

Graduate Council Minutes**March 8, 2012**

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, March 8, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in 307 Kerr Hall.

Present: Bruce Schumm, *Chair*, Bettina Aptheker, Scott Brandt, Jorge Hankamer, Carol Shennan, Donald Smith, Megan Thomas, Tyrus Miller (DGS), Christy Caldwell (LAUC), Noah Meites (GSA), Alice Ye (GSA), Jim Moore (DGS), Michael Tassio (ASO)

Absent with Notice: Kimberly Jannarone, Raphael Kudela, Alkis Polyzotis

Consent Agenda

The minutes from February 23, 2012, were approved with minor corrections.

Chair's Announcements

The Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) met recently and discussed California Senate Bill 259, which expands the definition of employees under the Higher Education-Employer Relations Act (HEERA) to include student employees whose employment is contingent upon their status as students. Similar to Teaching Assistants, if the bill becomes law, Research Assistants will gain workload protections, job security rights, child care subsidies, etc. The bill is currently with the Assembly and it is very likely to pass. The general sense amongst CCGA members is that the Governor will not veto the bill, even though it is in contrast with legislation he signed into law during his first term as Governor. Following the likely passage of the bill, members expect there will be a campaign amongst Research Assistants to unionize. In contrast to work sometimes done by Teaching Assistants, work done by Research Assistants is often well integrated with their academic pursuits, and it would not be surprising if the number of hours they work exceeds the number they are allotted, raising the potential for misunderstandings and grievances. Depending on the details of the contract UC may also need to be careful to follow fair hiring practices, which will delay the hiring process prompting some concern that faculty will miss opportunities to hire outstanding Research Assistants when opportunistic funding materializes. It was noted that some faculty and graduate students at the University of Michigan have mobilized in opposition to a similar bill.

There was recent action on two UCSC program proposals at CCGA. The Latin American and Latino Studies Ph.D. program was approved, as was the Theater Arts M.A. CCGA members strongly approved both programs, but noted concerns about starting any program in the current economic climate.

On February 15, the UC Assembly of the Academic Senate approved the proposal to put forward a "Memorial to the Regents" calling on the Regents to publicly advocate for support for the university. Although specifically stated, this initiative is geared towards specific ballot measures or legislation that would increase revenue to the state and/or prioritize state allocation of funds to the University. The Memorial is expected to gain approval of Senate faculty, and administrators are hopeful that faculty will send a strong message by garnering a large voter turnout.

The University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC) has drafted an open access policy for the UC and will soon solicit feedback from campus academic senate committees.

UC online curriculum efforts are expanding and it is not yet clear how this will impact graduate level education, including opportunities for Teaching Assistantships. Two central aspects are motivating online education: 1) economies of scale; and 2) generating revenue by offering courses on a pay-as-you-go basis for non-matriculated students. Questions regarding UCOP's decision to move forward with the unfunded pilot program for online education remain, and faculty opinions on their decision vary.

For the third consecutive year, UCSC graduate students will participate in a Graduate Research Symposium next week in Sacramento to showcase the value of graduate level research. Students have appointments with several legislators.

The issue of the November 2011 defunding of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), which oversees all three branches (UC, CSU, CCC) of the California Higher Education system, was discussed at CCGA. Although CPEC was widely acknowledged as an ineffective oversight body, it provided a well-run and critical data repository, including over 30 years of aggregated data from the public postsecondary segments. This function has been temporarily assumed by the Community College System, but a permanent solution has not been achieved. There is also a growing concern that without an effective oversight body, legislators will feel compelled to step in and introduce legislation that "micro-manages" the University. For instance, a bill was recently introduced that includes a moratorium on starting any new program at UC. The bill is merely an "intent" bill, a placeholder, and not clearly articulated, but it raises concerns about the vacuum created by the demise of CPEC. Discussions of what, if anything, might replace CPEC are underway between UC, the Governor, and the Legislative Analyst's Office; at this point it is not clear how those discussions might play out.

Graduate Student Association President Eric Green has requested feedback from GC on a draft proposal of a System-wide Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. Chair Schumm formed a sub-committee to review the document and invited all Council members to provide feedback.

DGS Announcements

Dean Miller reported on the recent meeting with the General Council of Brazil, who is exploring Universities where Brazilian students can study abroad. The meeting was extraordinary and featured presentations from distinguished UCSC faculty representing diversity of divisions. UCSC administrators are hopeful that they will soon finalize an agreement with the General Council that will be of mutual benefit. UC Davis has ratified an agreement, and UC Berkeley is in negotiations. Dean Miller is working with departments to learn more from them about how many students they would have the potential to accommodate. It was noted that an agreement will not change any admissions policies; departments will not be forced to accept any Brazilian students.

Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Jim Moore reported that the application cycle is winding down and UCSC has received roughly 3,600 applications. This is the first time in UCSC's history that they have received more than 3,500 applications for graduate level education. Many departments are keeping wait lists for students rather than merely sending acceptance and rejection letters.

