

GRADUATE COUNCIL
February 13, 2014
Kerr Hall Room 307, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Present: Bruce Schumm, *Chair*, John Bowin, Leta Miller, Tyrus Miller, ex officio, Juan Poblete, Deborah Gould, Seth Rubin, Wang-Chiew Tan, Micah Rahder (Graduate rep), Erin Ellison (Graduate Rep)

Absent with Notice: Ken Kletzer, Pascale Garaud, Christy Caldwell (Library Rep), Michelle Glowa (Graduate Rep)

Guest: Jim Moore (Assistant Dean, Grad Division)

Consent Agenda

The draft minutes from the December 5, 2013 and January 16, 2014 GC meetings were approved as written.

Routine Announcements

Chair

Chair Schumm reported on a meeting between UC and Silicon Valley industry representatives aimed at improving UC/industry relations and support for UC graduate students moving into industry positions. This initiative goes beyond the traditional STEM fields. Also, Chair Schumm and Graduate Dean Miller will participate in a systemwide meeting on graduate study that will feed into the May meeting of the UC Regents.

Dean of Graduate Studies

Dean Miller reported that UCSC has submitted an NSF proposal along with UC Merced and UC Santa Barbara, to diversify the STEM fields. Also, UCSC is the recipient of an Integrative Graduate Humanities Education and Research Training (IGHERT) grant from the Mellon Foundation.

Education Department Ph.D. Program Follow-up

The council continued its discussion on the state of the Education Ph.D. program. Having voted not to suspend admissions to the program for 2014-15, the council turned to the issue of benchmarks for the department to allow continued admission in 2015-16. One serious concern is the likelihood that faculty positions lost to retirement or separation will not be replaced. Given this, the council discussed asking the Education Department for a four to five year outlook on their Ph.D. program assuming no new FTE in the department. The council also discussed giving the department an opportunity to advocate for more FTE, but to obtain a letter of support from the Dean of Social Sciences if their program outlook depended on these new positions.

Chair Schumm reminded the council that the key issue is whether the department can continue to mount the necessary curriculum for the Ph.D. program. The council's default position is that programs are allowed to admit students unless a serious problem is identified that merits suspension. For Education, the council discussed flipping this default, and asking the department to provide proof of its viability before admissions were allowed for the 2015-16.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Vice Provost of Academic Affairs (VPAA) Lee asked the council to opine on a new process in which all UCSC programs provide an annual update on their assessment efforts through the creation of program learning outcomes. The council reviewed sample PLOs and discussed whether the documents ought to be reviewed by the council and whether they ought to be included in the catalog. Members talked about the value in the exercise of writing PLOs, connecting what departments believe they are doing with what is actually happening. Some members supported the creation of a list of outcomes that all graduate programs ought to include, such as research practice, teaching, and ethics. Other disagreed, arguing that the PLOs ought to come from the ground up and not be an imposition from any body, including the council.

By majority vote, the council agreed that the PLOs should be publicly available, but not included in the catalog. The graduate handbook and the program websites are more logical locations for PLOs. A letter to the VPAA will be drafted by the council reflecting this decision and the surrounding discussion.

Program Statement Changes

The council conducted its annual review of proposed program statement changes.

Computer Engineering – The council discussed the elimination of the preliminary exam, which used to be a requirement to continue in the Ph.D. program after year three. The change was not adequately explained in the department's cover letter, so the council agreed to solicit more information prior to approval.

History – approved

Biomolecular Engineering – The council discussed the proposed reduction of normative time to degree. Graduate Representative Ellison added that this can have adverse effects on students, who may not be able to get TAs if they are beyond normative time. The council agreed to solicit more information on this change prior to approval.

Philosophy – The council had trouble with the organization of the statement, as a key element (a substantial research paper) was explained in detail after it was first mentioned. The council agreed to ask for a formatting change prior to approval.

Overseeing Deans of Academic Programs

The council discussed a question posed by VPAA Lee regarding whether non-divisional deans (deans of undergraduate and graduate education) can oversee academic programs. Members raised the issue of interdisciplinary programs that may not have a logical overseeing dean. The ability to have the Dean of Graduate Studies as an overseer of an academic program could be valuable in this instance. The council felt that the appropriateness of having a non-divisional dean overseeing a program was contextual and could be considered on a case-by-case basis. A letter to the VPAA will be drafted outlining this position.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.