

GRADUATE COUNCIL

October 24, 2013

Present: Bruce Schumm, *Chair*, John Bowin, Christy Caldwell (Library), Ken Kletzer, Leta Miller, Jim Moore, Juan Poblete, Pascale Garaud, Deborah Gould, Seth Rubin, Wang-Chiew Tan, Micha Rahder (GSA)

Absent: Tyrus Miller, *ex officio*

Guest: Jim Moore, Assistant Dean, Graduate Division

Consent Agenda

Approval of the meeting minutes of October 10, 2013 – tabled until next meeting.

Routine Announcements

Chair

Chair Schumm provided an update on SEC's discussion of graduate growth, noting that there needs to be further discussion between the Senate and administration on this topic. While there was no crisp formulation of a consensus at this point, one possibility is to create a document that raises questions about how the administration envisions graduate growth.

Dean of Graduate Studies

Jim Moore provided an early update on graduate applications.

Graduate Student Association Representative (pending GSA committee assignments)

Chair Schumm noted that GSA has regularly generated important agenda items for the Council.

Librarian Representative

Librarian Rep Caldwell reported that the library received a \$500,000 grant to support graduate students through GSR appointments, one for two years, and one for three years.

Proposal from Digital Arts & New Media to Extend the MFA Program From Two to Three Years (Continued discussion from October 10)

The Digital Arts and New Media program has proposed modifying their existing MFA program from two to three years with the expectation that a longer program will significantly strengthen student research and creative work. Council members expressed enthusiasm for migration to a three-year structure for the DANM program, but expressed concerns about fiscal issues raised by this extension. The Council discussed the implications for the program's curriculum and its ability to support graduate students. The Council agreed to draft a letter and revisit this topic at the next GC meeting.

Draft Proposal for a Masters Incentive Program

The Council discussed a proposal to incentivize Masters' programs by implementing a tuition revenue sharing model. The program has several goals including creating greater program

flexibility for doctoral growth (through MA tuition), improving research capacity, and enhancing UCSC's relevance for regional industry. The Council will revisit this issue at the next meeting.

Review of the UCSC International Recruitment Assessment Draft Report

CDB Solutions was contracted by UCSC to assist with campus efforts to assess the potential of increasing international student enrollment. The Graduate Council reviewed the draft of CDB Solution's International Recruitment Assessment Report. The Council did not find much to comment upon with respect to graduate education, which is appropriate as the work of the consultant is primarily geared towards attracting non-resident-tuition-paying international students to both enhance the diversity of the undergraduate student body as well as to reach the enrollment numbers mandated by the Office of the President. The Council was in support of the efforts of the consultant to aid the campus in reaching this goal, and noted that the resulting reclamation of tuition funding is likely to benefit both graduate and undergraduate education on campus.

The draft report made one or two points about graduate applicants that the Council discussed. According to statistics they have been provided, the acceptance rates for international Masters applicants is quite low, which raises the possibility that students who are desirable both from an academic and financial perspective are not being invited to enter degree programs of interest to them. This perhaps deserves attention. The report also presented statistics on admissions rates of international Ph.D. applicants. In this case, though, the Council discussed whether the relative rate of admissions for domestic and international applicants is a good measure of the ease of access to international students to the campus's Ph.D. programs. If objective measures could be found, it would be interesting to assess the relative quality of domestic and international admits, to understand if potential impediments, such as the high cost of supporting students that are ineligible for in-state tuition rates until advancing to candidacy, is leading to negative admissions decisions for highly-qualified international students.

External Reviews

The Council commented on two External Review Reports.: Science Communication and Environmental Studies.

Science Communication: The Council was impressed with the progress the program has made in revising its curriculum since the 2005 review. The program is now strategically focused on new media and providing its students with the skills they need for successful careers. The most critical issues facing the program at that time – the selection of a new director – has been addressed splendidly with the appointment of Director Irion. The program has made a smooth transition between the old and new directors. Irion has brought a significantly more youthful perspective to the program, and worked very hard and successfully to evolve the program's curriculum in response to significant changes in the way media is generated and delivered. Thanks to Director Irion's efforts, the program remains ranked among the top handful of programs in the country.

The Council agreed, however, that there are significant financial concerns that have the potential to threaten the health of the program. The Council noted that it may be necessary for Director Irion

to shift focus a bit, redirecting a significant effort towards the securing of the program's financial stability.

Environmental Studies: The Council noted that the external reviewers praised the department for its collegial faculty, strong external reputation for interdisciplinary study and research, and the success of their doctoral program in placing students in academic and non-academic positions. The Council shared these sentiments and congratulates the department on the successful and productive review.

The Council appreciated the praise given to the interdisciplinary core graduate courses, but raised the concern that the reviewers did not adequately evaluate the department's attempts to reconfigure their core introductory curriculum. The Council expressed interest in learning from the department about their progress.

The Council also noted that the doctoral program faces inherent vulnerability from competitor institutions that are able to make five year offers, and welcomed the news that Environmental Studies was able to make five year offers for the first time in 2012-13. The Council would like to hear from the department about whether they foresee being able to sustain formal 5-year offers.

The review committee commented on the potential for a UCSC School of the Environment. While the review committee's discussion of the School was generally vague, the Council was interested in hearing more from the Department and Dean about what developments, such as professional programs, might support the case for a School of the Environment. The Council was somewhat disappointed that there was little mention of the possibility of a School of the Environment in the Department's and Dean's responses. Along these lines, the Council was interested in thoughts on the reviewer's final recommendation that campus undertake a review of environment as a theme for the development of global leadership.

Experiential learning was described by the reviewers as a hallmark of both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Through the use of highly regarded facilities (such as CIRS, CASFS, and the Museum of Natural History Collections), faculty are able to foster experiential student learning. The reviewers praise all of these facilities and registered surprise to learn that budget cuts have threatened staff positions within them. Further, the reviewers state that CASFS is "one of the signature institutions at UCSC helping to shape its identity" and that "[it] has the potential to attract more interest and visibility especially if key investments are pursued." The Council would like to hear more from the department and division about their sense of the value of these institutions for the graduate program, and the nature of the budgetary tradeoffs that were considered in the decision to reduce funding to support these facilities.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.