Oregon State University Graduate Program Review
Nutrition Graduate Program, May 2011

PREFACE

Professor Martin Fisk, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Oregon State University (OSU), appointed a team to review the Nutrition Graduate Program (NGP) on May 4, 2011. The Review Team included the following: Denise Lach (Professor, OSU Department of Sociology, and Transitional Director of School of Public Policy); Thomas Wolpert (Professor, OSU Department of Botany and Plant Pathology); Patrick Stover (Professor and Director, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University); and Mark Failla (Professor, Department of Human Nutrition, and EHE Associate Dean for Research, Ohio State University). Review Team members received a copy of the Self-Study prepared by the Nutrition Graduate Faculty several weeks before the on-site meeting. Dean Fisk hosted the Review Team for dinner on the evening of May 3rd to provide an opportunity to meet one another, learn the background associated with review, and share expectations for the evaluation process. The following morning the team first met Professors Anthony Wilcox, Chair of the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences, and Donald Jump, Nutrition Graduate Program Director, for an overview of the NGP and the faculty. Professor Tammy Bray, Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences, shared insights about the rebuilding of the NGP and her vision for its continued maturation. This was followed by a meeting with graduate students (8 of 14 in attendance), a tour of the laboratory facilities in Milam and Weniger buildings that house NGP faculty and graduate students, and a meeting with NGP Faculty. The Review Team and Dean Fisk met once again with Professors Wilcox and Jump for final questions prior to initiating an Executive Session to share perspective on programmatic activities during the past five to six years and the stated perspective of the faculty, students and Dean Bray. The Review Team agreed to individually prepare a draft for assigned sections of the final report. The completed draft was shared, revised and accepted by all Review Team members prior to submission to Dean Fisk.

INPUTS
1. Fit of the mission of the program and its relationship to the mission to the academic colleges and university mission.

1.1 Background. The Nutrition Graduate Program (NGP) is affiliated with the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences, chaired by Professor Anthony Wilcox. In this capacity, Professor Wilcox has oversight responsibility for the very large undergraduate programs, as well as two graduate programs: 1) Exercise Sports Science and 2) Nutrition. Professor Donald Jump was recruited in 2007 from Michigan State University to strengthen molecular nutrition at Oregon State University (OSU) and was appointed as NGP Director in 2008. The Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences is affiliated with the College of Health and Human Sciences. Professor Tammy Bray serves as Dean of this College and is a member of the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences. All eight core NGP faculty members, including Professors Jump and Bray, are affiliated with the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences. This core group was recently enriched by the recruitment of an additional seven adjunct NGP faculty who have primary affiliations with Animal Science (1), Biochemistry/Biophysics (3) Pharmacology (1), Public Health (1), and Environmental/Molecular Toxicology (1). The stated mission of the Nutrition Graduate Program is to: 1) provide state-of-the-art graduate level training in nutrition for the next generation of scientific leaders entering careers in academia, government and industry; 2) carry out cutting edge research in areas relevant to human health, including bone metabolism, cancer biology, diabetes, exercise, metabolism, obesity, and aging; and 3) communicate research outcomes to the public to improve health and well-being. The NGP self study identified five short-term goals and three long-term goals, which centered on growing the number of doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and faculty, and increasing the quality and visibility of the program.

The Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences expressed to the committee an ambitious vision for nutrition and NGP during the planned transition to a College of Public Health and Health Sciences. In keeping with the Land-Grant mission of the University, nutrition was viewed comprehensively in the context of linking healthy individuals to healthy families to healthy communities. In this context, nutrition was described as key to bridging the basic sciences, through its molecular nutrition emphasis, to community outreach with a strong emphasis on health disparities.

