I. Approval of Council Minutes

Lynda Ciuffetti (Science) commented on the usefulness of having names associated with comments within the minutes and asked why they had been suppressed in the most recent minutes. Bruce Rettig (Graduate School) said that one Council member had asked whether the minutes needed to be so lengthy and that he had reduced the most recent minutes while keeping all names that were required to understand the points being made. David Brauner (Liberal Arts) noted that minutes have been more closely scrutinized this year, but that the Council had decided at one point earlier in the year to continue having very detailed minutes. The minutes of the meeting of May 22, 2004, were approved as distributed.

The Council also agreed that the minutes from this meeting (June 12, 2003) would be approved by Council members by email during the summer.

II. Category I Proposal for a Master of Arts in Contemporary Hispanic Studies

Following its meeting on April 10, 2003, at which a proposal to establish a Master of Arts in Contemporary Hispanic Studies had been presented, the Graduate Council forwarded the following requests to Joseph Krause, chair of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (FLL).

• Revise the budget to address the question of adequate FTE and clarify the budget line item concerning GTAs.

• Examine the list of courses in the integrated minor and consider adding courses that provide a large-scale perspective such as might come from courses in economics or additional courses in political science.

• Clarify the language defining the capstone experience. Specifically, is the capstone a thesis option, which would require 6-12 credits, or a non-thesis option, which would include 3-6 credits of research-in-lieu-of-thesis (commonly research or project credits)?

Krause, accompanied by Kay Schaffer, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Juan Trujillo, from FLL, returned to the Council to present a revised proposal that addresses those questions.
Krause circulated a listing of core courses for the proposed Master of Arts in Contemporary Hispanic Studies. The degree would require a total of 48 credits including 27 credits in core Spanish and Linguistics courses, 6 credits for field work and a non-thesis project, and a 15-credit intercultural communication minor drawn from courses in other departments. Krause explained that he expects to generate savings from hiring more graduate teaching assistants and fewer instructors; he believes the department will follow that staffing strategy. The revised document distributed to the council indicates that 2 graduate teaching assistants would be hired with funding from the College of Liberal Arts. This personnel strategy should allow a regular faculty member to teach one additional graduate course in the first year of the program. In response to a question from John Selker (Engineering) whether that is a savings of one course per term or per year, Krause said that the savings is one course per term. In the year that the program begins, a national search for a new tenure track faculty member would be undertaken, with that new hire to teach two new graduate level courses in the second year of the program, resulting in a total of three new courses by the end of the second year. A key feature of the program is the use of learning communities. Each would last for approximately three terms and involve two or three faculty members from FLL, one or two faculty members from other departments, and the cohort of students.

Krause said that, after examining the courses in the Department of Economics, he and others in FLL did not find any courses that directly related to the minor theme (intercultural communication). He also doubted that the students enrolling in the program would have the necessary prerequisites to take graduate courses in economics. He added that the proposal had been edited to remove reference to a thesis and to provide clarity about the project requirement. These changes were made specifically to answer the concerns of the Graduate Council members; he expressed hope that those changes enabled passage of the proposal.

Selker asked whether any of the listed courses were slash courses. Krause said that the new courses would be standalone graduate courses and that some of the other courses, now listed as slash courses, would be converted to standalone by Fall 2005. However, several courses would remain as slash courses.

David Gobeli (Business) questioned the value of the program, given that it is intended to graduate only six students per year, which seemed small for the major efforts at shifting work and funding. Brauner noted that graduate students with other majors, including Anthropology, serve as graduate teaching assistants and suggested that the undergraduates are served well by foreign language instructors whose first language is the subject of the course. Selker asked whether the excitement in CLA is related to the fact that FLL has no other master’s degrees. Brauner and others pointed out that FLL participates in the MAIS and provides the specialty courses for a teaching credential as part of the Master of Arts in Teaching. Brauner argued that the other incentive for creation of the program is a growing number of Hispanic students at OSU, who are very interested in this program. The need for the program is also related to the growing Hispanic population in Oregon.

