Graduate Education Council
Notes for meeting
Wednesday, November 19, 2014
2:00 pm – 4:00 p.m., 101 Walter

Present: Melissa Anderson, Victor Barocas, Lyn Bruin, Phil Buhlmann, Liz Davis, Celeste Falcon, Emi Ito, Ameeta Kelekar, Linda Lindeke, Henning Schroeder (chair), Carissa Schivley Slotterback, Katie Thomas, Sabrina Trudo, Randall Victora, Char Voight (staff), Elizabeth Wattenberg

Guests: Vicki Field (Graduate School), Takehito Kamata (Council of International Graduate Students)

1) Council of International Graduate Students (CIGS) representative on GEC (Henning Schroeder, Takehito Kamata). Kamata provided GEC members with background on the mission, values and objectives of CIGS, which was created in January 2014. CIGS is the only such official student organization among Big Ten schools. Networking and sharing knowledge among international graduate students is crucial. There are approximately 450 students on the listserv, and outreach continues to grow the organization. The focus has been on community building and networking in the form of workshops, Culture Week activities, etc. CIGS events have been very well attended. CIGS is requesting a permanent slot on the GEC to specifically represent the voices of international graduate students.

Discussion/Questions:
- Why do we need CIGS representation in addition to COGS? Is COGS inadequate? Perhaps COGS needs to think more deeply about issues of representation in many different ways.
- Whose job is it to ensure proper representation? What kind of diversity should be represented on the GEC? Why should international students be specifically represented when other constituencies (e.g., female graduate students) are not?
- Should COGS designate one of their 3 slots as an international student slot?
- Will adding another slot for students risk that student voices could overpower faculty voices on the Council?
- Should there be another entity that could meet in advance of the GEC so COGS representatives could be prepared to bring any issues to the Council is needed?
- International students face a separate set of issues than other student groups. They should have a place at the table. There is plenty of room.
- The GEC is a policy-focused group. CIGS is a new organization and has not had the time yet to address some of these issues. It appears more like a social group right now. It may be premature for CIGS to have a slot on the GEC since it has not yet had the time to develop other aspects of its identity, such as advocacy.
- Could we have a non-voting CIGS representative on the GEC for two years and then revisit the issue?
- Could we have rotating membership? For example, four representatives whose would seats would be filled based on current needs and issues (e.g., internationalizing the U, gender issues).
Decision: Celeste Falcon will take up this issue with the COGS Executive Board in consultation with CIGS. She will come back to the GEC with a proposal in December for a vote.

2) Principles for Interdisciplinary Graduate Education/Metrics and Assessment of Interdisciplinary Initiatives (Schroeder, Vicki Field; handout: Principles for Interdisciplinary Graduate Education, Metrics for ID Scholarship). Schroeder explained to the GEC that we are looking at measures of success for ID initiatives; for instance, looking at outcomes for students who receive an interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship versus those who do not to see if there are differences. Field noted that how we measure the value and impact of ID initiatives is critical. How do we foster and support ID? How do we remove the barriers to ID work? The overarching goal is to help students find pathways to do ID work that are outside the typical structures (especially collegiate). How do we demonstrate the value of these activities so that we can continue to offer these kinds of opportunities? How do we create strong linkages between students and centers and institutes? Most Graduate School ID initiatives are funded by the Provost, so it is important to be able to make the case that they have an impact. Input from GEC is crucial on this issue.

There are two different views of ID. One is that anything ID is inherently good and valuable. The other is that some problems are intractable and can’t be solved without ID effort. The Provost is not so much interested in measuring ID outcomes such as the number of faculty publications that are ID collaborations, but rather how to we remove the barriers to doing the work we want to do. There is no value judgment about whether this is interdisciplinary or not, but how do we allow for the opportunities? Removing barriers is a good goal, but the sole focus on centers and institutes is problematic because there are programs that are inherently interdisciplinary and students in those programs face barriers also. Are centers the preferred place to do this work? They may not have been created for this purpose – e.g., the scholarship is lagging and/or there are not enough centers to support certain kinds of ID projects.

3) GEC election and subcommittee volunteers (Schroeder, handouts: Draft Call for Nominations, GEC membership by CGS category). We have approached the election process in different ways over the last several years with varying degrees of success. Last year, the CGS broad categories were used to pair nominees. Do we still want to use the same process? It was a much improved, but still had some issues. We have debated whether or not we should adhere to collegiate representation. Should we reconsider this? Will this lead to the representation of disciplines that we need around the table? These will be issues for a nominating subcommittee to consider. Emi Ito, Victor Barocas, Carissa Schively Slotterback will volunteer to be on the committee.

4) GEC subcommittee to review graduate programs for consideration of overall academic offering at the University (Schroeder, Ameeta Kelekar). Schroeder reminded the GEC that members had asked to have a role not only in reviewing new and changed program proposals, but also ongoing academic program review. A GEC subcommittee (Kelekar with Phil Buhlmann, Celeste Falcon and Sabrina Trudo) has been charged with defining discipline specific measures for program assessment. Our current measures (e.g., time to degree etc.) are not outcomes that are discipline specific. The subcommittee met yesterday for the first time, and will meet bi-weekly to develop a set of criteria for program evaluation. They will use existing criteria, while
also exploring if there are things that should be added or changed, and then bring this back to
the GEC.

Discussion:
- Due to our 2015 accreditation, all programs are now required to define program goals and
student outcomes that articulate their goals and definition of success. How will the
subcommittee incorporate these into the criteria?
- Nursing did a self-assessment using the GRIP process, which was a practical approach that
was very helpful.
- How will the subcommittee set criteria for such a broad range of programs where there is
diversity within even broad fields (e.g., humanities)?
- Program closures and mergers when mandated from central administration have often been
perceived as arbitrary and the decision making process not transparent. The subcommittee has
an opportunity to help develop some rules that are more thoughtful and clear.
- Do we know how many and which programs have their own internal set of criteria to track
success and outcomes? Schroeder indicates that we have this information and that we will get
that to the subcommittee.

5) Updates (Schroeder)
- Graduate School budget request for FY16 (handout: FY16 Prioritized Funding Requests):
Schroeder briefly reviewed the prioritized budget request. The funding request is all targeted
toward student support in one form or another, including a request for increased funding for the
Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship. Members discussed the time to degree of DDFs versus other
students, which was included in the handout. Is there an argument for redistributing DDF slots
based on the impact on time to degree; for instance from Life Sciences to Arts and Humanities
where it appears to the most impact on time to degree? The point was made that the statistics
presented should not be interpreted as casual, and that time to degree may also have nothing to
do with the quality of the research. Finally, since the DDF is not a needs-based fellowship, it
could be argued that students who excel should be nominated even if they are already funded
and could not necessarily demonstrate a benefit from having received the fellowship.
- GPEA planning for spring 2015: The focus for the spring GPEA will be on the Pathways
Through Graduate School and Into Careers report. Suzanne Ortega, CGS President, will be the
keynote speaker. We will also focus on bringing in employers and highlighting student voices.

6) Other discussion/agenda items: COGS draft Graduate Student Bill or Rights: This item will be
discussed at the December meeting. Please send comments on the draft to COGS by
November 24. The draft will be revised by December 1, and circulated prior to the December
10 GEC meeting.