GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
April 21, 2005
3:00pm, MU Board Room

Present: Pehrsson (co-chair), Steel (co-chair), Bond, Brown, Ciuffetti, Filtz, Francis, Koenig, Pedersen, Rettig, Rockey, Strickroth, Unsworth, Waldschimdt

Absent: Selker, Tadepalli

Guests: Tammy Bray, Tony Wilcox

I. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the April 7, 2005 meeting were reviewed by Council members. Elaine Pedersen (Health and Human Sciences) asked that the spelling of her last name be corrected throughout the document. Eileen Waldschmidt (Graduate Admissions Committee) and Mike Unsworth (Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences) noted that they were present, not absent at the last meeting. The minutes were approved as amended.

II. PhD Learning Outcomes

What are the essential components for the making of a compelling PhD learning experience? A list of discussion questions (Appendix 1) were developed by Dale Pehrsson (Education) and distributed to Council members for their consideration. Pehrsson opened the topic for general discussion.

Theresa Filtz (Pharmacy) asked for clarification: What does the Council wish to achieve by discussing outcomes? Does it plan to establish requirements for university-level learning outcomes for graduate programs? Bruce Rettig (Graduate School) provided background and indicated that the momentum stems largely from last year’s Council action to accept 27 rather than 36 OSU didactic course credits for the Chemistry PhD degree. He reminded the Council that at the time of the Chemistry request, Barbara Bond (Forestry) had asked the Chemistry Department to link the request for 27 course credits to outcomes and assessment of outcomes.

To help inform the Council on outcomes, Rettig had recommended several articles about the doctorate (e.g. Carnegie, LaPidus) for the Council. These articles provide an array of outcomes in addition to that of producing a dissertation. Hence, the current discussion can be viewed as a fundamental philosophical discussion underlying the Council’s consideration of various policies such as residency, the requirement of 36 regular course credits, the minimum of one year devoted to the dissertation, the oral preliminary examination, and the number of transfer credits permitted; all of these regulations are related to what one considers the doctor of philosophy degree to be all about. He indicated that the Council has options in the approach they wish to take. They could come up with general principles or they could think in terms of specific regulations that currently exist, such as residency, the minimum number of program credits, etc. Rettig stated that the background questions are meant to provide set-up for these discussions; it is
up to the Council to determine how this discussion may impact policy decisions. Pehrsson pointed to the need to be well informed as policies are considered, especially as the world is changing at a rapid pace.

Filtz stated that a list of identifiable core outcomes would be beneficial. Yet she does not feel she lacks a sufficiently broad background to develop core outcomes for the entire university. She sees the need for program requirements to be tied to outcomes and indicated that she thinks that the larger policies that have been considered by the Council have been without a framework; this discussion could provide this needed framework.

Pehrsson referred Council members to a document found on the Pennsylvania State University web site document on residency and related policies for off-campus graduate programs. (This document is found online at [http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/offcampus.html](http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/policies/faculty/offcampus.html)) Lynda Ciuffetti (Science) indicated that the Penn State document was helpful relative to the Council’s pending deliberations on off-campus programs. Ciuffetti noted that the Penn State document made a distinction between the PhD and professional doctorate programs. The document reflects many of her perspectives on doctoral education. She also said Pehrsson’s list of questions reinforces her views and stated that she does not see how an off-campus PhD program would be able to respond adequately to the list of questions articulated by Pehrsson.

Rettig noted that the current version of the Graduate Council Program Review Guidelines also emphasizes outcomes assessment and asks units providing graduate programs to identify the outcomes. The growing emphasis on identification of outcomes and accountability in graduate programming is seen in the emphasis placed in university accreditation processes and is consistent with the increasing requirements for accountability in the K-12 school system. Within graduate education, the issues are: What are the needs of your students? And, are you meeting them?

Brent Steel (Liberal Arts) pointed to pages 28-30 of a policy statement of the Council of Graduate Schools dealing with residency. (This document is found online at [http://www.cgsnet.org/pdf/DistanceGraduateEducation.pdf](http://www.cgsnet.org/pdf/DistanceGraduateEducation.pdf)). The language in the CGS policy statement bears on the Council’s third agenda item (the proposal from Nuclear Engineering for a process related to their distance-delivered PhD program).

Ciuffetti questioned the Graduate Council’s independence in making decisions on this issue without seeking adequate liaison. When a previous issue lacked adequate liaison, the Faculty Senate required involvement by the Curriculum Council and a presentation to the full Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate may want to be involved in decisions about this policy issue as well.

