I. Approval of Council Minutes

The minutes of the February 13, 2003, meeting of the Graduate Council were approved as submitted.

II. Geosciences Review Follow-Up Report

On April 23, 2001, the Graduate Council conducted a program review of the Geology and Geography graduate degree programs. On January 29, 2003, Courtland Smith, the chair of the 2001 review, and David Gobeli (Business), a current member of the Graduate Council conducted a follow-up review. Smith presented their report, which (as amended by the Council) follows.

Summary of Findings:

The Department of Geosciences took the review very seriously and made progress on all the recommendations in the April 23, 2001 graduate and undergraduate program review. The actions taken by the Department were positive and have already begun to enhance capabilities.

Review of Primary Recommendations:

1. Additional tenure-track faculty is needed to maintain the Department’s mission.

Using College FTE, diversity hires, and creative appointments for research faculty, the Department has increased tenure-track FTE. The Department’s experience in the area of added FTE is instructive. When the review was done, the Department was contemplating hiring an instructor to handle part of the undergraduate teaching load. Applicants for the instructor position were well below department standards, and the instructor search was abandoned. The Department decided to search for a tenure-track faculty who would have a reduced research load and a higher teaching load. The applicants were outstanding and the Department hired an innovative teacher, who also has 0.20 research in the job description. With the tenure-track position, the Department achieved better quality teaching, better class coverage, and some research at only a slightly higher salary than the salary for an instructor.
Along with concern about the number of tenure-track faculty, the Department was also having trouble with the quality of part-time fill-in positions. Students were complaining about the quality of teaching. The Department solved this problem by developing a pool of research faculty interested in occasional part-time teaching assignments.

2. Computing facilities need better supervision.

The College of Science improved the situation by creating a college network and support staff. Internally, the Department changed its arrangement with COAS on use of the computer workstation classroom (Wilkinson 210). The room has had a hardware and software upgrade. Further, rather than being used once or twice a term, the room gets over 36 hours per week of use. The use is projected to increase above the 36-hour level, and the department has created a viable staffing plan for the improved facility.

3. Seek additional opportunities for joint Geography/Geology curricular programming.

Three integrative activities have been undertaken. First, the Department is submitting a Category I proposal for a BS in Earth Sciences. The degree has four options—Earth System Science, Earth Science Education, Public Interpretation, and Applied Earth Science. Second, the Department created an integrated seminar. This seminar has been very popular across campus. It takes a special topic each year—volcanology (2001), paleoclimate (2002), disturbance and cataclysms (2003). Third, several of the basic courses have opportunities for “cross-teaching.” These are courses that can be taught by either a geographer or geologist. Ten courses have this feature. One of the findings from the “cross-teaching” is that student interaction with faculty helps students select their major. The department has continued to have geographers and geologists on many graduate committees. Geographers and geologists cooperate on research.

Review of Secondary Recommendations:

1. Improve advertising of employment and internship opportunities to undergraduates.

The solution here is quite innovative. The Department did two things. First, it created a Board of Advisors who discuss career opportunities and provide networking for graduating students. Second, the Department has encouraged students to do a better job marketing themselves with improved resume writing skills that are learned in a seminar, GEO 407: From Student to Professional. The seminar addresses the job-opportunities question, plus many other professional issues.

2. Explore graduate course offering opportunities.

The problem solved itself with larger sections. Since the low enrolling courses were more often in geology, an increase in geology majors solved the problem. Reasons for the increase in majors are many. This increase is the opposite of what is happening in the
discipline. One reason appears to be new faculty and the cross-teaching of core courses, which brings geologists in more contact with potential majors.

The course offering issue is related to a faculty load problem, in which geographers were carrying a heavier teaching load. With a faculty load policy that each member of the faculty can expect to teach a large university service course, a course for majors, a course in their specialty, and a course for graduate students, the teaching load has evened out. The department has increased its teaching productivity at an average rate of 5% per year from 1989 to 2002.

3. Examine accounting of geosciences majors.

Recent change in the Environmental Science Program has eliminated the geosciences option in favor of a geosciences undergraduate minor. With the minor, the Department gets credit for its teaching effort in this area.

