GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
October 10, 2002
3:00pm, Kerr Admin. Bldg. 650

Present:  Brauner (Chair), Ciuffetti, Collins, Fisk, Francis, Markle, Pedersen, Prucha, Rettig, Selker, Watrous
Missing: Roth, Sanchez
Guests: Adams, Dean, College of Engineering; Bose, Interim, Associate Head, Computer Science; Fiez, Head, Electrical and Computer Engineering; Pancake, Interim Head, Computer Science

1. Introduction of Council Members Charge

2. Committee Assignments

Bruce Rettig (Associate Dean, Graduate School) distributed proposed committee assignments to sub-committees of the Graduate Council for the coming year. If Council members have problems with assignments and/or scheduling, they were to let Sally Francis (Dean, Graduate School) or Rettig know by Friday, October 18, 2002. Committee members were urged to stay with assignments if at all possible, as changes are very difficult. Special task force assignments and/or student grievances may come up as the year unfolds and may call for Graduate Council representation. The question was raised as to absences from Council meetings and how those were handled. Dean Francis stated that operating policy during 2001-2002 was that substitute members could not be sent, but a vote could be sent for an agenda item if a member needed to be absent. Council members were asked to let Renee Windsor in the Graduate School office know in advance if a particular meeting is going to be missed. David Brauner (Liberal Arts) asked for the operating policy from last year to be circulated and indicated that the matter will be decided at a later meeting.

3. Review of Probable Agenda Items for Fall 2002

Brauner outlined future agenda items for the 2002-2003 academic year. Francis pointed out that Jan 9th meeting will fall on the same day as a Faculty Senate meeting. Council will need to decide whether to cancel the meeting or hold it a week later. If council members want to add items to the agenda, they should contact either Brauner or Rettig.

4. Category 1 Proposal to Create a School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
   a. Background
   This Category 1 proposal was considered last spring. No action was taken at that time. A major issue was the divided opinion among faculty in regard to their support of the proposal to merge. A revised Category 1 proposal was distributed to Council members in advance of the October 10 Council meeting. The Category 1 proposal states that the majority of faculty members in Electrical and Computer Engineering and Computer Science are in favor of the merger of the two departments. According to the proposal, the two departments worked together over the summer on promotion and tenure issues and graduate studies procedures. John Selker (Engineering) reported that there were 10 faculty members in favor of merger, 3 strongly against and 5 undecided within the Department of Computer Science. This contrasts with the proposal that states "A few members of CS are opposed, but they represent a very small minority at this point; only one faculty members is ‘strongly opposed’ to the plan.” Selker also reported that according to the U.S. News and World Report magazine, 94% of the computer science departments ranked above OSU are not merged. Selker interviewed an individual graduate student and the student seemed to be in favor of the merger. In a written statement given to Brauner, Selker indicated: “I would vote to approve this change based on its impact on graduate programs. I do not think the Category 1 document is accurate by way of fact in several aspects, but in matters not material to the impact on graduate programs.” Council concern also focused on the “service courses” offered by Computer Science to a number of other departments on campus and whether those courses would continue if the merger were to take place.

   b. Discussion with Departments and College
   Ron Adams, Dean of the College of Engineering, Terri Fiez, Head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Cherri Pancake, Interim Head of the Department of Computer Science, and Bella Bose, Interim Associate Head of Computer Science, summarized the proposal for the Council. Adams reported that high tech
companies consulted by the College of Engineering are in favor of this merger and that the College sees the decision to move forward as a strategic move, which strengthens the ability of the College to work with companies and to work with other colleges at Oregon State University. College decision makers felt that the two departments would receive more recognition as a larger single entity and that students would no longer need to choose between the two fields. Other benefits of the merger include a very close link between hardware and software principles and theories and the fact that grant opportunities would be greater for a larger merged entity. A joint staff retreat brought to light opportunities for sharing important programs developed by each department. From the graduate prospective, the degree requirements for both majors are quite similar, only the committee structure will be different.

Graduate Council members asked questions of the guests during the discussion that ensued. Doug Markle (Agricultural Sciences) asked if the merger has alienated faculty members. Pancake indicated that some faculty members would always want to work alone rather than in interest groups, and there is room for diversity. Brauner, after observing that statistics listed elsewhere say that 94% of engineering schools above OSU are not merged asked whether that said something about the necessity for this merger. Pancake stated that 3 of top 10 engineering universities, MIT, Berkeley and Michigan, have merged programs. Markle asked if admissions procedures had been merged yet. Pancake indicated that an interim admissions procedure has been created and that more will be done to merge those two procedures next year. Barbara Watrous (Veterinary Medicine) asked whether the departments anticipated losing any graduate faculty because of the merger. Adams responded that no one has tendered a resignation and none are anticipated. Martin Fisk (Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences) asked whether, if the merger did not happen, the two departments would still move into the same building. Adams responded yes, that the new Kelly Engineering Center was designed for one department and that the units will essentially operate this way whether formally merged or not. Tony Collins (Pharmacy) asked Cherri Pancake whether, in your presentation of this proposal, you meant to imply that the new Imagining Center would not be possible if the departments do not merge. Pancake replied that the Imaging Center would happen anyway. Watrous asked why the merged departments were being called a school rather than a department. Adams replied that the size of the merged departments warrants the name and the significance seems larger when the word “school” is used.

c. Council Discussion/Action
Collins indicated he thought some of the reasons sited for merging the two departments seem to be artificial. Since there are still traditional degrees, how would they look different? And why have the departments not asked to change those to this point, since that would seem to be necessary for the merger to be successful. Ciuffetti indicated she was still confused about how degrees would appear and how/when degrees would be merged. Mary Prucha (Graduate School) gave a short history of the merger that created the present Geosciences department and suggested that its history with two distinct degrees (Geography and Geology) has worked successfully, but with an increasing number of opportunities for students and faculty to work together. She suggested that this might be a good model for a School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. Brauner declared that the question for which the Council must find an answer is “Would this merger hurt graduate students at OSU?”

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Category I Proposal to create a School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science; all approved.

5. Category I Proposal to move College Student Services Administration (CSSA) master’s degree program from the Graduate School to the School of Education
   Francis gave a history of the proposal to move the master’s degree in CSSA to the School of Education. This graduate program has been under the purview of the Graduate School since 1991. It was previously located in the former College of Education, and was moved to the Graduate School when Education was moved to the College of Home Economics and Education. Francis believed the program would benefit from more interaction with academic units and graduate faculty. Tom Schueremann, current director of CSSA and Sam Stern, Dean of the School of Education, will be present at the October 24th Graduate Council meeting for in-depth discussion and action on this proposal.

6. Other Business/Announcements
   There was no other business introduced. The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.