Environmental Science Graduate Program Review
Action Plan

General Statements:

-- On 15 September, Linda James, the Administrative Assistant for ESGP resigned to pursue graduate education. She was the Administrative Assistant for 10 years.

-- This position not filled until 1 December. I ran the program with little assistance until 1 December.

-- The ESGP now has one part-time (.4) Administrative Assistant and one part-time work-study student.

-- The ESGP office, student lounge, offices and mailboxes were vacated for the COS Business Affairs on 15 September.

-- ESGP office is now housed in Geosciences

-- Students need offices and the Graduate Dean has helped to identify areas where offices may be found. Sherm Bloomer is also involved in finding office space for students.

-- This year, we had about 100 applications for ESGP.

1. Review tracks, streamline where there are low enrollments and redundancy with other programs

Some tracks have relatively low enrollments but there is no harm that we can see in keeping them. Removing and streamlining tracks is problematic because this is not just interdisciplinary across campus it is interdisciplinary among three campuses.

Certain tracks appear to overlap with other programs:
Example—Water Resources Track is fundamentally different from Water Resources Science which is geared more toward Hydrology/Geology rather than ecology. At the urging of the Water Resources Science Director—Mary Santelmann and in a meeting with Graduate Deans and other IDP directors—we are keeping our track in Water Resources.
2. Update course lists for tracks, perhaps with appointed track leaders and student input

At this point, the tracks will remain the same. We have interest in adding tracks in Conservation and Disease Ecology. Discussions about these tracks are being initiated with appropriate departments.

A recent proposal primarily by the College of Liberal Arts that there be a major/program in Environment and the Humanities has been discussed. I believe that the original proposal concerned both undergraduate and graduate levels. I proposed the possibility that Environment and the Humanities would be an ideal track in ESGP. I have had little response about my proposal.

Track leaders are a good idea. But we need incentives for this to work.

3. Keep web pages updated, including links to PSU and University of Oregon programs; additional staff or student worker help is recommended

I have one part time administrative assistant (0.4 FTE) who is attempting to do this. I recently searched for another part time person to assist with this. I believe that Hou Truong, may take this position part time. He is an expert computer and web person who currently works on campus part time. Negotiations are occurring.

4. Work with Deans to provide incentives for faculty participation in the program as major professors, committee members and core teachers

We have a Dean’s meeting in June where this will be addressed.

5. Collect consistent data on completion rates, time to completion and student placement after graduation. Also provide annual student reviews

We have attempted to collect these data and what we have is in our Self-Study Report.

Annual Reviews are done for several students per quarter. Again, I have to do most of this myself. So, I do about two or three per quarter.

6. Consider moving core courses to fall term to build student esprit de corps, include returning faculty and students to fall orientation, encourage formation of student e-mail list, student seminar series and a formal ESGP Student Association

Core Courses were taught by Drs. Eric Seabloom and Elizabeth Borer along with Dr. William Hogsett, Seabloom and Borer left for the University of Minnesota
just before the courses were to be taught this year. Dr. Hogsett along with a
gradient TA took this course over. The course is being taught in winter until
we find a solution as to who will be teaching it.

I strongly urge the university to dedicate one FTE to ESGP to teach the core
courses. Dedicated FTEs exist in Environmental Sciences/Studies at our sister
campuses (University of Oregon and Portland State). *We are the only campus
that does not have dedicated person/persons to teach in the core courses.*

A student e-mail list has been initiated.

7. Have a consistent policy on requirements for students, including examinations
   and coursework

   I am working on that but most of our policy is consistent and is written on the
   webpage.

8. Work with Deans, Chairs etc to ensure that ES students are on par with
   students in the participating units

   We need incentives for Chairs, Deans etc. to want Interdisciplinary students in
   their program. In many departments, there is no difference in attitude or
   relationship among ESGP students and others in the home department of the
   major professor. I do not see this as a big problem except in a few instances.
   In fact, I have dedicated funds every year for travel to meetings and for
   research supplies to ALL students who have applied. These types of funds are
   not available to students in many departments. This year, for example, I have
   partially funded 9 ESGP students to travel to professional meetings to present
   research papers. This is an excellent incentive and I know that the students
   and their professors are very appreciative when receiving these funds.

9. Enhanced career services for both academic and non-academic careers

   I need to get help with this. Mostly, my Administrative Assistant has been
   handling this.

10. Incentives for faculty to participate

   In the past substantial funding was provided to the home department for each
   student participating in IDPs.

11. Student Seminars
Inter-campus conference: We have a full day of student seminars every year that switches between campuses. Students also present papers at BGSS (Biology Graduate Student Symposium).

12. Orientation

We have this every fall.

13. Students on committees

We are in the process of doing this.