Graduate Council
Elizabeth Watkins, PhD, Chair

Thursday, February 4, 2010
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Room S-30

MINUTES


ABSENT: Patricia Babbitt

GUEST: Rick Wyllie

The Graduate Council was called to order by Chair Watkins on February 4, 2010 at 2:35 p.m. A quorum was present.

The minutes of January 14, 2010 were approved.

Chair’s Report – Elizabeth Watkins
No UCSF Senate Coordinating Committee meeting for February.

Larry Pitts spoke to the Executive Committee meeting about post-employment benefits. The retirement accounts are down; employees will be required to increase contributions. Concerns were raised about what appears to be an impending two tiered system: current retirees will not be impacted nor will current employees, but new hires will likely experience a less generous retirement package. On the other hand, unlike most institutions, UC has been contributing to retirement funds for many years without any contributions from employees.

Vice Chair’s Report – Michael Beattie
There are ongoing discussions and concerns about other entities (e.g. the legislature) having a say about whether or not new programs are needed and/or created with UC.

A number of items came up among the Academic Council, one of which was whether or not UCSF was truly getting 50% of the educational fees returned as is supposed to be the case. There is some question as to which campuses are, in fact, getting 50% of their educational fees returned, which ones are not, and how that money is being distributed.

UCOP has effectively decided that UCSF will receive a slightly better deal on our educational fees; in exchange UCOP keeps more of our indirect costs and proceeds from our patent income. The official line
from the Office of the President is that education fees stay on each campus, but we have determined that for UCSF 50% of education fees would be on the order of $6 million; we certainly do not receive that amount of money. There has been some dialogue between UCOP and our campus; OP says “here is this portion of your educational fee; you get 50% of this for graduate study” so there is a remaining 50% that we do not see. Presumably, the remainder is used to support campus infrastructure; historically that has been explanation we’ve been given regarding those funds.

In response to requests from the legislature, a letter was put together, initially for the Regents and the Chancellors, by CCGA in an effort to advocate for graduate education. Someone suggested that this letter should contain questions/suggestions of what the Regents could do right away to support graduate education. One suggestion was for the state to extend Cal Grants to graduate students. Given the groundswell of support for funding undergraduate students, why not also fund graduate students? Doing so would send the message that graduate education is valued by the state.

Graduate Research Day in Sacramento was scheduled for March 17th.

President Yudof will attend the next CCGA meeting to dialogue and take questions from members on the overall theme of how best to advocate for graduate education. What would UC look like without graduate education? We are eager to get his feeling on the relationship between graduate and undergraduate education at UC; CCGA is of the view that they are insoluble at a research institution like UC.

**Dean’s Report – Patricia Calarco**

These figures come from a proposal we are working on for earmarking; for Fall 2010 we are looking at the following costs:
- $41,700k for a domestic graduate student
- $45,300k for a post doc
- $56,800k for an international student

This discrepancy explains why our international student population is so low on this campus. It also indicates cause for concern; as research labs review these figures they are likely to conclude that post-docs represent a better value than training graduate students.

We have been working, with our government office, on a proposal that will be submitted to Jacqueline Speier’s office to fund approximately ten fellowships a year for five years to help address falling enrollment and to give a focus to some of our topical areas of research in the basic sciences. This would be an earmark in the federal budget. UCSF has never done this kind of earmark request before, but it is the Chancellor’s priority that requested earmarks should favor student issues. They will probably, eventually consider something for professional students but this one, for graduate students, is first. The likelihood of success for this proposal is, of course, unknown.

The Graduate Dean attended the inaugural symposium of the Bioengineering and Therapeutic Sciences and it appeared to be a big success.

The federal grant that we receive from the NIGMS (NIH) was approved for another four years of funding; that funding began on January 1, 2010. This program is being funded in a different format. Previously, we adopted a cohort of students and followed them for five years. NIGMS has changed this to a two year funding vehicle; the concept being that under-represented students may be under prepared and the focus in the first two years would be on getting them up to speed, meeting their qualifying exams, etc. That has not been a particular need on our campus as our under-represented students perform very well from their initial enrollment.

We are approaching the programs for this nomination procedure differently. The self identified under-represented minority students selected for interview will be indentified. After looking at that subset, this money could convince a program to accept a student who might be on the edge of the accept/reject line.
We have been notified that someone in Sacramento has miscalculated; apparently the space we were to occupy on March 17th to display posters for Graduate Research Day is not available. The date of our trip has been rescheduled to the first half of May. Two students from UCSF will accompany us to Sacramento, as will two graduate students from the other UC campuses.