Selker observed that, during the discussions of new degree proposals in the Faculty Senate, the question is often raised where the money is coming from. With limited OSU funding, any new
programs must imply a reallocation from somewhere else within a college. On the other hand, Selker asked whether the role of the Graduate Council is to question the source of funding or whether the sole focus should be on the academic rigor of the graduate program proposed. Rettig said that the focus should be on the quality of the graduate experience from proposed graduate programs, but he added that finances become an issue if the lack of funding affects the ability of the unit to offer an appropriate graduate learning experience. Sally Francis (Graduate School) pointed out that the issue regarding finances at the first meeting considering this proposal was an issue of adequacy of funds, rather than the source of the funds.

The proposal to create a Master of Arts in Contemporary Hispanic Studies was approved unanimously.

Following the approval, the Council discussed whether the budgeted graduate assistant appointment (0.25 FTE to offer one class session) met university standards. Rettig noted that there is a wide variability of expectations across campus, but that there is precedent for using that level of appointment.

III. Zoology Follow-Up Report

Susan Tornquist (Veterinary Medicine) reported on a conversation with John Ruben, chair of the Department of Zoology, and Bob Mason, chair of the Biology program and a faculty member in Zoology (see Appendix A for the full follow-up review report). A combined graduate and undergraduate program review had been conducted two years earlier including a site visit on May 14, 2001.

Since the program review, important changes have occurred in both faculty and administration. Departmental leadership shifted from Stevan Arnold to John Ruben; four faculty members retired; and the department is currently interviewing to fill two faculty positions. Tornquist said that the Zoology graduate programs are doing very well in spite of inadequate faculty and funding. Their strategic plan for new hiring is designed to build on their strengths. Ruben said that the Dean of the College of Science has been very supportive, especially in providing funding that permitted the hiring new faculty members. Responding to a recommendation to recruit Research Associates rather than fixed-term instructors, three new post-docs were hired to fill in for retired professors. The department increased stipends for graduate assistants, making the department more competitive in attracting graduate students. A newly appointed Graduate Program Director, Barbara Taylor, now advises students regarding policy and procedures. Four or five faculty members from the Entomology Department, which ceases to exist at the end of June, 2003, will join the Zoology Department. Following the follow-up review, Tornquist felt that the department has done well with the primary recommendations.

Secondary recommendations have also been addressed and progress is being made on them. In response to concerns of the graduate students about summer registration, the new program coordinator has made clear that the department does not require summer term registration if the students are not using university resources to pursue their degrees. Work by the department webmaster has improved the department’s website. Ruben expressed dismay that the admissions
procedure is slowing down response of the department to good students and is causing the
department to lose some of the strongest prospective students. Course offerings are experiencing
less flux because of the oversight and planning by the graduate program coordinator. The
department chose to not change 500 level courses to 600 level courses as recommended. Some
teaching laboratories are slated for renovation. Staff problems have been resolved by turnover of
personnel. The department continues to maintain a good reputation nationally and
internationally. The department carries out an annual review of each graduate student, and most
of the students go directly into tenure track positions rather than into postdoctoral positions after
graduation. The rotation of the department chair position works well in this department.

Barbara Watrous (Veterinary Medicine) asked whether Tornquist was concerned about the
department’s choice to not change 500-level courses to the 600 level. Tornquist said that this
recommendation had originated with the external reviewer, but that she was satisfied with the
department’s decision on this matter. Their rationale was that if they changed from 500 to 600,
master’s students in other departments would overestimate the difficulty of the courses and
would not choose to take them. Responding to Ciuffetti’s question about the difference between
hiring fixed-term instructors and post docs, Tornquist said that the origin of the strategy for
hiring fixed-term instructors was the period of a large debt burden in the College of Science. The
department has concluded that postdocs would benefit from gaining the teaching experience that
could improve their abilities to be hired into tenure-track positions after working with the
department. Francis recalled that department was responding to requests from postdocs in the
department for teaching experience. Wende Feller (Graduate Student) asked who opposed the
change, students or teachers. Tornquist said that the majority of faculty members were happy
with the change, as are the postdocs. Francis asked that the report be corrected by changing
“Graduate School” to “Office of Admissions” on page 3, paragraph 4. Alex Sanchez (Education)
asked why they use the title “Coordinator/Director”. Tornquist said that both terms were used
interchangeably. Sanchez asked that the official title be used in the document.