1.2 Challenges facing the NGP. The NGP is a relatively small program that has recently been reorganized and revitalized with the appointment of Professor Donald Jump as program director beginning in the 2008-2009 academic year. Professor Jump has taken the lead to revise and modernize
the curriculum and the NGP Handbook, and importantly has established a critical mass for the NGP by recruiting outstanding adjunct faculty from across the campus who appear to be committed to the success of NGP. Prior to Professor Jump’s initiative, the NGP did not fare well in the NRC graduate program rankings, and the committee became aware during the review that the current number of NGP doctoral students is below the minimum size required by the OSU Graduate School. The committee noted the recent excellent progress and improvements in the NGP over the past two years, spearheaded by Professor Jump. An excellent framework has been established for the NGP, and the program is now well positioned to scale up the number of doctoral students to meet size expectations set by the OSU Graduate School, and to meet research and training goals put forward in the self study. Specific recommendations follow.

**Recommendation 1. Decrease or phase out recruitment of MS students.** The number of doctoral students needs to be increased to meet OSU Graduate School standards and to enhance the research and training missions of the NGP. MS student recruitment seems to be justified based on the following: 1) the ability of OSU to recruit students interested in completing Didactic Program in Dietetics (DPD) requirements through post-baccalaureate education in preparation for a dietetic internship (DI); and 2) filling teaching assistantships (TAs) with students qualified to support the undergraduate teaching program. While there are exceptions, research does not appear to be the primary motivation for MS student recruitment. Because the NGP has limited resources available to support doctoral training, the wisdom of using these resources to recruit and support MS students and the possibility of transitioning as many of these positions as possible to the PhD program should be considered by the faculty. The Review Team also encourages the NGP faculty to discuss the possibility of establishing a larger post-baccalaureate DPD program that generates full-tuition that could be directed towards support of the Director’s salary.

**Recommendation 2. Doctoral student recruitment should be made a priority.** The quality of the NGP has been enhanced significantly the past five years by faculty recruitments to the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences and recruitment of adjunct NGP faculty across the OSU campus. These changes should improve the ability of the NGP to recruit a strong pool of high quality graduate students. Currently, the quality and quantity of PhD applicants are inadequate to meet the stated missions and goals of the NGP. An aggressive doctoral student
recruitment plan should be developed and financially supported by the program, department and college. Doctoral student recruitment should be the highest priority for the program and all NGP faculty should actively engage in the recruitment of strong students to the NGP doctoral program.

**Recommendation 3. Develop a diversified funding plan for doctoral student training.** The funding plan for scaling up the doctoral program is centered on increasing faculty extramural research support (and hence GRAs), and obtaining a NIH- and/or USDA doctoral training grant(s). Dr. Manore is complemented for her success with obtaining a USDA training grant. However, the committee has some doubts that this approach will be sufficient to achieve the increase in PhD students that is required to meet enrollment minimums set by the Graduate School. The USDA National Needs Fellowship Program is not well funded and characteristically funds only two to three students. Currently, the NGP would not likely be competitive for a NIH training grant because of the small size of the current program, low matriculation of students from Underrepresented Minority (URM) groups, and the lack of graduates hired as postdoctoral fellows and appointed to tenure track faculty positions at Research 1 institutions. A training program that is “theme” centered and extends beyond the NGP may be feasible. While the desire to increase extramural funding is applauded, the current funding environment is challenging. The committee recommends that funding for the NGP doctoral training become a priority or the program may continue to not meet OSU program standards. We recommend that the NGP, departmental, and college officials work together to develop a diversified funding portfolio to fully fund (0.49 FTE) all first year doctoral students with opportunities for competitive funding of some candidates with dissertation year fellowships. The plan might include income and funding from e-campus, the Dean’s initiative, return of a portion of faculty salary recovery, and return of a portion of cost recovery from grants generating full indirect costs. The review team suggested that full funding for first year NGP students from program resources is essential to allow students to enter the doctoral program without an appointed faculty mentor, thus providing opportunities to rotate among faculty research groups before selecting a doctoral mentor.