**Postdoctoral Scholars – Christine DesJarlais**
None.

**Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) Report – Julie Hunkapiller, GSA Representative**
For many years now the GSA has sponsored a Career Research Day in February so that is on schedule. We have a panel discussion on work/life balance planned as well as a Student Alumni Dinner. We are very much indebted to the Graduate Division for supporting half of the cost of this event.

The GSA keynote and poster session is also on schedule. Our speaker this year will be the director of The California Academy of Sciences.

We are collaborating with Women of Life Sciences (WILS) on being a bold scientist. Our magazine should be forthcoming in a couple weeks.

**Postdoctoral Scholars Association Report – Vuk Uskokovic, PSA Representative**
We have been having ongoing discussions about the labor union affairs officer we wanted to appoint. On one side of the discussion we had union members and on the other we had UC administrators. In the end, we agreed to have an External Affairs Officer who would be in charge of dealings between the PSA and any external bodies.

A visitor from Genentech spoke to the PSA about the planned biotech tour that will take place in March.

Every two years Genentech usually hosts tours for biochemistry students; we negotiated the inclusion of post-docs in future tours; the next one will take place soon.

We are currently writing a funding proposal (due in one month) that will be sent to individual departments; this is how we fund the PSA to the tune of $25k per year.

**New & Ongoing Business**

**Medical Student’s Option**
A revision or elimination of this Option does not have to go to the Academic Senate; it would simply be offered as courtesy and an informational item. It is not, for example, a stand-alone program that is being deactivated and therefore does not require Academic Senate approval.

The proposal to remove this Option was circulated to David Irby, Helen Loeser, and Dan Lowenstein in the School of Medicine and they were all in support of it. A conversation with one of the new directors of the Pathways to Discovery program indicates that they are not entirely clear on how to formalize academic education above and beyond the MD for medical students which suggests that not many masters programs will come before the Graduate Council, but we can expect to see the stand-alone Certificate programs come before us for review. In conversations, we have clarified that they need not offer a full-fledged MS degree; the Master of Advanced Studies remains an (lighter) option.

The Graduate Council has voted to remove the Medical Student’s Option.

**PSPG Program Review response**
The program has adequately answered all of the concerns indicated in the review. Much of the concerns articulated in the report had to do with funding. We accept the response and now consider the PSPG review closed.

Program Reviews
It appears that some program directors have proven hostile to the idea of writing a response to program reviews. Perhaps we need to think about how better to communicate to program directors what we do, why we do it, and the idea that The Graduate Council and Graduate Division is working with programs, and for programs and on behalf of programs. The reason for program reviews is in the university bylaws; it has to do with quality control.

Is there a way for our program reviews to be more in line with reviews for NIH, T32 reviews & site visits, etc? Some program directors do not have a clear idea of what the Graduate Council does; this is an odd disconnect because we are ostensibly working in partnership with them.

It may be helpful if we can get some program directors to think of program reviews as a preparation for, or supplement to, other kinds of external reviews they routinely undergo. With or without an external compliment, our campus program reviews add value. In particular the student voice comes out strongly in our reviews. Recently, one program director was annoyed that we had not performed our program review in a timely way because he could have used that information for his T-32 site review. Even internally, programs are often asked (by deans for example) about the kinds of robust reviews they undergo aside from T-32. So whether it is T-32, Liaison Committee on Medical Education LCME, WASC, or some other body, reviews are an essential component of our enterprise, and we want to position our reviews to programs as a compliment rather than a hurdle.

Professional Fee from UCB engineering?
There is a proposal on the table from UC Berkeley engineering to levy an additional fee of $5k-6k per student that would be collected by the College of Engineering as a professional fee. All of our Bioengineering students would be required to pay this fee. It is not clear whether this money could be paid by NIH grants or how it would otherwise be paid.

Based on the way this fee is being presented, it is clear that UCB plans to use this fee to offset the reduction in 19900 funds. The Dean of the College of Engineering is the one putting this forward, but whether or not it would ultimately be approved remains to be seen. The implementation of this fee would likely require some kind of central approval; even our own self-supporting programs, for example, require UCOP approval. We will be monitoring the progress of this proposal for future developments.

Chair Watkins adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

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