

November 1, 2021

PETER BIEHL
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

RE: Campus Directory Areas of Expertise for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars

Dear Peter,

The Academic Senate has reviewed your request that ITS change the Campus Directory third tab to "Areas of Academic Expertise" and allowing its use by graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, a tab currently reserved for Senate faculty. The Committees on Development and Fundraising (CDF), Information Technology (CIT), Research (COR), and the Graduate Council have responded. Overall, the reviewing committees were supportive of the request and agreed that it could increase the visibility of the work of graduate students through the improved inclusivity. With that said, there were some concerns.

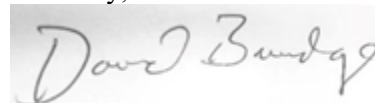
CDF, the committee responsible for initiating the creation of the Areas of Expertise tab, was supportive but had three areas of concern. First, they note that graduate students and postdocs turnover at a higher rate than faculty in general, and suggests that there needs to be an efficient updating process so that when they leave UCSC the information is updated in a timely manner. This is related to the chief concern raised by COR, who worry about increased administrative burden created by the average three- to six-year turnover of grad students and postdocs.

The second issue raised by CDF was related to the specifying of areas of expertise. On this subject, CDF suggests that it should be optional as to whether or not a grad student or postdoc specifies a certain area of expertise in their directory entry.

CDF's third point refers to the public facing nature of the Areas of Expertise, which was initially implemented as a way for media to contact faculty for comment on a specific area of interest. The committee agrees that postdocs, as PhDs, can be seen to have expertise in a specified area whereas grad students could be perceived as working toward that goal. Because of this, CDF suggests that there should be some text suggesting that grad students seek the guidance of their advisors prior to adding their areas of expertise. On the public facing nature of the tab, GC observed that this change could create a more expansive definition of who could become a spokesperson in a certain area and that the implications of this need to be addressed. CIT suggests that there should be capability to support faculty only searches if desired.

Several committees also discussed and commented on the issue of changing titles within the campus directory. GC noted that this is listed as an FYI and wonders if there will be a more formal proposal on this issue forthcoming. On this issue, CIT supports the idea of encouraging graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to change their titles in the directory to "Postdoctoral Scholar" and "Graduate Student" respectively, which would help to set a more unified standard. CIT also agrees that changing the title of the tab to "Areas of Academic Expertise" is more inclusive.

Sincerely,



David Brundage, Chair
Academic Senate

Enc: Senate Committee Responses (Bundled)

cc: Stephanie Casher, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies
Sonya Newlyn, Professional Development Coordinator, Graduate Studies
Karen Holl, Chair, Committee on Development and Fundraising
Peter Alvaro, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Jarmila Pittermann, Chair, Committee on Research
Melissa Caldwell, Chair, Graduate Council

October 27, 2021

David Brundage, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Campus Directory, Areas of Expertise

Dear David,

During its meeting of October 13, 2021, the Committee on Information Technology (CIT) reviewed the Information Technology Services proposal to change the third tab of the online Campus Directory from “Areas of Faculty Expertise” to “Areas of Academic Expertise” to allow graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to utilize the feature. In addition, CIT considered the proposed campaign to encourage postdoctoral scholars and graduate students to change their titles in the directory to “Postdoctoral Scholar” or “Graduate Student” respectively. Members agree that changing the tab to “Areas of Academic Expertise” to be more inclusive would be a positive change, but noted that there should be a way to support faculty only searches if desired. Members were additionally supportive of the campaign to encourage postdocs and grad students to change their titles in order to improve search capability and set a unified standard.