The follow-up report was accepted with the minor corrections identified by Francis and Sanchez.

IV. Graduate Certificates (Minimum Number of Credits)

During the previous Graduate Council meeting, Council members discussed a possible reduction
in the minimum number of credits required for a graduate certificate.

Selker asked whether the Faculty Senate would also be voting on this proposal, as was done with
the original proposal in 2000. Francis said that the earlier proposal created a brand new
credential not previously awarded at Oregon State University. Creation of a new type of
credential required full consultation and approval from Oregon State University and acceptance
by the Oregon University System. In contrast, because this is a change in an approved graduate
policy, she does not believe that the full approval process is needed. Because Portland State
University’s guidelines allow as few as 15 credits for a graduate certificate, 18 credits at OSU
should not create concerns at the OUS level. Rettig noted that the Sustainable Natural Resources
(SNR) Certificate proposal, if approved in its 18-credit version, would allow all bodies to
consider this change. If the SNR 18-credit proposal passes the Graduate Council, the Curriculum
Council, and the Faculty Senate and is approved by OUS, all these bodies would implicitly be endorsing the new 18 credit allowance. At any step, they could explicitly debate the change. If they disagreed with the new guidelines, they could return the SNR proposal to the Graduate Council with a request to consider the 24-credit version offered as an alternative.

Selker observed that 24 credits exceeds the maximum credits permitted for graduate students (16) for a single academic term. Normally, an 18 credit graduate certificate would have to be associated with two or more quarters. Rettig said that the decision to change to 18 credits, if approved by the Graduate Council, would be communicated to the Curriculum Council and Faculty Senate so that they could decide if they want to decide the questions (approval of the SNR certificate and approval of the new 18 credit minimum requirement) as two separate issues. Although he was concerned about the lack of justification for the change, Selker indicated that he would favor an 18-credit certificate. Francis said that the original number (24) was decided by a sub-committee of the Council. She believed that this group chose this number because it was toward the high end of the number of credits in graduate certificate programs across the country. That number was also chosen by the committee as an indication of the rigor of the program. Feller noted that 18 is an appropriate number of credits because it is more than what is required for a minor, but less than what is required for a full major. Francis noted that this is a credential that can be earned, can be hung on a wall and can serve as a proof of achievement at the graduate level, even if one never earns a graduate degree. Gobeli suggested that market demand would be even greater if the number were 15. The Graduate Council may face pressure to lower it to 15 in the future and may wish to consider that lower number at this time. Selker suggested that students who are earning the certificate would be allowed to register for 18 credits per term without having to fill out the Course Overload forms. Rettig said that course overload forms for 18 credits are currently approved whenever students are informed that additional costs will be levied on the student (the current registration plateau allows one bill for anywhere from 9 to 16 credits) as long as the student has a strong academic record and is not likely to face academic difficulties by carrying this higher load.

The Council approved a motion to reduce the minimum number of credits from 24 to 18. The revised policy on graduate certificates now reads:

The Graduate Certificate Program at Oregon State University is a structured progression of graduate level courses that constitute a coherent body of study with a defined focus within a single discipline or a logical combination of disciplines. It is designed for a student who has completed a baccalaureate degree and is in pursuit of advanced-level learning. Graduate certificates reflect the educational mission of the University. All certificate programs require a minimum of eighteen (18) graduate credits with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or greater. Students desiring a graduate certificate must be admitted to the University as a credential-seeking graduate student, but are not required to be on track for a specific degree. There is no formal committee requirement for graduate certificates. Certificate students are subject to all general policies governing the courses for the Master’s Degree.