Barbara Bond (Forestry) asked if the department had previously appointed tenure-track faculty with small research FTE and high teaching FTE. Smith said that the standard practice in Geosciences has been appointments with 50% research and 50% teaching appointments, although the newest appointment is 80% research and 20% teaching including commitments to work with graduate students. Bond was concerned about the difficulty of the new faculty member to move through the tenure process with a much lower research percentage. Smith acknowledged that the follow-up review team was more concerned with the quality of the program than with the situation of one faculty member. This concern for program quality affected their evaluation of this new hiring practice. Smith also reported that current Interim Chair Matzke will be going on sabbatical and doing fund-raising for the department as part of his sabbatical. The positive results identified in the follow-up review were, in Smith’s judgment, proof of the success that can come from review procedures. Bruce Rettig (Graduate School) noted the excellent quality of the work that Courtland Smith did as the chair of the review team. The report of the Geosciences follow-up reviewers was approved with one change to clarify that the change in Environmental Science and the departmental minor referred to undergraduate degree programs.

III. Criteria for Approving New Graduate Courses

The Graduate Council continued its discussion from February 13, 2003, of guidance for graduate level courses. (See http://oregonstate.edu/dept/grad_school/Graduate_Council/2002-03%20Minutes/Feb_13_03_minutes.pdf). In response to a question from Barbara Watrous (Veterinary Medicine) about who determines or defines the assessment of learning, Bond answered that individual instructors are responsible for determining the learning outcomes for courses. She added that graduate students have been complaining of a lack of graduate level courses, saying that slash courses do not provide a graduate level learning experience. What graduate students are missing in slash courses is the academic rigor and the experiential component of meeting and networking with other graduate students. She suggested that Graduate School could post the guidelines established by this proposal on its web site so that instructors of
slash and graduate level courses could learn what the Council’s expectations are for identifiable course outcomes.

According to Lynda Ciuffetti (Science), a mentoring committee in Botany and Plant Pathology meets regularly to guide instructors in best practices. Although supportive of the ideal that all courses be accountable to the same standards, she argued that university faculty would spend too much time trying to meet the criteria of the proposal under consideration by the Council. David Brauner (Liberal Arts) said that the examination of learning outcomes is already taking place for courses in Anthropology.

John Selker (Engineering) asked whether the committee submitting the proposed change had looked at ways to measure the differences between undergraduate and graduate courses, especially ways to compare outcomes with expectations. Bond said that they had not proposed quantitative measures. Because teaching is also an art, which cannot easily be quantified, outcomes are very difficult to measure. Selker would like to see some measure that would quantify the outcomes for student and instructor. He added that, at Oregon State, graduate students are not encouraged to sit in on courses before registering. Rather, they are expected to complete a course once they begin it.

Sally Francis (Graduate School) said that this proposal would create a tool to help faculty remember that they have two levels of students in a slash course and that they must provide a genuine graduate learning experience for those registered for the 500 level courses. Bond reiterated the importance of relating learning experiences in the syllabus to course objectives and learning outcomes. Francis recommended that instructors provide two syllabi, one for undergraduates and one for graduate students.

Ciuffetti summarized the background for this conversation: Graduate students had expressed concerns about their learning experiences during program reviews and the University accreditation process. When the Graduate Council selected the elimination of the slash courses as the best way to address their concerns, this action was not supported at the Curriculum Council. Given that decision, the Council’s committee that evaluates new graduate courses was frustrated with the lack of clear criteria to make decisions. Is the proposal from that committee the appropriate way of dealing with the issue? Should the committee begin with this proposal and revisit these guidelines several months later to determine whether it resolves the problem? She added that care must be taken in imposing too much work for graduate students for the same amount of credit. Selker said that the faculty must bear the responsibility of insuring that graduate level learning is achieved.

Selker argued that quantitative language, which could be inserted into the proposed guidelines easily, would be very helpful to the faculty. Ciuffetti noted the difficulty of quantifying an experience as a “graduate level learning experience”. The criterion for a 500 level slash course should not be different from that of a stand-alone graduate level course. Bond volunteered to reword the guidelines to refer to criteria for all graduate level courses. Selker proposed adding the word significant to the proposal to read, “All graduate level courses should include significant emphasis on developing skills in analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation....” This would also apply
to the 500-level component of 400/500 level courses. Bond argued that expectations for a 500 level course should be the same whether it is a component of a slash course or a stand-alone graduate course. Brauner asked whether students are complaining about difference between 500 and 600 level courses. Gobeli suggested starting with slash courses and then, at a later date, develop policy guidance for all graduate level courses. Selker wondered whether some courses at the graduate level are more fact-based than others.