Sally Francis (Graduate School) reported having consulted with Provost Sabah Randhawa and Vice-Provost Rebecca Johnson. The Provost indicated that he would be unsupportive of a case-by-case approach to alternative delivery sites for graduate programs, specifically Nuclear Engineering. Both Randhawa and Johnson agreed that OUS’ concern about alternate sites is largely relevant to sites within the boundaries of Oregon. While they indicated the Graduate Council could make decisions about alternate sites, Francis said the Provost would not condone a
case-by-case approach. Even so, Francis indicated that she could envision a pilot case for a given student to be used as a test case.

Hal Koenig (Business) reported that in the recent graduate program review in Statistics, he became aware of a student who could not find a PhD advisor at OSU and had to leave the program. He sees the NE proposal in a similar light. The remote site would provide the facilities and equipment, but if a mentor cannot be identified, then Nuclear Engineering might find itself in the same situation as is often found in Statistics. Bond argued that Nuclear Engineering would be treated no differently than any other department that may be interested in deviating from the standard residency requirement.

Unsworth said that, if the Graduate Council had a policy with clearly stated criteria, individual cases could be judged against the policy and criteria.

Steel suggested reviewing the Penn State policy statement and developing an OSU policy would be most helpful. He reported on a conversation with the Distance Education program at the University of Florida where four distance doctoral programs are offered. The two distance-delivered PhD programs require completion of the standard university residency requirement while attending intensive summer sessions to meet the spirit of residency. The two distance-delivered professional doctorates (Doctor of Audiology and Doctor of Pharmacy) are delivered at regional sites rather than Gainesville, but do create a community of scholars consisting of both faculty and students.

Bond said that Graduate Council lacks the information it needs to make an informed decision. Too much of the conversation is relying on hunches rather than scientifically validated relationships between specific requirements and desired outcomes. In addition to answering Pehrsson’s questions, the Council needs research on what strategies would lead to the outcomes. Pehrsson stated that the burden of demonstrating how outcomes are met should be on the unit that proposes to not comply with current residence requirements. Nuclear Engineering should be required to tell the Graduate Council what they will do in the next three years to validate the approach they wish to pursue. This approach (requiring a process to assess how their proposal would provide the learning outcomes normally generated by residency) will prevent setting a precedent. Any other unit offering a proposal to deviate from the standard residency requirement would also be required to show evidence of how outcomes would be met. In addition, Bond asserted that Nuclear Engineering should be financially responsible to fund a study of their “test case,” providing external validation rather than relying only on an internal validation process.

Steel proposed establishing a subcommittee to develop a draft policy on outcomes for the Graduate Council to discuss at a future meeting. Steel, Pehrsson, Ciuffetti, Unsworth, and Dan Rockey (Veterinary Medicine) volunteered to serve on this subcommittee.

Elaine Pedersen (Health and Human Sciences) suggested that the Nuclear Engineering proposal be made the test case. Rockey supported this idea. Bond reasserted that the department or the Provost should fund an independent external study to prove the validity of the approach.
III. Nuclear Engineering Request for an Exception for Doctoral Residency Requirements

Barbara Bond made a motion as follows:

- The Graduate Council ad hoc subcommittee will draft outcomes concerning doctoral education and policy recommendations;
- After review of the draft by the full Council, the Graduate Council will send it to Nuclear Engineering;
- Nuclear Engineering must then report back to the Graduate Council with a plan specifying how their proposal will address the policy recommendations and outcomes;
- A plan for an independent study of the relationship between the program requirements and hoped for outcomes will be developed by NE;
- After all the above are met, the Graduate Council will respond to Nuclear Engineering’s specific request.

The motion approved unanimously.

IV. Category I Proposal to Create a Department of Nutrition and Exercise Science

Tony Wilcox, chair of both the Department of Exercise and Sport Science and the Department of Food and Nutrition, gave a brief summary of the Category I proposal to create a department of Nutrition and Exercise Science by merging the two departments he is currently chairing. He stated that 2004-05 has been a “trial” year during which the two departments have operated as a merged unit. Both programs are in stages of growth. This presents an opportunity to bridge the two departments in ways that will guide their future faculty hires—in fact, they are already hiring in the direction of supporting a merged unit. Many students who apply to one area will have as a support area the other discipline. They have large undergraduate enrollment and a reasonably large graduate population. They have an initiative in laboratory facilities development to consolidate cellular and molecular research from both programs. While the idea to merge was presented initially at the administrative level, there has been a good level of faculty engagement and support. The merger is an opportunity to address new, important health questions and to develop curriculum together and build courses that will bridge the two former departments’ foci and missions.

Ciuffetti asked if any faculty oppose the merger. Wilcox said no minority position has been presented. He reported that the Budgets and Fiscal Planning Committee recently approved the proposal and that the transmittal bears the former NFM Department Chair’s (Melinda Manore) signature. Budgets and Fiscal Planning also wanted to see a liaison letter from the College of Agricultural Sciences and the Extension Service. Tammy Bray, Dean of Health and Human Sciences, reported that the leadership in both of those units have given verbal support and that their liaison letters will be forthcoming.

