

**GRADUATE COUNCIL**  
**Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (IGP)**  
Proposed May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011

UCSC has one of the lowest enrollments of graduate students, in terms of percentage of overall student enrollment of any UC campus. In order to grow our graduate student programs, and enrollments, we need models for offering interdisciplinary graduate programs that do not rely on starting new departments. UCSC has 3 different mechanisms for pursuing interdisciplinary graduate programs (IGP), namely the ad hoc interdisciplinary doctoral program, an umbrella admissions program, and interdisciplinary graduate group.

The ad hoc interdisciplinary doctoral program is modeled on a similar program available at UC Berkeley. This program allows the Graduate Council and Dean of Graduate Studies to recognize the doctoral equivalent of an “individual major” at the undergraduate level. Such ad hoc interdisciplinary programs would, by their nature, be relatively rare and require a significant degree of faculty and decanal review before being approved; however, they offer the significant advantage of allowing faculty and students to respond rapidly to new interdisciplinary fields. They can be used to seed and test emergent interdisciplinary areas that could lead to more formal IGP’s. Suggested guidelines for this new adhoc program are provided below.

The umbrella admissions program allows faculty from different departments to offer a combined degree program with joint admissions into the program. In practice, it works similar to an interdisciplinary graduate group; however, the degree that is granted is an existing graduate program on campus. Consequently, it is not a new degree-granting program and therefore does not undergo CCGA review. Students may take joint classes or be involved in research across departments, but they must meet the degree requirements of one of the existing graduate programs on campus in order to earn their degree. The UCSC campus has one example of such a program, namely the Program in Biomedical Sciences and Engineering. While the PBSE program is still in its early stages and faces some challenges in terms of effectively merging the engineering and biology components, it shows promise of being an effective means of offering interdisciplinary graduate programs. The campus has established procedure for the umbrella admissions model involving the bylaws and charter.

The interdisciplinary graduate group model is similar to the graduate group model on other UC campuses. This IGG brings together faculty from multiple departments to offer a new degree in an interdisciplinary area. In contrast to the umbrella admissions program, an IGG is a new graduate program and therefore requires a full graduate program proposal and review process as well as final approval by CCGA. While UCSC has had guidelines for IGG for decades, we have had no success sustaining these programs at IGGs. Only one IGG program has been proposed, namely Digital Arts and New Media, but it failed as on IGGs and will convert over to department-based programs. The failure of these programs to be successful as IGGs, combined with the lack of proposals for such programs, indicates that new guidelines are needed. Consequently, a significant fraction of this document is dedicated to understanding why the former IGG’s failed and suggesting new guidelines to help assure future success.

## **Proposal for New Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs at UCSC**

Interdisciplinary Graduate Groups (IGG) provide a model for new and existing graduate degrees at UCSC that do not require the formation of new departments. IGGs are basically graduate groups, a degree-offering graduate program that has participation of faculty from more than one department.

Graduate Council envisions that IGGs will become an important mechanism for graduate program growth since using new departments to launch a graduate program requires significant FTE and space resources. The limited amount of FTE growth envisioned in the future needs to be used mainly to increase the size of FTE in existing departments, some of which are sufficiently small that the quality of their graduate programs has suffered. New FTE hired into departments can participate in IGGs as members. Moreover, the large amount of continuous space needed for new departments also argues against graduate programs based on the department model. While GC recommends that even IGGs need space assigned to them, similar to ORU's, the space required is much less than departments and fits better into the fractured space that is likely to open up on campus in the future. Given that CCGA takes into account resources in their program approval process, the ability of IGG to harness sufficient faculty and space resources, without the need of substantial additional FTE and space, may also be needed for program approval.

In establishing guidelines for IGGs, GC held a teleconference meeting with both the GC Chair and Dean of Graduate Studies at UC Davis to discuss their views on graduate groups. Davis has the most experience with graduate groups, with over half of their graduate programs being graduate groups, making them a good campus to start informing our discussions. Davis also provided a recent assessment of their graduate group guidelines. We also reviewed the IGG guidelines established by Irvine, available on their website. One of the most informative documents was a recent self-study of Berkeley's interdisciplinary graduate programs, including graduate groups, provided by Diane Hill, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs at UC Berkeley. Key points in the Berkeley document with regards to strengths and weaknesses of the graduate group model, along with suggestions for improving the model, are contained in Appendix I.