Ciuffetti reported a conversation with Gordon Matzke, the interim chair of the Geosciences Department. Matzke was concerned about the Council’s policy limiting the use of slash courses because many teaching assignments for 2003-2004 have been made and copy for the 2003-2004 catalog, including the schedule of classes, has already been submitted. He was concerned about implementing a policy change without sufficient advance notice to departments.

IV. Applied Anthropology Review Report

Martin Fisk (Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences), who chaired the Graduate Council review of the Master of Arts in Applied Anthropology, presented the report of the review team. Their conclusions and recommendations follow:

Conclusions and Recommendations
The Master of Arts in Applied Anthropology degree program appears strong. It attracts and graduates many top students who find employment in their fields. The faculty attracts a moderate number of research grants and produce scholarly work.

Weaknesses to be addressed are identified in our Key Recommendations below. Attention to the Additional Recommendations could bring the MAAA program to a top ranked program. The committee feels that a Ph.D. program is feasible, but certain steps need to be taken first. Some of these are in our list of Key Recommendations and some are in the section Recommendations for Ph.D. program.

Key Recommendations
Fixed term staff
The department must establish the credentials of instructors of graduate courses by providing the Graduate School and the Graduate Council with these credentials, and obtaining approval for them to teach graduate level courses. The department should maintain current resumes of these teaching staff.

Program of Study - Curriculum
Multiple level courses 3xx/4xx/5xx should be eliminated immediately regardless of actions taken by the Graduate Council in this matter.

Reduce the number of required courses, especially in the World Culture series, to provide faculty more time for research and other scholarly activities.
Program of Study - Thesis
The magnitude of student debt should be reduced. Two actions are suggested to do this. The faculty should be more proactive with grantmanship to help provide greater financial support for students. Faculty should actively manage and monitor student progress, in concert with the continuous enrollment policy, to reduce the post coursework lag in degree completion.

Thesis topics should be selected by the end of the third term, and coursework or seminars should be provided to facilitate this.

Administration
Develop a departmental governance system.

Students need to be involved in planning of curriculum, hiring, admissions, recruiting and other departmental business, where their voice would add value to faculty decisions.

Clarify the role of courtesy, adjunct, and extension faculty in the department.

Facilities
Upgrade student facilities with Internet access and telephones.

Find a venue to promote the department with displays of current work and material of anthropologic interest.

Additional Recommendations

Program of Study - Curriculum
Stage more courses over a two-year cycle to allow separation of graduate and undergraduate courses.

Courses in contemporary poverty, project management, and thesis selection should be considered for addition to the curriculum once the number of graduate world culture courses is reduced.

Program of Study - Thesis
Determine the impact of the new continuous enrollment policy on the time to completion and percent completion of MAAA degrees and identify stratagems to mitigate negative effects.

Recommendations for Ph.D.
The faculty should develop a strategic plan for establishing a Ph.D. program to include:
• A staffing plan to fill the growth needs and replace retiring faculty.
• A draft curriculum that fulfills the needs of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs.
• Establish greater national recognition for its graduate-level programs by increasing the level of grant funding and refereed and peer-validated scholarship.
• A plan for improved facilities.
• A plan for reducing student debt.
• A departmental management plan

John Young, chair of the Anthropology Department, said that the review was fair and that the recommendations from the team will be useful as the department proceeds with its proposal to establish a PhD degree. He was pleased with the external reviewers’ enthusiasm for the quality of the department and the reviewers’ respect for its national reputation. Relative to other OSU CLA departments, research funding is very high. Seven fixed-term faculty teach courses when regular faculty are not available. One fixed-term faculty member is playing a continuing role in the department until funding becomes available to hire a tenure-track faculty member with that person’s expertise. The courses offered at the 300/400/500 level, mostly World Culture classes, are being eliminated. Concerns about the lengthy completion time by some students are being addressed. Because some students took the maximum seven years allowed to complete a master’s degree, Young believes a more accurate estimate of average time to completion will require additional research of student records. The lack of graduate student participation on departmental committees reflects the active engagement of students in social settings. The department had problems with graduate student participation on committees, because they did not fulfill their responsibilities when they were on those committees. Graduate students are asked to informally comment on departmental decisions. Office staff members are often the ones who receive and communicate students’ complaints and complements. More money is being provided to the department for remodeling of classrooms and telephone/computer connections. Because the department is located near Kerr Library, which has good computer facilities, adding departmental computers for students has not been a focus of attention in the department.