Bray said that on the nutrition and food management side, the faculty numbers have been decreasing. Faculty members who have retired from this department have not been replaced
from the strategic plans of the University and the recently merged College to become more apparent. The two departments have decided to take a more holistic, lifestyle approach as opposed to the previous emphasis on the study of specific micronutrients. All new hires will be based on this evolving emphasis which includes:

- Fitness and nutrition,
- Athletic training and dietetics, and
- Pre (Allied) health sciences

OSU’s dietetics program, which is an undergraduate program, will have a unique emphasis on preventive health and community nutrition. Wilcox indicated that their intent is to expand dietetics to the master’s level.

Wilcox said they intend to create a dietetics management internship, which will tap into their extension specialist and be complementary to OHSU.

Unsworth asked what implications the merger may have on the graduate programs. Wilcox indicated that they will continue to offer existing NFM and EXSS masters and doctoral degrees. There is no proposed immediate merger of the current graduate majors, but both will evolve, particularly with new faculty hires. Bray indicated that at the point of the merger, they saw the connections between exercise, bone density, and aging—these are complementary areas of graduate study and research.

Bond spoke of her experiences with graduate program reviews in which departments have merged. She reported that separate physical locations of faculty and students create a barrier to true integration. She asked what plans are in place to physically integrate the faculty. Wilcox stated that the two departments are now spread among three buildings but that there is a plan to move the department office from Langton Hall, where leadership of Exercise and Sport Science has been housed, to Milam Hall, where Nutrition and Food Management has been located. It is important for the purpose of integration that the chair’s office be located in Milam. In addition, the location of laboratories will be important—the organizing principle is around research needs. One EXSS faculty member has already moved to Milam Hall. Further, new laboratories will be designed with an open approach (accessible to multiple faculty members) to facilitate integration and cooperation. Generally, the bio-human laboratories will be in Langton and the chemical laboratories will be in Milam. Bray reiterated that Wilcox has been doing a very good job of mixing/moving people already.

Filtz asked about the absence reference to a graduate admissions or program committee within the proposal. Wilcox stated that they have identified a graduate coordinator position. However, in the past, both departments worked without such a committee. They do have separate faculty meetings of the graduate faculty. And they are developing a single, combined graduate handbook for both programs which will create action items for the faculty to discuss. Unsworth asked again about the absence of a formal graduate admission committee for the purpose of overall coordination. He thinks a more formal structure would be appropriate. Wilcox stated that he does not see their current practice in this regard as having any deficiencies.
Bond followed up by noting that the Graduate Council has been asking departments during program reviews to articulate their competencies, expectations, and outcomes. She said that as the new unit is forming, the entire faculty should get together to discuss these issues.

After the guests departed, Rettig informed the Graduate Council that the Budgets and Fiscal Planning Committee report indicating approval of the proposal is available and that he could get that to the Council if they would like to have it before they act. He indicated that Wilcox had highlighted the report’s recommendations within his comments to the Council.

Bond made a motion to accept the Category I proposal for the creation of a Department of Nutrition and Exercise Science. The motion was seconded by Unsworth and passed unanimously.
Appendix 1

What are the essential components for the making of a compelling PhD learning experience?

Questions to ponder

Dale E. Pehrsson
Graduate Council
April 7, 2005

• Are these individuals pursuing a PhD prepared to contribute to and expand the knowledge of their discipline(s)?
• Are these PhD individuals ready to be stewards of their unique profession?
• Are these PhD individuals ready to function as emerging scholars and researchers?
• Do these PhD individuals have the tools and skills necessary to conduct research?
• Can these PhD individuals function independently conducting research and obtain funding?
• Do these PhD individuals have what it takes to teach, advise, mentor and plan curriculum?
• Have these PhD individuals earned the “terminal” preparation essential for their career?
• Do these PhD individuals possess the skills for life long learning?
• Have these PhD individuals formulated their professional identity?
• How does the discipline/department/program provide experiences for fostering the development of professional identity?
• Do these PhD individuals engage inter, intra and independently with other professionals?
• Can these PhD individuals perform collaboratively?
• Does the PhD individual have a sense, working understanding and ability to contribute to global issues?
• Do these PhD individuals have needed skills for interdisciplinary work and contributions?
• Do we know what makes the PhD from OSU unique?
• Are these PhD individuals prepared for professional practice?
• Are these PhD individuals prepared for faculty positions?
• Are these PhD individuals prepared for industry?
• Do we trust our colleagues and disciplinary experts to decide what is needed?
• Do we know the desired outcomes and if so... what is the best course of action or structure needed to insure a quality PhD preparation and experience?
• Do we, individually and as a council, clearly understand and can we articulate what is important and necessary for the OSU PhD experience?