Of significant concern in GC's deliberations was the appointment of FTE's to IGGs, who IGGs should directly report to, how personnel actions are handled for IGG faculty, and how resources are allocated to IGGs. We summarize briefly the conclusions we arrived at for each of these cases below. GC did not deliberate about guidelines with regards to the membership, voting rights, TA allocation, and allocation of service, research, or teaching of faculty involved in FTEs. Such issues should be left to the decision of the IGG faculty, their department and Dean, and firmly outlined in both the Charter by-laws and memorandum of understandings.

### ***FTE appointment to IGGs:***

Davis reviewed the appointment of FTE to graduate groups and decided against such a model due to concerns that it would arbitrarily shift FTE away from departments; however, Berkeley has a long standing practice of "enhanced" graduate groups that have partial FTE assigned them, the benefits of which are discussed near the end of Appendix I. Moreover, the external review committee for DANM recently recommended that DANM become FTE holding as a pathway

towards solving some of their challenges. If DANM had been provided the option to be FTE holding, many of the issues it faced could have been solved that perpetuated its move to a department-based program.

*Conclusion:* GC determined that the Berkeley model offers a more flexible model needed for UCSC to be successful at maintaining IGGs because it can be used to assure the needed instructional resources and faculty investment required to successfully start a new program; however, we also want to address the concerns raised by Davis of arbitrary shifting of faculty from departments to IGGs. Therefore, in contrast to joint-appointments between departments, we recommend that any non-zero FTE-assignments to IGGs are done on a temporary basis only. The procedure for temporary FTE appointments to IGGs will follow the same process as the more permanent joint-appointments between departments (APO 417:220), namely that 0% appointments require approval from the Dean and non-zero appointments to the IGG require approval from the EVC. Faculty with joint appointments have [Bylaw 55 rights](#) in all departments and graduate groups in which they are members (including those where the appointment percentage is zero). In contrast to joint-appointments between departments, we further recommend that the faculty member who has a fraction of the FTE temporarily appointed to the IGG maintain the salary scale of their current appointment in cases where the salary scale changes. The individual FTE's assigned to the IGGs would be reviewed at each personal action according to the procedures already laid out for joint appointments (APO 417:220). During this review process, the temporary FTE-assignment of the faculty member will also be reviewed and a recommendation will be made as to whether the FTE should continue with the IGG or revert back to the department. The EVC retains the write to reassign the temporary-FTE in the IGG back to a department or division at any time. If the faculty member leaves the campus or IGG program, the temporary FTE would revert back to the division (or EVC). In Appendix

### ***Administration of IGG's***

As with FTE allocations, the campuses undergo different practices with regards to the administration of IGGs, and problems have frequently been caused by lack of explicit guidelines for the administrative model. While GC and VPDA serve their traditional roles, a question comes up as to whom the graduate group or IGG should directly report to. Davis and Irvine both embrace the lead-Dean model where a divisional Dean agrees to be the lead-Dean for the graduate group. The graduate groups on the Berkeley campus report to the Graduate Dean; however, the host department supplying the resources for the graduate group is clear. While the lead-Dean model is attractive due to the allocation of resources, a potential issue comes up when an academically strong interdisciplinary IGG is proposed where a lead-Dean cannot be readily identified or where a divisional Dean refuses to take the lead

*Conclusion:* GC concluded that the lead-Dean model, where the Dean is normally a divisional-Dean, is the best model for the UCSC campus due the current decentralization of campus resources to the divisions; however, modifications in the campus resource allocations may facilitate the Dean of Graduate Studies being assigned as the lead-Dean for interdivisional IGGs. If a lead-Dean cannot be identified, the IGG should have the option to appeal to the DGS and EVC to work with the Deans to provide resources for the IGG as well as to appoint a lead Dean.

### ***Personnel Actions for IGG faculty***

Consistent in all the documents from the other campuses was concern that the participation of member faculty in IGG was not sufficiently acknowledged in personnel action decisions. One recommendation made by Berkeley was to cross-list the IGG courses taught by the faculty with the home department to assure full credit was given for teaching; however, this does not address research and service.