In addition to approving a change in minimum credits for a graduate certificate, the Council also adopted a proportionally lower number of credits that would be allowed as transfer credits.
Instead of the previous allowance of 8 transfer credits (one-third of 24), the number of allowable transfer credits toward a graduate certificate is now 6 (one-third of 18). The section of the guidelines for implementing the graduate certificate policy that refers to these numbers now reads:

*The certificate curriculum is a structured progression or collection of courses approved and offered for graduate degree credit at OSU. The curriculum consists of a minimum of eighteen (18) quarter credit hours, and may include a final project, portfolio, or report for integration of the sequence of course materials. Up to 6 quarter credit hours may be transferred toward an 18 credit hour graduate certificate.*

V. **Category I Proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Natural Resources**

A proposed new graduate certificate in sustainable natural resources was presented to the Graduate Council at its meeting on May 22, 2003 by Steve Radosevich and Denise Lach. At that meeting, members of the Council expressed concern about the intensive nature of a 24-credit, 14-week summer institute and recommended that Radosevich and Lach revise the proposal to one that would require 18 credits. The revised proposal addressed those concerns by reducing the credits required in three of the courses, but with the major adjustment in the capstone project course. Gobeli asked if this was not a 24-credit hour program disguised as an 18-credit hour program. Rettig said he believed there had been a substantive change in Projects to make this a true 18 credit hour program. Selker remarked on the high regard fellow faculty members have for Steve Radosevich. The program is to be taught by faculty with strong research and teaching credentials. Those faculty members are showing such a high level of excitement and creativity that Council members thought the certificate program should be attempted. The 18-credit version of the Category I proposal for the certificate in Sustainable Natural Resources was approved.

VI. **Other Business/Announcements**

Rettig said that he had never before seen a workload for a Graduate Council like that shouldered by this Council. Problems with lack of quorum, encountered often with past Councils, have not happened at all this year. He thanked the Council for all their hard work and commitment during the year. Francis seconded that thank you and expressed the appreciation of the entire campus for the work and preparation of the Council. Sanchez expressed his appreciation to the staff of the Graduate School and especially to Renee Windsor as secretary of the group.

Feller noted that she might not be able to serve on the Graduate Council next year due to changes in her assistantship and the fact that she will not be serving as president of the Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA) next year. Rettig encouraged Feller to work with the Associated Students of OSU and apply to serve as the designated graduate student member, even if she is no longer in the GPSA position.
Appendix A:
Follow-up Review of Zoology Graduate Program Review
March 5, 2003
Susan Tornquist and John Selker

The follow-up review of the Zoology Department’s graduate program review was conducted March 5, 2003. The original report and recommendations were written following a site visit on May 14, 2001 and included a review of both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The follow-up addressed only the graduate program and consisted of a review of the 2001 report and a meeting with John Ruben, current Department of Zoology chair and Bob Mason, Chair of the Biology Program and Zoology Department faculty member. At this meeting, each of the primary and secondary recommendations made in the original report were discussed as they pertain to graduate education.

Since the 2001 report, there have been some significant changes in the Zoology Department. John Ruben, the new department chair, assumed his duties in June, 2002. There have been 4 faculty retirements since 2001, and at the time of the follow-up review, there were candidates interviewing for an open faculty position. The department appears to have retained its excellence in research, teaching and reputation in the face of continued budget reductions at the University. Several specific improvements have been made in the graduate program and these will be addressed under discussion of the specific recommendations that follows.

Primary Recommendations

1. Prioritize new faculty hires across the department. Work with the Dean to implement a strategic plan that will increase the number of tenure-track positions in the department and replace retiring faculty in a timely fashion.

The department, in its strategic plan, focused on retaining and building on its existing strengths. Plans for new faculty hires are based on filling deficits in certain areas left by retirements. The current greatest need is in conservation biology or ecology. Thus the candidates currently interviewing were in the general area of Ecology/Evolution/Behavior. The next hire is projected to be in the area of Cell Biology/Physiology, an area that has a very high teaching component within the department. Dr. Ruben expressed the opinion that the Dean has shown his intentions to maintain Zoology as a strong unit and has been supportive of the department.