Responding to Ciuffetti’s question about whether the department compiles data that could be used to measure time to degree, Young said that no question on the Graduate School’s student survey generated that data. Ciuffetti suggested that the Anthropology Department could draw on experience in other departments, which provide a variety of models for student organizations.

Selker, observing that he had been a member of the review team, asked Young to comment on the major obstacles that the review team foresaw in the proposal to establish a PhD degree program. Noting that several of the recommendations impact both the graduate and undergraduate anthropology degree programs, Young said that the department is working to intelligently reallocate funding from undergraduate courses to graduate courses to support the creation of a PhD degree program. According to Selker, graduate students commented several times that undergraduates were holding slash courses back. Following up on Young’s statement that the Anthropology Department’s research funding exceeds that of other OSU CLA units, Fisk asked about the funding level of anthropology PhD-granting departments. Young replied that research funding would expand in the presence of PhD students. Sunil Khanna (Anthropology) noted that much funding for anthropological research comes from a specific source in NSF, which funds PhD students but not students pursuing master’s degrees. The department has been successful in securing funding for many master’s students through scholarships and private funding, but having PhD degree authority will open up more funding opportunities. In response to Selker’s observation that master’s degree students are submitting few articles to peer-reviewed
publications, Young said that the PhD degree would radically change the nature of publications by students and faculty.

After Selker asked whether Young disagreed with points made in the report, Young shared a listing of committees and explained how decisions are made in the department. He also took exception to a statement about a lack of reviews, saying that annual reviews take place each year. This appeared to be a case of incomplete communication because the concern in the review report was for the apparent lack of informal peer reviews of teaching. Post-tenure reviews have taken place for two faculty members, and the department is gearing up to conduct full five-year reviews for others.

Ciuffetti asked why the department did not have a graduate studies committee. According to Young, the committee that has been drafting the PhD degree proposal will evolve into this committee. Presently, the entire faculty decides on admission of graduate students. The process begins with a series of informal meetings. When a consensus emerges on a student’s admission, it is formally recorded.

After Young, Khanna, and Schaffer left the meeting, Brauner asked that a reference in the report to older faculty be changed to senior faculty. He then provided an explanation for the departmental use of temporary instructors. Adjunct faculty members are usually associated with research projects, rather than classroom teaching. Confusion over appointments should be less in the future as the department reviews and revises faculty rosters. Ciuffetti asked about the confusion between review comments about post-tenure review and Young’s response concerning annual reviews. She also asked about the differences between faculty proposals versus graduate student proposals. In the first case, Selker speculated that Young might not have understood the statement in the report. In the second case, he thought that the department had not fully addressed the cultural change that will take place when PhD students are present. Because this review focused on the MA in applied anthropology, greater attention to the PhD proposal is not appropriate for this particular review. Selker added that how faculty in the department conduct research and publish would undergo a major change when and if a PhD degree is initiated. Brauner agreed with Selker that the department would need to adapt to change in response to the new culture associated with the addition of the PhD. He said that the absence of a formal research committee reflects the diversity of faculty specialties. Commenting on the review process, Rettig reminded the Council that the department had an opportunity to correct error of fact and chose not to do so. They could submit a response to accompany the report as it is submitted to the Provost if they wish to do so. In response to Bond’s question whether there is a periodic chair review in Anthropology, Selker and Fisk said that question did not come up as part of the review. Brauner explained that the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts asks faculty for comments as she conducts periodic reviews of department chairs.

The report, with the one word change (older changed to senior) was approved with one abstention.
V. Other Business/Announcements

Brauner asked the Council about his role when it reviews the proposal for a PhD in Community Impact Anthropology on March 13, 2003. The Council asked Brauner to chair the meeting as the department presents the proposal, but to excuse himself when the Council decides how to act on the proposal.