

## **Graduate Council Minutes October 20, 2011**

The Graduate Council met on Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. in 307 Kerr Hall.

**Present:** Bruce Schumm, Chair, Bettina Aptheker, Scott Brandt, Jorge Hankamer, Kimberly Jannarone, Raphael Kudela, Carol Shennan, Donald Smith, Megan Thomas, Tyrus Miller (DGS), Christy Caldwell (LAUC), Meg Gudgeirsson (GSA), Alice Ye (GSA) and Stephanie Casher (ASO).

The minutes of 10/6/11 were approved.

### **Chair's Announcements**

Chair Schumm reported that he met with Economics Chair Carl Walsh, in regard to GC's recent recommendation against moving the Economics department to an eight-year review cycle. Chair Walsh had some concerns that his department was being mischaracterized, and wanted to clarify some things in response to our letter. He acknowledged that the table in the MidCycle report regarding graduate student support was misleading; in fact, the number of unsupported graduate students in the table represent students who have *applied*, not students who have been accepted.

Chair Walsh also wanted to address our concern that the department lacks a plan for moving forward in light of reduced FTE numbers. He informed Chair Schumm that their plan is to use revenue generated by the PDST to hire additional faculty.

From SEC: They are continuing to talk about rebenching, and are pushing to home in on a recommendation by the end of the calendar year. Elements of the rebenching proposal may pertain to the issue of NRT; those privileged to the discussion will follow this.

The Chair of CFW made a presentation about devising sensible metrics to evaluate faculty salary and faculty step advancement. A formal report is forthcoming.

Afterwards Schumm met with Senate leadership and talked briefly about Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs. A list was generated of programs that had strong interdisciplinary components (HistCon, MeTOX, Ocean Sciences, Feminist Studies, Bioinformatics, LALS, Digital Arts and New Media, Materials Science, CBSE). What is the optimal structure of such programs?

### **DGS Announcements**

Dean Miller informed Graduate Council that he is representing the Council of Graduate Deans at CCGA.

Since January, the Graduate Division has been working with divisions and some faculty on formal sponsorship of the SACNAS program. The conference is Oct 27-30, 2011. Dean Miller thinks this could be a fantastic recruitment tool.

The Graduate Division is developing a Graduate Leadership Academy, similar to the Staff and Faculty Leadership Academies, which they would like to pilot this year. It is a way to connect people from different disciplines, as well as cover areas of leadership such as department chairs, senate members, administrators, etc. The goal is to run the Leadership Academy in Winter quarter, 2012.

Dean Miller is interested in having Graduate Council review and endorse the Leadership Academy as an official certificate program.

Dean Miller is also looking at the funding mechanisms for graduate education, such as nonresident tuition, grants, professional master's programs, etc.

Dean Miller informed GC of new financial aid rules that have been propagated by the federal government. There is now a strict set of criteria in regard to minimum progress in a program and time to degree. They are now counting calendar years (four before you advance to candidacy, and three after you advance to candidacy) with the possibility of one extension. Faculty need to be made aware of this change, so they can inform their students.

### **GSA Announcements**

None

### **Library Announcements**

- McHenry is now open, and if anyone is interested in a tour, please let her know.
- Librarian assignments to departments may have changed.

### **SR610 Residency**

Graduate Council reviewed SR 610, which aims to clarify the definition of what it means to be “in residence.” There are certainly some cautions we want to guard against, but there are also some potentially positive developments that could occur with a more flexible interpretation of residency. One perspective that was offered was that, while the changes would greatly liberalize the notion of residency, it would allow campuses, and even programs, to be more flexible in their development of new programs. On our campus, for example, growing Silicon Valley could be hindered by construing residency too narrowly.

One member opined that, while he found the proposed changes unproblematic, he felt the comment about ‘mode of delivery’ was unnecessary.

Another member was not comfortable with the proposal at all, though she can appreciate the logic behind it. She feels it opens the door wide for online instruction, which is not good for students, and particularly not good for our graduate students.

There are also concerns about how this change would impact the idea of forming a cohort amongst a group of students, and how central that is to certain graduate programs.

There is also an issue with increased FTE in relation to library services. An increase in enrollments could translate into an increase in subscriptions, which could have a fiscal impact on library services.

However, this type of flexibility could open up graduate study to ‘nontraditional’ students, such as working professionals, and could really benefit some segments of the population.

One member pointed out that there are many wonderful programs, already in existence (such as programs that offer educational opportunities to soldiers in Iraq), that could be negatively impacted if these changes were to be voted down.

One member was curious about what other universities in the country are doing. The Graduate Dean stated that he would be willing to assemble some data if members are interested.

With all these pros and cons, what is the middle ground?

GC expressed reservations about the move toward online education, and although the vote was not unanimous, GC agreed to approve the proposal in principle, with the suggestion to strike the language referring to ‘mode of delivery’. Although it is not our purview, GC feels that undergraduates should have a different standard in regard to residency. Chair Schumm will draft a response letter to be discussed at the next meeting.

### **Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The Graduate Dean, having read Graduate Council’s response, was concerned about purview. He didn’t understand how the creation of the ‘Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities’ document impinged on senate oversight, and how this issue was in the purview of Graduate Council.

The Dean of Engineering was also not particularly receptive to Graduate Council’s criticism.

Graduate Council clarified the areas that they felt were clearly within the purview of Graduate Council, such as references to graduate student instruction and graduate evaluation.

The GSA is also developing a similar document, outlining the rights of graduate students.

Graduate Council decided to convene a subcommittee to work on revising these documents, with the aim of creating a set of principles that can be applied to all graduate students across all divisions. Scott Brandt, Don Smith, and Dean Miller volunteered to serve on the subcommittee, with Scott Brandt chairing. A GSA representative will also be appointed.

### **Social and Environmental Practice in the Arts MFA Proposal**

GC began discussion of the Social and Environmental Practice in the Arts MFA Proposal.

There are several mentions of the program collaborating with other departments on campus, yet none of the departments mentioned (such as Environmental Studies and Theater Arts) have been formally approached.

To what extent does the reliance on other departments make or break this program? The program also proposes coursework in other departments, but can students in this MFA program actually get into the courses that are listed? Are the named departments in the Social Sciences able to accommodate the students from this program?

Other questions: How is this program going to distinguish itself with degree-granting rigor? Would this program be better conceived as an interdisciplinary program, as opposed to being situated solely in the Arts?

There was also some concern about the use of GSIs to mount the program in the third year.

Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10pm.

So Attests,

Bruce Schumm, Chair  
Graduate Council