Sincerely,



Peter Alvaro, Chair
Committee on Information Technology

cc: Karen Holl, Chair, Committee on Development and Funding
Jarmila Pittermann, Chair, Committee on Research
Melissa Caldwell, Chair, Graduate Council

October 27, 2021

DAVID BRUNDAGE, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Graduate Students Inclusion in the Areas of Expertise Tab on the Campus Directory

Dear David,

The Committee on Research (COR) has discussed the request from Sonya Newlyn, Professional Development Coordinator for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars, to allow graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to have a presence and create content under "Areas of Academic Expertise" within the Campus Directory. In principle, we agree that this would be a valuable update to the directory, and that it would increase the visibility of early career researchers. Our chief concern is that keeping this section of the Campus Directory current may create an additional administrative burden on staff and/or faculty because graduate students and postdoctoral scholars turn over every one to six years. This information may not be reflected in the directory unless it is continually updated.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine on this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jarmila Pittermann, Chair
Committee on Research

cc: Karen Holl, Chair, Committee on Development and Fundraising
Peter Alvaro, Chair, Committee on Information Technology
Melissa Caldwell, Chair, Graduate Council

October 27, 2021

David Brundage, Chair
Academic Senate

RE: Graduate Division Request: Campus Directory “Areas of Expertise”

Dear David,

At its meeting of October 21, 2021, Graduate Council reviewed the request for feedback on the plan to change the current Campus Directory tab titled “Areas of Faculty Expertise” to language more inclusive of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars (“Areas of Academic Expertise”).

Graduate Council discussed that the proposal seemed straightforward, and overall Council supported the change to make the expertise tab more inclusive. However, GC members questioned whether, given this directory is publicly available, this change would allow a more expansive definition of who could become a spokesperson in a certain area? If so, we might want to discuss the implications for the public-facing aspect of this information.

One member also raised that this change was driven by the need to include postdoctoral scholars in the campus directory. Graduate Council supports inclusion of postdoctoral scholars in the campus directory. Graduate Council was unaware that postdoctoral scholars were not included in the campus directory.

Finally, there is a section of the request from Graduate Division, under the header “FYI,” that states that a campaign to change titles in the campus directory is underway (for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars). GC is unclear whether this FYI is meant to signal that a proposal on this is coming to the Senate in the near future, or that this is an effort being undertaken with graduate students and postdoctoral scholars currently, and requests clarification.

Sincerely,



Melissa L. Caldwell, Chair
Graduate Council

cc: CDF Chair Holl
COR Chair Pittermann
CIT Chair Alvaro



Re: Campus Directory Areas of Faculty Expertise

On Oct 21, 2021, at 3:52 PM, Karen Holl <kholl@ucsc.edu> wrote:

Matthew,

I'm new as a Committee Chair so I'm not entirely clear how I'm supposed to reply to topics that CDF is asked to opine on. It seems like I am supposed to reply to you rather than directly to the graduate division, but let me know if I should write directly to Sonya Newlyn.

CDF discussed the inclusions of graduate students and post-docs in an expanded "areas of expertise". The committee was strongly supportive of adding post-doctoral fellows to the "areas of expertise" and generally supportive of adding graduate students. We had some discussion of whether graduate students school be screened/approved by their advisors prior to adding their names to the areas of expertise. The pro of this is would be that the faculty could provide some guidance on talking to media who might contact them and making sure they had sufficient expertise in a given field to be listed. But most on the committee felt that the bureaucratic cost of requiring advisor approval would be quite high and would seem like unnecessary gatekeeping. We thought that a recommendation to talk to their advisor first (per #3 below) would be easier to implement. We noted that graduate students can talk to the media regardless of whether they are on the area of expertise list, so advisor approval would not eliminate the small risk that an unqualified graduate student talked to the media.

Three issues that our committee discussed and all agreed upon were:

1. Graduate students and post-docs turnover more quickly on average than faculty, so there needs to be a good updating system to reflect when people leave UCSC so the expertise does not become outdated rapidly.
2. It should be optional whether graduate students and post-docs specify areas of expertise on their directory entry.
3. Importantly, there should be some clear information when people sign up that a major purpose of the areas of expertise directory is for media and the public to know who to contact at UCSC on a topic, so if one specifies those areas of expertise they are more likely to be contacted on specific topics. And there should be some text suggesting that graduate students talk to their advisors prior to adding their areas of expertise so they can receive some guidance.

Karen Holl
Chair of Committee on Development and Fundraising