2. Develop a teaching internship program for research associates that would allow them to gain experience and develop expertise in teaching. These research associates would teach part of the year and conduct research part of the year. This might help alleviate the faculty shortage for undergraduate teaching and avoid many of the problems associated with adjunct faculty who only teach.

This recommendation has been adopted by the department and appears to be successful. There are currently 3 post-doctoral research associates who have been hired to help teach undergraduate courses in conjunction with their research appointments. Each of these research associates is in charge of a major undergraduate course with a large enrollment. All are pleased to be gaining teaching experience along with further research experience. The teaching load of other faculty members has not decreased by having the research associates assigned to lead
courses, but the impact of retirements on the teaching assignments of remaining faculty members has been lessened.

3. **Increase stipends for graduate assistants in the department.**
   Much effort was put into increasing graduate student stipends and this has been accomplished as a two-step process. The first stipend increase came entirely out of department funds with the second being funded 50% by the department and 50% from funds provided by the Dean. The current stipend is $16,500, which is just below Biochemistry/Biophysics at Oregon State University, and still about $1000/year less than what the department would like to offer. The feeling is that these increases have made the department much more competitive for attracting top graduate students.

4. **Conduct regular curriculum committee meetings with a liaison from each research cluster and a graduate student representative. Include the identification of relevant graduate courses offered by other campus units and inform Zoology students.**
   A major change was made in administration of the graduate program that has impacted this recommendation. A Graduate Program Coordinator was appointed to replace the Graduate Program Committee and Graduate Admissions Committee in the department. The Coordinator is a member of the graduate faculty, has been appointed for a 3 year term, and has part of her salary paid specifically to serve in this capacity. She advises students about policies and courses, including relevant graduate courses in other units, acts as an advocate for students and maintains confidentiality of her interactions with them. The presence of a Coordinator for the graduate program has facilitated enforcing the letter and the spirit of the rules for graduate programs and exams.

   The graduate curriculum committee has not been meeting regularly since the appointment of the Coordinator. There will be 5-6 new faculty coming into the department from Entomology in the fall of 2003, and it is anticipated that more regular meetings will be held following this addition. There are graduate students on the committee and it currently meets as needed.

5. **Continue to press for adequate funding, both internally and externally in support of facilities as well as staffing and faculty hiring.**
   The Department has had the support of the Dean in securing resources to maintain its quality and reputation. Drs. Ruben and Mason felt that the department was successfully recruiting candidates of excellent quality. This is in spite of continued budget restrictions and cutbacks.

**Secondary Recommendations**

1. **Offer a departmental welcoming orientation for research assistants and associates and prepare and distribute a handbook with useful information to newcomers. Encourage research assistants and associates to initiate and organize informal gatherings to enhance socialization and the exchange of ideas among themselves.**
   The department chair has encouraged the research assistants/associates to form an association to promote interactions and exchange of ideas. While this has not occurred, there have been several steps taken to make research assistants/associates feel more a part of the
department including giving teaching assignments to RAs, and having the RAs meet as a group with individuals interviewing for faculty and other positions. The RAs appear to be more involved with the department and to appreciate this increased involvement.

2. Investigate the need for all graduate students to register for credits over summer, making sure to communicate to students the rationale for any policy implemented.

   Graduate students must continue to register for the summer as this is a University, not a departmental policy. The reason for this policy (e.g. use of library and other University facilities even though students may be doing field work), has been communicated to the students.

3. Ensure that students and faculty are aware of existing departmental policies and that the policies are consistently enforced.

   The Graduate Program Coordinator has taken on the responsibility of making sure that policies, such as those that determine conduct of oral preliminary exams, are followed uniformly.

4. Continue to invest in the development of the department web site, including features that target graduate student recruitment.

   Maintenance and development of the departmental web site has been assigned to Traci-Durrel-Khalife. A review of the web site at the current time shows it to be well-designed, informative, and easy to use, with multiple links to information that prospective students would need.

