GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES
October 22, 2015
307 Kerr Hall, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Present: Dean Mathiowetz (Chair *Pro Tem),* David Brundage, Pascale Garaud, Roberto Manduchi, Dard Neuman, Stefano Profumo, Ruby Rich, Tyrus Miller (ex officio), Christy Caldwell (Library Rep), Anjali Dutt (Graduate Student Rep), Jess Whatcott (Graduate Student Rep), Jessica Perez (Graduate Student Rep), Esthela Bañuelos (Senate Analyst)

Absent: Don Smith (Chair), Anjali Arondekar

Guests: Jim Moore, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies

Member's Items
VPDGS Miller provided an overview and context for his "Block Risk Reserve Fund for Doctoral Programs" proposal, to be deliberated at the Council's November 5, 2015 meeting. The proposal is intended to provide programs with flexibility in their use of allocations to smooth out spikes and troughs in acceptance rates and allow programs to allow drawing in extra students. The program would introduce two new features of the block allocation for the 2015-16 admissions process: 1) each block funded program will have established a consistently maintained reserve against risk of unexpected shortfalls, 2) programs through block carry forward, may supplement that reserve.

Dean Miller clarified that this is not new money, but the ability to deploy additional money to meet the spikes and needs. It's intended to prevent risk averse behaviors on the part of programs. Dean Miller also clarified that his proposal is not something that calls for GC approval, and that he would like the Council to be informed about the proposal and to have the Council's endorsement and comments. He would like to implement it this year, which means getting it in place now. He stated that unless there is some really glaring problem, the proposal will move forward.

Members raised questions about the details of the proposal, including how the carry forward could be used. The Council will deliberate this proposal at its next meeting.

Computational Media M.S. and Ph.D. Revised Proposal
The Council continued its discussion of the revised proposal for M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Computational Media, including feedback received from the Committee on Planning and Budget. The Council approved the proposal for consideration by the Office of the President and CCGA, and with its approval, recommended that the department include in the forwarded proposal information on the mix of Ph.D., academic M.S. and professional M.S. students that make up the student/faculty ratio, and the nature of student advising. The Council also recommends that VPAA Lee include the Senate review-related correspondence when forwarding this proposal to CCGA, in order to provide reviewers with the full depth of comments and review the proposal received at the divisional level.

Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment
Members reviewed the revised proposed Presidential Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, intended to bring UC into compliance with the requirements of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

The Council's deliberation raised several issues of concern related to the clarity of the proposed policy, definitions of reporting responsibilities and contexts in which these responsibilities are in effect, and the adequacy of the policy as proposed to sufficiently protect graduate students in their multiple and shifting roles as students and university employees. For example, the Council determined that the policy was insufficiently clear around definitions of mandated reporter, and of specific concern, graduate student requirements as mandated reporter and when this definition applies and when it does not. This left the Council wondering if the draft policy provides sufficient tools for addressing sexual violence and sexual harassment for graduate students.

The Council also discussed other confusing and inadequately addressed sections of the proposed policy. The   definition of "responsible employee" was deemed problematic because of the far reaching implications of making all employees (including graduate students serving in that capacity) mandated to report even confidential disclosures, and because it lacked specific provision for graduate students themselves as potential complainants.

Members pointed out that the proposed policy included separate definitions of sexual harassment for general situations and sexual harassment between students outside of an employment context, and raised concerned about the particular impact on graduate students. The issue of defining a mandated reporter, and the consequences and liabilities for both individuals and the institution were also unclear and potentially far reaching for faculty.

Finally members raised concern about the short timeline for Senate review and response on this critical issue. The Council requested that the concerns raised by GC and other Senate committees be carefully reviewed and addressed, and that a revised version is again circulated for systemwide review with sufficient time for careful deliberation.

Revised Proposal for a Designated Emphasis: HLMM
Faculty in Human Language Media and Models (HLMM) housed within Computational Media submitted a revised proposal for a Designated Emphasis, first reviewed by the Council during spring 2015. Members expressed enthusiasm about the prospect of creating an interdisciplinary DE that will take advantage of complementary interests among faculty in different disciplinary areas. The Council agreed that most of the issues raised during first review were addressed, but two issues remained to be clarified around how the requirement for attending HLMM related talks would be managed, and around continuity for required course CMPM 280Z. The Council noted it looks forward to seeing a revised proposal.

External Reviews
Supplemental Questions for External Review Committee (Stage 1)
Ocean Sciences
The Council discussed the upcoming review of the Ocean Sciences department. The Council is interested in the External Review Committee's (ERC) comments on the health of the current M.S. program and their plans for transition into a professional M.S. program, and particularly for the prospects of leveraging funding and internships for these students with local institutions and agencies. The Council is also interested in ERC comments on space issues, impact on graduate student enrollment, and possible solutions.

Biomolecular Engineering
The Council discussed the upcoming review of the Biomolecular Engineering Department. The Council is interested in ERC comments on the M.S. program, including plans for better integrating Ph.D. and M.S.

programs, resource models used to support M.S. students, and comments on the direct admit configuration. The Council also noted that the ERC should comment on how the fragmentation of BME faculty across six buildings potentially impacts graduate students, and what efforts might be undertaken to build greater graduate student interaction. Finally, the Council noted that the Graduate Student Survey identified concerns about the program not providing a supportive environment for women, students of color, and students from low income and diverse religious backgrounds, and would like the ERC to address what specific actions the department envisions to address this issue.

Sociology
The Council discussed the upcoming review of the Sociology Department. The Council is interested in ERC comments on the extent to which demands to deliver undergraduate curricula are impacting the quality and depth of the graduate curricula and program, as well as if recent changes to the graduate curricula are sufficient to alleviate the limitations students perceive in course offerings. The Council would also like addressed the department capacity for graduate growth, and what resources are necessary; how new faculty hires may alleviate the pressures on the graduate program and normalize the faculty: student ratio (or are additional hires necessary), and the assessment of the department's average time to candidacy of 4.4 years.

Comments on the ERC Report (Stage 2)
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
This item will be discussed at the next meeting.