

MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
5241 N. Maple, M/S TA43  
Fresno, CA 93740-8027  
Office of the Academic Senate Ext. 8-2743

September 15, 2015

Members Present: M. Wilson (Chair), J. Marshall (Dean), M. Lopez, A. Nambiar, R. Raeisi, T. Skeen, S. Tracz, P. Trueblood, D. Vera

Guests: M. Byers, R. Gomez, M. Kismetian, C. Radke

The meeting was called to order by Chair Wilson at 2:00 p.m. in TA #117.

1. Minutes: MSC to approve the minutes of September 8, 2015.
2. Agenda: MSC to approve the agenda as distributed.
3. Communications and Announcements: Dean Marshall informed the committee that Faculty Affairs is reviewing the policy on Teaching Associates for collective bargaining compliance, after which the policy will be discussed at the Academic Senate. M. Lopez informed the committee that there are 26 applications to the Grad Net research cohort. The applicants represent all of the colleges.
4. Graduate Research and Creative Activities Symposium (GRCAS): The committee, along with the guests representing the Division of Graduate Studies and the Central California Research Symposium (CCRS), discussed similarities and differences between the two symposia. The purpose of the discussion was to consider whether to keep the symposia as separate entities, to discontinue the GRCAS, or to merge the symposia.
  - a. Separation: The GRCAS is a graduate student event, whereas the CCRS is represented by both undergraduate and graduate students. Therefore the purposes of each symposium are somewhat different. The committee discussed the difference between focusing on academic rigor, peer review and exclusivity, as opposed to giving all students the opportunity to practice the art of academic presentations. In other words, prestige or practice? By extension, the audiences of the two symposia might perhaps have different expectations. Last year the GRCAS had approximately 112 presentations including poster

- sessions; on the other hand, the CCRS had approximately 185 presentations. Therefore, logistically the merger of the two symposia might be problematic due to the availability of an appropriate venue. The committee discussed the possibility of a merger with UC Merced to address this issue.
- b. Discontinue the GRCAS: While student participation is encouraging, the committee lamented the small turnout for the event. It was noted that in the past the university seemed to place a higher value on graduate education than it currently does. The committee discussed how student, faculty and administrative participation might be increased. For one thing, the winners of each of the college's Outstanding Thesis award could be invited to share their work at the GRCAS if the winners can be determined early enough. For another thing, the aim and scope of the symposium could be more accurately described through a more thorough statement of purpose. As well, the abstracts could be made longer and more appealing to a general audience.
  - c. Merger: This would have to be approved by the CCRS Board of Directors made up of Fresno State and UCSF faculty and staff. If an appropriate venue could be found, and if a date could be agreed upon, and if the needs of both undergraduate and graduate students could be accommodated, a merger of the GRCAS and the CCRS might attract a larger audience, garner greater attention, and increase administrative interest in graduate student research.
- 5. MSC to adjourn at 3:00 p.m.
  - 6. Email vote 9/22/2015 resulted in unanimous support for keeping the Grad Research Symposium as a separate event with some changes in response to above discussion.

The next scheduled meeting of the Graduate Committee is Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in TA 117.

Agenda:

- 1. Approval of the Minutes of September 15, 2015
- 2. Approval of the Agenda
- 3. Communications and Announcements

- a. Follow up from Grad Coordinators' Breakfast
  - b. Academic Senate business related to graduate programs
  - c. Status of upcoming Program Reviews
4. Discussion of Graduate Orientation: timing, content, coordination with other events.
  5. Discussion of Graduation Clearance form: suggestions re simplification:  
Guest: M. Varela