*Conclusion:* In addition to possibly adopting the Berkeley suggestion for cross-listing IGP courses, GC concluded that the Chair of the IGG should provide a letter for each of their active member faculty's personnel actions that is sent to the department chair and the lead-Dean and becomes part of their file for consideration in the faculty members promotion. The Chair of IGG should also be allowed to provide additions to the department's letter in terms of service, research and teaching to the IGG. If the IGG has temporary FTE allocated to it, these FTE should be able to vote on the promotion file and the results of this vote will be contained in the IGG Chair's letter.

### ***Allocation of Resources***

Allocation of resources, which includes allocation of teaching, staff salary, Chair's compensation, office supplies, and space, also varies widely between campuses. For FTE-holding IGGs, the teaching of courses specifically for the IGG are allocated with the partial-FTE. Issue arises for non-FTE holding IGGs where a department must sacrifice some of their teaching in order to free up time for their faculty member to teach in the IGG. While this can be alleviated some by offering courses that could be useful to graduate students in both the IGG and department graduate program, it is unlikely that all courses will fit this requirement. Therefore, some mechanism needs to be put in place that awards departments that allocate FTE resources. For staffing, Chair, and supplies support, the Dean of Graduate Studies at Davis has access to a small amount of funds that they can use to negotiate with the lead-Dean to provide matching funds for such support. Berkeley frequently uses new initiatives or private funding to provide support in these areas, including FTE-appointments to graduate groups. In some cases, the most cost effective option would be to share graduate program staff between the IGG and a closely affiliated department or program. With regards to space resource, graduate groups do not normally have space assigned to them, other than an office for the graduate program staff; however, all campuses have identified that graduate groups suffer from the lack of dedicated space for their program, leading to a lack of community for the IGG. Moreover, departments can be strained by demands places on them to provide space for IGG.

*Conclusion:* GC did not put in specific guidelines with regards to allocation of resources since this is not part of our purview; however, we strongly urge the administration to follow the Davis model that provides the graduate division a small amount of funds to supplement the lead-Dean funds to meet staffing, supply, and Chair compensation requirements. We recommend the EVC set aside some dedicated funds for this purpose when budget cuts are less severe, as this would also demonstrate the commitment of the upper administration to grow graduate programs and would encourage faculty to submit strong IGG proposals. With regards to teaching resources, we encourage the Deans to consider providing departments that have agreed to allocate faculty to teach or provide other service to IGGs some priority in assigning new FTEs. We also recommend that a formal mechanism be put into place that enables the Graduate Dean and IGG

Chairs to provide input with regards to priorities for FTE. Finally, we recommend that the needs of IGGs for community space must be taken into account in assigning space, similar as has been done for ORUs. Established IGGs should have sufficient space to provide offices for the IGG Chair, the Graduate Program Manager, and graduate students, a combined seminar, meeting and classroom, and a common area for food preparation and community engagement. While GC recognizes that space is always an issue on campus, the amount of space that is needed is substantially smaller than the space department-based programs require, and a modest investment to help assure the success of the graduate program.

### **Guidelines for Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs (IGGs)**

In consideration of the above analysis, GC recommends a set of guidelines, given below, for establishment of IGGs. We note that IGGs follow the same GC, VPDA, and CCGA oversight with regards to their establishment, transfer, and disestablishment. They also receive block allocations from the graduate division following the block allocation formula.

