

MINUTES
The Graduate Council
November 15, 2006
Rowe Conference Room, Knight Library

Members Present: Yvonne Braun, David Chard, Li-Shan Chou, Marian Friestad (ex officio), Ellen Herman, Michael Hames-Garcia, Mark Johnson, Lori Kruckenberg-Goldstein, Huaxin Lin, Ron Mitchell Brook Muller, Harry Price, Mark Watson (ex officio), Corbett Upton

Members Absent: Richard Linton (ex officio), Wayne Mikkelson, John Russial

Graduate School Staff in Attendance: Debra Otley, Kassy Fisher

David Chard (Council Chair) called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m., adding a round of introductions for the two new members, Yvonne Braun and Ellen Herman. The minutes from October 18, 2006 were approved as distributed.

Announcements

- All Committee assignments have been made and a summary will be sent to the Council members.
- Marian Friestad reported that according to David Espinoza, Coordinator of Testing Services, the Graduate School Foreign Language Test (GSFLT), a second language proficiency test taken by many UO graduate students to fulfill the second language requirement of their major (e.g., English, Geography, Folklore, and Philosophy) is dated and has not been updated for several years. Several alternatives have been identified. One of these, the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), will be offered in place of the GSFLT at the Testing Center. CLEP is a 1.5 hour computer based test that will cost the student \$80. The GSFLT costs \$15.
- The School of Music and Dance has presented the Graduate School with a proposal to change the name of the majors "M.A. in Music History" and "Ph. D. in Music History" to "M.A. in Musicology" and "Ph. D. in Musicology." The process for approval begins with the Dean of the Graduate School and moves to the University Provost and then the State Board.

Old Business

- Proposal for a new Certificate: Suzuki Method String Pedagogy in Music
Although the School of Music and Dance had planned on having its revised proposal to the Graduate Council by November 10th, the department is still in the revision process. Most likely, the proposal will be forwarded to Council members in time to review it and vote on it at the January meeting.

New Business

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
A proposal to include the IELTS test as one of the acceptable tests for international graduate student admissions was presented by Dean Friestad. Lowered test security and increased difficulty with accessibility to TOEFL (re: testing sites and dates/times) have prompted some universities to accept IELTS scores. She also asked, if the IELTS is to be included, what minimum level/score the Council would recommend.

A hand-out was shared that compared current UO TOEFL minimums with other schools' minimum TOEFL and IELTS scores.

The fact that the minimum TOEFL scores required by the UO are low was noted and a question of raising these was brought up, but it was noted that this was a separate issue from whether or not to accept IELTS and at what level the minimum IELTS score would be set.

A brief discussion of the role of the spoken ability tests (SPEAK, TSE, and the speaking portion of the iBT TOEFL) for GTFs also took place.

It was decided that the Council needed the input of people with experience with these tests and their impact on admissions, such as Steve Durrant in Humanities, Linguistics, EALL, and Romance Language faculty. AEIS staff could also be invited to speak on how scores are interpreted and the

issue of such tests not being reflective of actual speaking ability. More data on the success rate of those who enter the university with low-range scores would also be helpful.

Any changes that the Council recommends would not take effect until fall 2008 admissions, so a Council decision in the coming spring term would be ideal.

- Online course evaluations, Brad Shelton (guest presentation)
A task force chaired by Russ Tomlin formed two years ago to revamp the current system of course evaluations. The current idea is to switch to an electronic system provided and run by a third-party vendor. A request for information from several vendors is being made. The goal is to have the system in place for fall 2007, with a pilot program utilizing 12 departments to run this spring.
Professor Shelton shared that the current system has several mechanical flaws. For example, instructors can manipulate data via their freedom to choose the date of evaluation, data analysis is done on an IBM 386, and there are two mathematical errors that involve Z scores and erroneous averages. The cost is also a concern: an estimated \$150-250,000 is spent each year.
The logistics and the process by which students would evaluate courses (e.g., students could access Duckweb to submit evaluations course-by-course and there would be an incentive of earlier access to grades for those who complete evaluations) were discussed.
Several questions were raised regarding potential new problems, content and the immediacy of knowing the completion rate (class by class) using our current paper system as opposed to an online system, and whether or not an incentive would be in accordance with Faculty Senate guidelines. Harry Price suggested that an assessment expert be included in the decision-making process, if one is not already on the task force.
Professor Shelton shared the 3 advantages of the proposed online system: the ease of being able to edit and determine questions and content; better, more useful analysis of data; and a natural segue to an exit survey component (Dean Friestad noted that the Graduate School already performs exit survey and analysis).
- Campus-wide research methodology training
David Chard would like to start a campus-wide conversation in an effort to set up an interdisciplinary research methodology training plan. A need for such a plan was identified by last year's Council. Dean Friestad distributed a 1994 review of statistics efforts at UO for review and the Chair invited Council members to engage fellow faculty in discussion of this issue.

Committee Reports

Regarding the Student Distinguished Service Award, the Faculty Senate will be discussing honorary doctorate criteria and processes.

Dean's Updates

- NRC
Dean Friestad passed around a memo regarding the assessment of research-doctorate programs and a spreadsheet of the programs being evaluated. She spoke about the rating of our doctoral programs. Ron Mitchell requested an email be sent to motivate and inform faculty and department chairs about the program questionnaire.
- UO Reaccreditation
Dean Friestad told the Council to expect, via e-mail, a draft of the graduate studies related portion of the reaccreditation report for review.

With no other announcements, the Council adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Price, Secretary