

MINUTES

January 31, 1996

The Graduate Council

Graduate School Tyler Conference Room

Members Present: Katharine Cashman, Scott Delancey, Marian Friestad, Judith Grosenick, Van Kolpin, Robert O'Brien, Richard Sundt, Mark Tveskov (doctoral student representative), Steadman Upham (*ex officio*), Claire Wachter, Virpi Zuck

Absent: James Lemert, Catherine Roach (masters student representative), David Schuman (*ex officio*)

Staff in Attendance: Shirley Collins and Maggie Morris

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Marian Friestad, and the minutes for the meeting of January 17, 1996 were approved as distributed.

Announcements:

- The dean has a schedule conflict for the meetings of February and May; although Council could meet in his absence, members will be contacted in anticipation of finding acceptable alternate dates. Several members expressed a preference for a Wednesday afternoon.

- Dean Upham reported that there has been unusually strong response to his recent memorandum identifying the decline in UO graduate enrollments compared to other AAU institutions. (The memo had derived in part from his observation during the luncheon meetings with the faculty that trends in the graduate population are not universally understood.) Responses to the memo have ranged from outrage at being reminded of something considered obvious to gratitude for stimulating thought on this topic. Academic deans have also been encouraged to consider the issue, and it is hoped that faculty will keep the information in mind when they participate in department meetings to establish course schedules and make other decisions that could impact the number and kinds of graduate courses offered. After there has been time for discussion at the departmental level, it may become appropriate to convene the graduate directors to consider further action. Council can suggest behaviors, but cannot impose them.

It was noted that the balance between domestic and international graduate students must be monitored. Too great an imbalance could cause difficulties with legislature and our image as a state school. Likewise, we must face the realities of producing graduates in a market-driven system. Concern for overproduction of Ph.D.s must be weighed against the time required to increase the number of graduates once a need arises.

- M. Friestad sits on a subcommittee for the Capital Campaign and notes that fundraising for the graduate component of the campaign is running at 23% of its goal while the overall campaign has reached 72% of goal, and some individual colleges have moved as high as 150% of goal. There is time left in the campaign to improve the graduate component, and the organizers would welcome suggestions.

It was pointed out that the Graduate School is without its own Constituency Development Officer (CDO); CDOs have assumed primary responsibility for the goals of the campaign thus far, but have not stressed the graduate agenda. Dean Upham has had little time for fundraising except as part of research and technology transfer issues.

It was noted that perhaps the individuals or agencies that have been approached thus far have no particular sympathy for graduate education. Effort should be made to identify potential donors who

would have good reason to be supportive of graduate education and to target them. Although industries and businesses tend to operate with more short-term financial goals, it might be possible to approach those industries that routinely hire our Ph.D.s. In this context, it was suggested that Dan Pavillard, a UO alum and a retired symphony development director, should be brought to the attention of the campaign staff as having both expertise and interest in fundraising.

The Graduate School could consider hiring a CDO instead of a half-time associate dean; however, it would be several years before such an individual could become effective, and the cost (between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year plus benefits) would be high. Addition of another CDO also adds to the existing problem of determining which school/unit the donors “belong to.”

It was determined that the Graduate School should immediately make up a listing of specific graduate items or projects which could be forwarded to the existing CDOs for use in their campaign solicitations. Potential donors could then be offered identifiable items to support.

- The UO Doctoral Fellowship competition is underway. One additional faculty member is needed for the selection committee. Judith Grosenick and Claire Wachter are the current faculty members. (The selection committee has traditionally not included student members.) Katharine Cashman agreed to serve for this competition.

Old Business

- Environmental Science, Studies, and Policy (ESSP) proposals for joint campus and doctoral programs**

The proposals are still under consideration by the College of Arts and Sciences, so Council cannot consider further action on them yet. Dean Upham did report, however, that when/if the proposals do go forward to the OSSHE level, there may be a potential obstacle resulting from recent discord with respect to adding degrees. Territoriality has become more pronounced, and it is possible that the State System’s colleges will object to the joint campus ESSP proposal because they view it as disenfranchising their existing environmental studies programs.

- Time to degree limit on graduate degrees**

Results of a survey of time to degree policies at other institutions will be provided at the next meeting. Preliminary results indicate that most institutions do impose a limit; however there is variability in when the clock starts.

It is consensus among Council members that a time limit is desirable, so long as it is petitionable and framed in such a way as to assure true currency of knowledge. Departmental practices with respect to the timing of comprehensive examinations vary widely, and are frequently tied to highly variable requirements for core coursework. It may be best to consider starting the clock with advancement to candidacy, but shorten the allowable time. Alternatively, it may become important to establish a more uniform understanding of what advancement to candidacy really means.

New Business

- Dissertation and language translation**

Council was provided with copies of the current policy requiring foreign language block quotes in dissertations to be translated and with a request for a waiver of that policy. In view of frequent requests, Council might consider revising the current policy. After considerable discussion concerning the subject areas and dissertation types in which it makes particular sense either to require translations or not to require them, it was determined that the individual dissertation committee members, including the outside member, would be in the best position to judge the potential readership for the document and the desirability/utility of providing translations. Council then unanimously approved authorizing the Graduate School to modify the present policy statement by making the following addition: “...However, with unanimous consent of the doctoral committee, including the outside member, translation can be

eliminated." This is understood to mean that an individual need not file a petition to take advantage of the waiver. The change in policy is effective immediately.

Other Discussion

There was general discussion concerning the status of graduate education, especially in light of the memo about declining graduate enrollment. Questions raised included the following:

- Is declining enrollment necessarily bad in view of the job market?
- Can Ph.Ds from UO hope to compete with those from Ivy League institutions?
- How do graduate students affect research? (In some areas, like art history, they need not be involved at all)
- What quality of graduate training do we have for the graduate students that remain, especially in view of pressure for student credit hour production?
- What is critical mass in terms of viable graduate programs?
- Do programs risk elimination by intentionally downsizing and therefore appearing expendable?
- Does the teaching experience gained by the graduate students outweigh the criticism that graduate program size in some major departments is directly proportional to their need for GTFs to sustain the instructional mission of the unit?

The doctoral student representative suggests that finances, rather than program size, have the most direct impact on the graduate experience. Continuous enrollment requirements make it costly for doctoral students who may have outlasted available departmental GTF support. Not all departments limit enrollment to the number of students that can be supported fully.

The issue of special dissertation tuition arises in this connection. It might prolong the time to degree for some students, but make it possible for others to afford to complete. The present OSSHE tuition revenue distribution model which reimburses the institution 2:1 or 3:1 for graduate credit hour production makes it financially difficult for the institution to lobby for reduced registration for advanced graduate students.

R. Sundt suggested the following possible remedies to the potential loss of quality created by declining enrollments:

- Restore funding for professional journals;
- Require a minor field outside of the major area. This would strengthen existing programs by enlarging the students' perspective;
- Increase course requirements beyond the 45 credit minimum in order to ensure breadth of experience and to compensate for the smaller number of courses required as a result of the credit hour conversion;
- Raise funds specifically to support special 600-level seminars that might bring visiting specialists to campus;
- Reduce the teaching loads of graduate students when they are excessive.

After the final report from the study of master's degree requirements is available, Council may want to convene a subcommittee to consider that report and the above issues related to quality and program size. Framing the charge for that subcommittee will be discussed at the February meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Sundt, Secretary

xc: President
 Vice Presidents
 Vice Provosts
 Academic Deans