- ***IGG Graduate Program Proposal:*** New IGG's submit a proposal for a graduate program in accordance with current graduate program procedure and must undergo, or have previously undergone, review by GC and CCGA. Graduate programs that have already been approved and are only changing from a department-based to IGG-based program are not required to submit a new graduate program proposal for review unless they have undergone substantial changes. We note that graduate program clusters and/or umbrella structures between related IGG's and/or graduate programs are encouraged for more efficient use of available resources, especially with regards to teaching, administrative, and spacing needs.
- ***Program Charter and By-laws:*** All IGG's require a formal charter and by-laws between faculty involved in instruction, research, and service for the IGG, their academic Deans, and their department chairs. Such charters must clearly define the program and its governance structure, identify program faculty members, describe how faculty become members and how inactive faculty members are removed from membership, admissions committee membership, and resources available to the IGG, including faculty teaching, research, staff and administrative support, space requirements, and equipment and supplies. The charter should describe the responsibilities of the department and/or division to replace faculty teaching, research, and service to the IGG if a faculty member leaves the IGG. The charter should include allocation of department TA (if any) and block grant resources to the IGG. The Charter should also describe the program review procedure and provide guidelines for program amendments, discontinuance, and oversight. If the IGG is FTE-holding, the charter must specify the obligation of the FTE-holding unit in maintaining the IGG. The charter must be signed by all faculty, department chairs, Deans committing resources to the IGG, and approved by GC and the VPAA.
- ***Member Faculty Memorandum of Understanding:*** Consistent with existing campus policy, non-zero appointments of FTE's to the IGG require a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) between each faculty member involved and their department chairs and divisional Deans outlining the instructional and service responsibilities of the faculty to the IGG versus the department. For FTE holding IGG's, this would normally be equivalent to the percentage time of the appointment. If the faculty time committed will be through the cross-

listing of graduate courses, this should be clearly stated, along with the procedure for review and inclusion of courses in the curriculum. The MOU must be signed by the faculty member, his/her department chair, his/her academic Dean, and the chair of the IGG. MOU's can be discontinued or modified upon approval of the above parties. Any disagreement in the MOU's can be appealed to GC and the VPAA who will work to resolve the issue. The Dean and/or VPAA can request MOU's for any faculty in the IGG.

- **Administration:** A lead divisional Dean will be identified that the IGG will primarily report to and who will provide the required space and work with the DGS and other divisional Deans to assure adequate resources are provided. If a lead-Dean cannot be identified, the IGG may request the EVC identify resources for the IGG and assign a lead Dean.
- **IGG Program Chair:** The program chair oversees the operation of the IGG, which includes curricular and research planning and graduate student recruitment and advising. Furthermore, IGG chairs provide letters of support for all personnel actions of faculty that are members in the IGG that will go forward in the file to their Dean. The IGG chair also has the option of serving as a member of the search committee for any FTE recruitments that involve participation in the IGG. The IGG chair will be provided a stipend or course relief commensurate with his/her time commitment to the IGG.
- **FTE Holding:** In rare cases, and upon recommendation of the program faculty, Graduate Council, VPAA, and the Deans committing resources, the campus may determine that it is in their best interest for an IGG to be FTE holding. If the IGG becomes FTE holding, a new program charter and MOUs are required that outlines how the FTE will be allocated, the replacement policy if an FTE leaves the program, the voting rights of the FTE in the program and department, and how sabbaticals and personnel actions will be handled. FTE appointments to the IGG must be approved by both the host department and the IGG program faculty. For new hires, IGG faculty will have the option to serve on search committees commensurate with the percentage appointment of the FTE in the IGG.
- **Program Review:** IGGs will undergo periodic external review according to UCSC review practices. An IGG that is majority affiliated with a single department can choose to undergo external review at the same time as the departments review or undergo a separate external review upon approval of the VPAA. GC will undertake an internal review of an IGG upon request of the VPAA, lead-Dean, Dean of Graduate Studies, or GSA representative or due to unaddressed issues raised by outside reviewers.
- **Department Incentives:** The participation of department faculty in IGG's should also be taken into account in FTE hiring practices. To assure adequate input into the process, the Dean of Graduate Studies will request from IGG chairs and department chairs involved with an IGG an annual summary of their highest priority needs for IGG member faculty. Based on this information, the DGS will make an annual recommendation of FTE priorities to the divisional deans and EVC to inform their allocations of FTE between divisions and departments.

- ***Exceptions:*** Exceptions to any of the policies above requires approval by GC, the VPAA, and any department chair and/or Dean whose resources are impacted by the exception. The IGG faculty can appeal unresolved issues to GC who will work with the Deans, VPAA, and EVC to resolve the situation.
- ***Appeals:*** The IGG faculty can appeal unresolved issues to GC, the academic Deans, and Dean of Graduate Studies who will work together to resolve the situation. If they are unable to resolve the situation to the satisfaction of the IGG faculty, the IGG faculty can appeal to the EVC, in consultation with the SEC.