

**GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES
June 11, 2020
307 Kerr Hall, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

Present: Don Smith (Chair), Banu Bargu, John Bowin, Sharon Daniel, Andrew Fisher, Daniel Friedman, Nobuhiko Kobayashi, Longzhi Lin, Alex Pang, Patricia Pinho, Edward Shanken, Quentin Williams (ex officio), Katharin Peter (Library Rep), Elizabeth Goldman (Grad Rep), Daniel Rodriguez Ramirez (Grad Rep), Esthela Bañuelos (Senate Analyst)

Absent: None.

Guest: Jim Moore, Assistant Dean, Graduate Division

Member Items

Chair Smith thanked members and graduate representatives for their service on Graduate Council this year.

Chair Smith provided an update on the systemwide CCGA meeting of June 3, 2020. He reported that topics of discussion included efforts to extend the 18 quarter ASE limit and updates about divisional GC's action and planning related to COVID-19.

Acting VPDGS Williams provided a brief update on President Trump's May 29 proclamation and its anticipated impact on the incoming graduate class. The proclamation is expected to impact entering students from China that are "aligned with defense universities in China." Continuing students would not be affected, but this is expected to substantially impact the entering class.

A graduate student representative raised the issue of racialized language in a case of a student conduct summons. GC discussed this issue and what GC could do as a body given its purview. GC has also heard of sufficient accounts of racial bias, that suggest much more needs to be done on the campus to address the impact of racism on students of color. Graduate Council did not have sufficient information to draw a conclusion about this specific event, but agreed that if the described events were correct, it indicates a serious problem in racially-based application of the student disciplinary process, and it undermines attempts by the administration to demonstrate fairness and equity in these proceedings. GC decided it would ask the iCP/EVC to investigate these concerns and will make a request to the iCP/EVC in formal communication. GC would like to see a review of disciplinary procedures, and the ways in which these may, even inadvertently, disproportionately impact and discipline students of color. GC would also like a retrospective review of the student conduct cases over the last two years, through the lens of sensitivity to racial bias, to determine whether, for example, students of color are disproportionately represented in (and impacted by) graduate student conduct summons as compared to white students, or whether there are significant differences in disciplinary decisions and/or severity of disciplinary actions across race/ethnicity.

COVID-19 Impacts on TA Resource Needs

The Council continued its open discussion of the impacts of COVID-19 on graduate students and graduate education. Chair Smith provided an update on conversations with Senate Leadership and the iCP/EVC, following from the most recent GC meeting discussions. He reported that the iCP/EVC will formally communicate with deans so they can ensure departments communicate with TAs about resources that are available to provide to fulfill their TA duties, and to make communication protocols more clear and accessible.

GSI for Graduate Courses: Criteria, Guidelines, Process (Continued)

Graduate Council continued its discussion regarding revising its policy, guidelines, and process for appointment of GSI's, in order to reflect the role of faculty mentors in overseeing the assessment and grading process for GSI taught graduate courses. Chair Smith provided an update on his recent meeting with the campus Director of Labor Relations. Council reviewed and finalized the revised form for GSI requests for graduate courses.

Added Item: CCI Proposed Changes to GSI Criteria for Undergraduate Courses

Graduate Council (GC) reviewed the Committee on Courses of Instruction's (CCI) proposed changes to its Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) appointment criteria for undergraduate courses. Council commended CCI for taking on a reexamination of its current policy, with a focus on quality of undergraduate instruction on the UCSC campus, as well as quality of faculty mentoring of GSIs teaching undergraduate students.

Council had limited time to devote to discussion of CCI's proposal, however, members raised issues in response to three of the changes proposed by CCI: the proposed criteria making GSIs ineligible to teach undergraduate courses that require Teaching Assistants, the criteria that mentors may not oversee more than two GSIs without course relief, and the proposal to make ineligible students with academic integrity and other disciplinary actions from the university.

Feminist Studies Report

During a recent meeting, GC reviewed the response from Feminist Studies and the Humanities Dean to GC's request (6/28/2019) for additional reporting on the status of several issues, as part of GC's monitoring of the FMST graduate programs. GC followed up with an additional request for information after the last meeting (GC to FMST 5/19/20). A response to that report (including IRAPS survey data) was reviewed at today's meeting. Members decided next steps in its monitoring of the Feminist Studies Department, including a request for further reporting from Feminist studies (to be submitted in early fall 2020).

aVPDGS Response: Graduate Funding Process Changes and Academic Standing Language

Earlier this quarter, GC reviewed a letter, signed by graduate directors and department chairs, to aVPDGS Williams and Assistant Grad Dean Moore, along with student standing language in offer letters. GC generated a request for additional information to aVPDGS Williams after this discussion (4/10/20).

While aVPDGS Williams did not provide a formal response to Graduate Council's letter of April 10, 2020, he did via email communication (4/30/20 and 6/8/20) forward two responses that went out to the campus Graduate Advisory Group (GAG) listserv that addressed concerns in the faculty graduate directors and department chairs letter and Graduate Council's letter. These responses were reviewed at today's meeting. aVPDGS Williams' position was that there have not been any process changes associated with distribution or management of block allocation, but acknowledged that there were shifts in perceptions about central management of the block and perhaps a lack of understanding of block management. The decisions about block management were framed in the context of the fiscal constraints imposed by the five year funding guarantee (two year for MFAs), which aVPDGS Williams stated mandate extreme judiciousness by the Graduate Division.