Assistant Dean Moore recently attended a two-day conference at UC Davis on Stanford's transatlantic training program, where he developed new ideas for a leadership program at UCSC. In general, UCSC was well represented and attendees were very pleased with our program.

GSA Announcements

There were no GSA announcements.

Library Announcements

Alumni, students, faculty & staff, and community members are invited to celebrate the opening of the newly expanded and renovated McHenry Library on April 27, 2012. Special tours and demonstrations will be given in Special Collections and the Grateful Dead Archive.

Request to Offer Designated Emphasis in History of Consciousness

Members discussed the History of Consciousness proposal to structure a Designated Emphasis (DE) into their program, and reviewed questions raised by the Dean of Humanities. Members were supportive of the proposal but agreed that two issues should be addressed before granting approval. First, based on GC's awareness of experience with DEs in other departments, a requirement needs to be added to the proposal that assures that the candidate select and meet with the History of Consciousness advisor early in the DE process, and in consultation with the home department, establish a preliminary course of DE-specific study. Signature of the form by the student's advisor, a History of Consciousness faculty member, and the Graduate Directors of both departments would signal approval of the DE proposal, which would be awarded upon successful completion. Second, the Council felt it important that the proposal be more explicit with respect to whether the four courses required for the DE be listed as courses offered by the History of Consciousness Department, or if courses offered by other departments, but taught by History of Consciousness affiliated faculty, can also be counted among the four. If so, the department should specify for how many this may be true. This is particularly relevant for the case of independent study.

The discussion raised questions about ambiguities within the Designated Emphasis Policy and members agreed that Council needs to revisit the form later this year.

FTE Transfers in Social Sciences

Council discussed the proposal to transfer the FTE of two professors in the Division of Social Sciences and strongly recommended that the Dean and faculty in question make every possible effort to explore alternative options.

Graduate Student Association Housing Resolution

Council members reviewed a draft of the Graduate Student Association's "Affordable Family Student Housing Proposal" and discussed challenges facing graduate students. Members found

merits to the proposal and agreed in principle that it is important for the University to offer graduate students high-quality, inexpensive housing.

Regarding specific calculations within the proposal, Council members were skeptical about some of the projected costs noting that they are likely underestimated. Nevertheless, members understand the concerns voiced in the proposal, and are supportive of their efforts.

Dean Miller has already provided feedback on the proposal and made several recommendations, including the following: consulting closer with the Berkeley Student Cooperative; reconsidering some of the projected costs; clearly defining what is meant by “family.”

Graduate Council is interested in reviewing a revised version of the proposal and is willing to assist the GSA in ensuring that administrators listen to their concerns, but given other GC commitments, they might not be able to take this back up until the 2012-13 academic year.

Update from Interdisciplinary Graduate Program Subcommittee

Graduate Council’s Interdisciplinary Graduate Program (IGP) Subcommittee recently held four focus group meetings with 16 faculty members, representing all five academic divisions, who are associated with prior, ongoing, or prospective interdisciplinary programs. A number of themes emerged from the meetings that IGP members reported to GC:

- Many faculty felt that the extent of interdisciplinary effort on our campus was not particularly notable relative to our peer institutions.
- Not all interdisciplinary groups on campus are truly interdisciplinary in the sense that interdisciplinary collaborations are not being sparked.
- Digital Arts and New Media (DANM) has been very successful with interdisciplinary collaborations, but faces serious problems with funding given that their FTE positions were soft-funded and can be dramatically diminished; there were further questions about MOUs with DANM faculty.
- There was a sense that there was too little interest in and support for IGERT proposals among the divisional deans.
- Faculty felt that there were significant administrative impediments to team- and co-teaching between departments and divisions.
- There was a sense that there was too little interest in and weight given to interdisciplinary programs and collaboration by the division deans. There was also a sense that the “siloed” divisional structure impedes the collaborative deployment of campus resources.
- A number of faculty perceive that divisional focus on national ranking and, to a lesser extent, funding categories, which can be arrayed along disciplinary lines, acts as a counter-incentive to developing excellence through interdisciplinary collaboration.
- There is much enthusiasm amongst faculty for interdisciplinary programs, but they require significant grassroots efforts that could be mitigated if there was a clear set of procedures for developing interdisciplinary programs.
- A number of participating faculty felt that much of their interdisciplinary activity was “lost effort” that isn’t reflected in the assignment of workload or during the personnel review process.

Pre-Consultation for meeting with VPAA Lee

Members discussed issues of mutual interest to the Council and VPAA Lee and identified three areas of focus for their April 5 consultation: Interdisciplinary Graduate Study, The Silicon Valley Center Academic Plan, and issues related to graduate education pertaining to the upcoming re-accreditation.

Social Documentation M.A. Deferral Request

There was no support among Graduate Council for the Social Documentation Program's request to defer its responses to inquiries of the Council dated April 22, 2011. Council agreed to request that Social Documentation respond to their inquiries no later than April 27, 2012, to allow time for any issues raised by the responses to be identified and addressed this academic year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Schumm, Chair
Graduate Council