidation proposal; there has been an issue raised of the new program name in which "Genetics" is inserted. Since there is already a Genetics graduate group, Graduate Council agreed that input from the Genetics graduate group, a justification in the consolidation proposal for the use of "Genetics", and an opinion from the Dean of Biological Sciences would be warranted. CCGA will also want to review whether this is a "simple name change" or not, so Graduate Council also requests that the proposal include an argument that this consolidation does not include a "significant" change in the programs.
- **Program Review** (Buckpitt)  
Chair Buckpitt announced that the PRC has completed the reviews of Agricultural Resource Economics, Genetics, and Microbiology and those should be presented at the next Graduate Council meeting. Chair Buckpitt also announced that additional PRC Closures will be coming forward.

- **Support and Welfare (Martin)**  
Chair Martin announced that S&W just finished reviewing the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award; there were 12 awards given for \$250 each. The internal fellowships will be known by the end of the week; these were unfortunately delayed when one reviewer was tardy in replying.

## CONSENT ITEMS

- A. **Minutes of the Graduate Council meetings of February 18, 2009** were approved by consent.
- B. **Education (Ph.D.) revised Program Review Report** was approved by consent.
- C. **ORU reviews of the CA Primate Research Center and the Institute for Transportation Studies** were approved by consent.
- D. **Graduate Student Diversity memo to Graduate Chairs** was approved by consent.
- E. **The Bylaws for Anthropology, Comparative Pathology, English, and Mathematics** were moved to Discussion/Action.

## DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

- **The Bylaw revisions for Anthropology, Comparative Pathology, English, and Mathematics** were approved with some minor revisions.
- **Performance Studies request to change from a department-based graduate program to a graduate group (includes revised degree requirements and bylaws).**  
Council discussed the absence of the M.A. requirements (which could indicate that the M.A. is being left behind), and some minor revisions to the bylaws and degree requirements. Council requests an additional paragraph be inserted into the Ph.D. requirements which informs students that they can receive an M.A. *en route* to the Ph.D. if they complete the required coursework and preliminary exam. A revised request will be placed on a future Graduate Council consent calendar.
- **Response to Academic Senate: 5-Year ORU review of the Institute of Governmental Affairs (IGA).**  
Council reviewed the recommendation from the PRC and the budget information subsequently received from OVCR. It is stated in the review documents that the budget cut for IGA was 25%; a significantly deeper cut than other ORU's funded by OVCR experienced. From the revised budget information received by the Council, it appears the cut is closer to 16% and in line (or less) with other cuts OVCR made to other ORU's. PRC Chair Buckpitt stated that as one of the only Social Sciences ORU's, IGA provides critical support for graduate education. While IGA does not have large numbers in extramural funding compared to other ORU's, Chair Buckpitt reminded Council that funding from NSF for the Sciences comes in much greater amounts than the funding available to Social Sciences. From the revised budget information, it appears that OVCR provides greater funding to this ORU than the others, perhaps because of the lack of possible extramural funding. Council will add to the PRC recommendations that OVCR not impose a cut on the IGA that would disenfranchise them from the ability to support the three departments referenced in the review: Political Science, Economics, and Sociology. Council also recommended that IGA not be moved out of the OVCR and into the Division of Social Sciences, as was suggested in the review documents.

- **New proposal for an Energy Graduate Group.**

EPC Chair Farnham and EPC reviewer and Graduate Council member Weare presented the proposal. Council discussed the funding for this proposal, which, if approved, would only be implemented when the Dean of OGS actually receives the requested allocation from the Provost.

An extensive discussion was held regarding the perceived weakness of academic rigor in the degree requirements. Council was concerned that only two new courses were proposed and the rest of the course requirements were made up of existing UCD courses, some of which may not be academically rigorous, and some of which have extensive prerequisites (making it difficult for Energy students to successfully complete). Overall, Council would like for the proposers to more carefully define a program of study that is realistic for the students to succeed in, and properly trains them for the kinds of careers they have identified. This might include a more limited elective list, which really support the aims identified in the proposal.

Council suggested that the proposers might consider withdrawing this program proposal and instead propose a designated emphasis (DE); students in existing PhD programs (like Economics or Engineering) could then take advantage of the new emphasis on energy. Council suggested that the DE route would be quicker and would allow the program to grow into a graduate group in the future if the need was there.

Professor Weare and Analyst Wonhof will meet with Energy proposers Professor Jenkins and Professor VanderGheynst to discuss the Council's concerns. A revised proposal will be placed on a future Graduate Council agenda.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.