   A change in the Office of Admissions policy for admissions has created some problems for the department. Instead of potential graduate students contacting the Zoology Department directly, they apply for admissions through the Office of Admissions first. The Department has experienced problems in that applications from potential graduate students have not been forwarded to the department in a timely manner and some materials have gotten lost. There is a concern that some good applicants may be missed because of this.

5. Seek external funding to supplement student stipends and engage the Zoology Board of Advisors (ZboA) in the process.

   Faculty in the department are continuing to achieve success in gaining external funding for research, but there have been no significant new sources of external funding for graduate student stipends. The U.S. Department of Education Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) five-year training grant will continue to provide some funding for two more years. The ZboA has not been highly active in the last few years, even though it continues to exist. Many of the members are from the Portland area, and it can be difficult to bring together the members for meetings.

6. Improve coordination of course offerings.

   The course offerings still experience flux as there has been turnover in departmental faculty. The appointment of the Graduate Program Coordinator has addressed the problem to certain extent in that students are better informed of courses that are being offered.
7. Review department 4xx/5xx offerings and bring them into alignment with university criteria for distinguishing the two levels.

For the most part, the 4xx/5xx courses are in compliance with the University policy and students taking 5xx courses are required to complete extra work, have a different grading scale, etc.

8. Consider altering some course numbers from 5xx to 6xx to better reflect the departmental focus on its doctoral program.

The department decided not to make this change in order to maintain the most flexibility and to allow more universal access to courses.

9. Train faculty and staff to deliver better information to all students regarding departmental course offerings and relevant offerings in other campus units.

Once again, the presence of a Graduate Program Coordinator has directly addressed this issue in that she is able to advise students on courses both within and outside of the department.

10. Upgrade department facilities, addressing the worst first.

Renovations of three research labs and the Anatomy/Physiology teaching laboratory are underway. These facilities were chosen for renovation because they represented the most urgent needs in well-funded research labs and a heavily-used teaching laboratory. Funds for renovations came from departmental funds, returned overhead, and some from the Dean.

11. Clarify and strengthen both the internal and external potential of the ZboA and integrate its members more fully into the academic and social aspects of the department.

As mentioned earlier, the advisory board is still in existence, but has not been very active for a variety of reasons, including the numerous staffing changes that have been taking place in the department and the busy schedules of advisory board members. The department, along with the ZboA, has a goal of raising 4 million dollars for an endowed chair, and has accumulated approximately half that amount. The ZboA will continue to be utilized in this fund-raising effort.

12. Address concerns of departmental administrative staff relative to the working relationship with the PISCO administration.

The communication issues and problems with the working relationship between PISCO and Zoology department personnel have improved, in the words of the department chair, 1000%, due primarily to turnover in personnel. There are currently no apparent problems between the two entities and relations are cordial.

13. Remain informed regarding standards of other high quality programs and advocate on behalf of the department’s needs on campus and with the ZboA, in recognition of the absence of external review agencies in the field.

The faculty of the Zoology department have continued to be very visible in the field with faculty members frequently speaking at other institutions and meetings and an active departmental seminar program that invites speakers from other institutions. These interactions have kept faculty members well informed and connected with those from other programs. The
fact that 14 of 16 faculty members are funded by NSF or NIH indicates the quality of the research and the competitiveness of the faculty with those from other institutions.

14. Develop effective assessment protocol with follow-through capability.

The department conducts an annual review of each of its graduate students. This includes a careful review of graduate student teaching. Departmental graduate students have achieved great success in obtaining post-doctoral positions and faculty positions on completion of their programs. In addition, they have been quite successful at getting pre-doctoral fellowships from NSF and the EPA.

Summary

The graduate program in the department of Zoology continues to be a very strong and thriving program in difficult financial times. The faculty and administration should be commended on their obvious efforts to maintain their high quality and excellent reputation and to make improvements in important areas suggested by the program review of 2001. In particular, the appointment of a Graduate Program Coordinator and the increase in graduate student stipends have addressed some of the most pressing concerns of the 2001 report. The Department has a policy of voting a new departmental chair every 3 years. Based on the 2001 graduate program review and this follow-up review, that appears to be a good model to follow to create a vigorous department that continues to change and improve.