

**Graduate Council Minutes**  
**January 26, 2012**

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, January 26, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in 307 Kerr Hall.

**Present:** Bruce Schumm, Chair, Bettina Aptheker, Scott Brandt, Jorge Hankamer, Kimberly Jannarone, Raphael Kudela, Alkis Polyzotis, Megan Thomas, Tyrus Miller (DGS), Noah Meites (GSA), Alice Ye (GSA), Jim Moore (DGS), Michael Tassio (ASO)

**Absent:** Carol Shennan (with notice), Donald Smith, and Christy Caldwell (LAUC)

The minutes of January 12, 2012, were approved.

**Chair's Announcements**

Chair Schumm updated Graduate Council on recent items from the previous Senate Executive Committee (SEC) meeting. Rebenching efforts are moving forward, and a favorable outcome for UCSC appears likely. Part of the rebenching discussion involves the relative weight given to graduate and undergraduate students in determining funding levels. UCSC is finding some unexpected partners in the UC system in its interest in providing a greater weight for graduate students.

Major-mapping, a project to create visual diagram for majors showing prerequisites, course dependencies and sequences for all requirements and electives, will soon be implemented by campus administration and the Committee on Education Policy. Departments are currently discussing principles they should adopt.

**Follow-Up Discussion: Expanding the Chancellor's Fellowship beyond PhD applicants**

Returning to a topic from the January 12 meeting, one GC member made a case that the Chancellor's Fellowships should be extended to MFA students. MFA students are in the unique situation of often needing additional funding for production costs associated with creating art. Because of changing mediums in the arts, production costs have greatly increased for some students. Moreover, similar to the PhD, the MFA is a terminal degree and some students go on to careers in academia.

Dean Miller encouraged MFA granting programs like DANM to present their case to him and Graduate Council. While the decision has been made to not extend the Chancellor's Award to MFA students this year, Dean Miller and Graduate Council agreed to leave the issue open for reconsideration. Chair Schumm encouraged those interested in promoting the issue to apprise themselves of the principles behind the funding of graduate education laid out in the Attiyeh Report from the early 1980s.

There is concern from some GC members that awarding MFA students takes funding desperately needed from PhD students whose time to completion is nearly twice as long (roughly 6 years,

rather than 2 or 3 for an MFA). Further, Dean Miller reported that many graduate students reach 18 quarters at UCSC and lose their funding and ability to work as Teaching Assistants.

This conversation raised questions about how campus resources are distributed to graduate students. Are PhD students, for instance, weighted too heavily in the distribution of funds? Should MFA students have more opportunities for funding? It was noted that MFA programs are relatively new to UCSC, only 6 years old, and more thought needs to be put into answering these questions

A member voiced concern that on some university campuses the MFA is not respected as a significant academic degree, and that there is a long history of MFA students not being adequately funded on those campuses.

Dean Miller noted that some MFA programs are expressly for professional degrees and that the funding MFA programs receive needs to be considered with the orientation of each program.

One member raised a possible solution, proposing that awards designed for PhD students be open to MFA students, when possible, but at half the award amount (given the difference in time to completion).

This discussion will be continued at the next GC meeting.

### **Cota Robles Committee Selection**

Chair Schumm selected the Cota Robles Selection Committee. The committee consists of Chair Schumm, Scott Brandt, Jorge Hankamer, and Carol Shennan. They are charged with reviewing applications and making recommendations by January 31.

### **DGS Announcements**

Dean Miller announced that UCSC will again host Stanford's Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence (DARE) program designed to prepare students for careers in academia. Students from UCSC will be included in this year's event.

Over the past several months, Dean Miller has been working with Senior Administration to receive more funding to support non-resident tuition costs for graduate students, especially international students. As a result of the high non-resident tuition costs many excellent international students are unable to attend UCSC. Senior Administration has agreed to allocate funds, to be awarded competitively towards the mitigation of non-resident tuition for international doctoral students. This is an important step for UCSC, and the Graduate Division will have the chance to demonstrate that an initiative such as this can be successful in increasing the diversity and quality of the graduate student body. Announcements regarding the program have been sent out to divisional deans.

Returning to the conversation regarding funding for MFA students, it was noted that the funds to support non-resident tuition costs for international doctoral students will not be available to MA or MFA students.

### **GSA Announcements**

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is currently working on two central projects. First, they are working to create a new category for graduate student support titled “Graduate Assistantship.” This category is designed for non-academic appointments and will provide an opportunity for graduate students to build their resumes. GSAs have met with Senior UCSC Administration and have gained some traction on this issue. Second, GSA is working to create a cooperative living arrangement at what is currently Family Student Housing (FSH). While FSH has long been an affordable option for graduate students, costs have increased and it has become too expensive for many students. GSA has requested figures on costs from Housing Services, but has not received any response from them. Chair Schumm remarked that graduate student housing has regularly been an issue discussed in Graduate Council, and that GC should continue to be a venue for these discussions. He noted that this proposal is different because of the cooperative initiative attached to it, and offered GCs support in the exploration of the idea.

### **Library Announcements**

There were no announcements from the library.

### **Learning Objectives on Course Approval Supplemental Sheets**

Graduate Council discussed VPDUE Hughey’s request for feedback on emphasizing learning objectives on the graduate course approval supplemental sheet. Chair Schumm framed the conversation and raised the question of whether or not GC was interested in doing this. One member wondered if courses already approved would need to be submitted for approval again, if the supplemental sheet is changed. While something such as this may arise as part of the WASC accreditation review, any changes to the supplemental sheet would apply only for newly-proposed courses.

There is concern from some GC members that learning objectives might be interpreted too broadly, and result in being less meaningful. A philosophy course might have as its learning objective, for instance, to turn philosophy students into philosophers. The nuances in learning objectives for particular courses might be overlooked by busy instructors hurriedly completing the required course approval paperwork. Nevertheless, many GC members thought the proposal was a good idea. One member remarked that at best asking instructors to think about learning objectives will be very helpful for their teaching, and at worst it will just be another question or two on the supplemental sheet for them to answer. Further, it is possible course approval requests that do not adequately detail learning objectives will be returned for additional comment prior to approval.

GC shifted their conversation to focusing on the sort of question that could be asked on the form. One way to engage instructors to think intellectually about learning objectives is to ask them to

think about what sorts of knowledge they expect their students to gain from the particular course. One member proposed the following: What do you expect a student to do or understand after taking this course? GC members agreed that there needs to be guidance to go along with question to clarify what learning objectives are. Another member noted that learning objectives transcend time in a way that course content does not; while reading materials on a syllabus will change over time, learning objectives will remain the same.

Dean Miller proposed that the question also ask how the course helps the student advance within the program. This secondary question will better frame the larger purpose for the course within the program. There was concern from at least one GC member about this proposal given that not all faculty agree on the focus of a program. Perhaps this will trigger department to engage in meaningful discussions about the learning objectives of their programs.

A GC member noticed that Question 5 on the supplemental sheet already asks instructors to think about course objectives within a program. Re-writing Question 5 provides an excellent opportunity for focusing on learning objectives. Another GC member wondered whether or not a program that has already developed learning objectives would just be able to index them on the supplemental sheet. This would save the instructor time, and might be a way of demonstrating how the course fits into the program. While this would make the process quicker, it might not adequately speak to what the VPDUE is looking for.

Chair Schumm agreed to draft a response to VPDUE Hughey focused on reframing Question 5, and to discuss it at the February 8 GC meeting.

#### **Five-Year Perspectives – 2012-13 – 2016-17**

Graduate Council reviewed the Five-Year Perspectives – 2012-13 – 2016-17 and found them very informative. They had no formal comments.

#### **Suspending Graduate Program Admissions**

Graduate Council members agreed that a procedure needs to be developed for graduate programs to notify GC and the Dean of Graduate Studies if they decide to self-suspend admissions to their program. Jim Moore asked that a deadline of September 30<sup>th</sup> be given to departments so Graduate Studies can block applications from being submitted before they are posted online on October 1. Chair Schumm requested that DGS present GC with a list of all programs with suspended admissions, and the duration of those suspensions, at the first meeting of each academic year, given that they may be indicators of other problems within programs.

#### **Update from the Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs Subcommittee**

The subcommittee has identified a dozen programs that have attempted to form interdisciplinary programs, and they have created a contact list for about 30 faculty members associated with them. Subcommittee members have divided into two groups and are planning 90 minute meetings with the faculty members. The objective of the meetings is to learn program

imperatives for interdisciplinary programs as well as their successes and set-backs. This information will be conveyed to VPAA Lee and EVC Galloway at GC consultations in spring.

The meeting adjourned at 3:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Schumm, Chair  
Graduate Council