**Recommendation 4. Maintain and build on current NGP strengths.** The primary strength of the revitalized NGP, both in its core and adjunct faculty, is in the area of molecular nutrition. The
size of the faculty is modest, yet the aspirations for the program appear to be much broader, and
the pressure to become a comprehensive nutrition program (molecules to populations and
policy) will increase with the new focus on Public Health. The NGP self-study also calls for the
recruitment of a new professor at the assistant or associate level to enhance graduate training.
The committee supports this recommendation and views such recruitment as essential to
establish a critical mass for the NGP. The Moore Family Center for Whole Grain Foods, Nutrition
and Preventive Health offers additional and immediate opportunities for the NGP, including the
hire of one or two faculty. Dean Bray shared that the donors have stated their preference that
the hire(s) have expertise in translational and not simply mechanism driven research. The review
team recommends the need to develop a strategic plan for new faculty recruitments that is built
around core strengths of the revitalized NGP. The review team concluded that achieving a
broader vision that meets long-term aspirations of the college will require significant new
investments and greater integration of the NGP with other related OSU programs.

2. Quality of Students and Admissions Selectivity. Total number of graduate students in the program
from 2007 to 2010-2011 has ranged from 11-14 students. The number of applicants has increased
during the 2006-2011 period by approximately 50%. Admission has been highly selective during this
period with only 10-15% of the applicants accepted during the past three years. The majority of
admitted students have matriculated in the MS program with a range of only zero to two PhD annual
admits from 2006-2011. Mean test scores for admitted students (V=525, Q=627, A=4.5) are well above
rejected applicants, but somewhat below the test scores desired to achieve stated aspirations. Also,
there has only been one international student admitted to the program during the past five years.

The profile of applicants and admitted students does not compare favorably with many other graduate
nutrition programs. This is explained in part by the marked changes in the program characterized by
turnover of the faculty, the need to renovate laboratories, and development of a modern curriculum.
Also, there have been no systematic efforts to recruit strong students. The current model for recruiting
and funding first year students will not attract the best students for graduate study in nutrition at OSU.
Rapid turnaround will be challenging without additional resources as the college is only providing 0.33
FTE towards each first year student. Faculty are understandably hesitant to provide additional support
to beginning students, especially as the students are expected to assist with the teaching mission, take a
full load of courses during the first year, and are largely admitted to the MS program.
The committee had the opportunity to meet with graduate students. Eight (five PhD and three MS students) of the 14 currently in the program attended the session. The entire group actively engaged in the discussion and exhibited impressive awareness of one another’s projects. Students acknowledged the greater flexibility of the revised curriculum, the open door policy of the faculty that facilitates the use of equipment in the various laboratories and the culture that encourages collaboration. Unanimous concern was expressed about the poor quality of the soon to be renovated graduate student “bullpen”. Other issues mentioned included the following: general lack of intellectual challenge in slash courses; the absence of meaningful interactions with faculty in the Exercise Science program that has largely resulted from the departure of a highly productive kinesiologist; apparent inequity in faculty support for presentation of research at professional meetings; and, lack of formal feedback by some faculty for graduate student teaching activities.

**Recommendation 5.** *It is imperative that the faculty immediately develop and implement an aggressive program of recruitment to begin in autumn 2011.* Recruitment needs to be as a collective responsibility and not merely an additional activity for Dr. Jump in his role as director of the NGP. As OSU is the only institution in Oregon that awards the PhD in Nutrition, recruitment of strong students in undergraduate nutrition program and the biological sciences on campus, as well as other institutions in the state seems to provide an opportunity for this effort. The NGP faculty are also encouraged to take advantage of ongoing recruitment efforts by life science programs on campus. These include the Molecular and Cellular Biology program and the departments of Biochemistry and Biophysics, Botany and Plant Pathology, and Microbiology. The review team recommends that the department, college and university provide funding to NGP to facilitate initiatives designed to recruit strong doctoral students for a period of three years.

3. **Level of Financial Support of Students.** As stated above, department support of graduate students is limited to 0.33 FTE for first year students with contributions from faculty potentially increasing the level of support to 0.49 FTE. Such support is associated with service as a teaching assist. Many of the graduate students also receive college scholarships in the range of $1000-2000 annually. These funds can be used to supplement stipends or for enrichment activities such as travel to professional meetings. However, the graduate students shared that the scholarships are generally used to pay “fees” that are not typically provided in GTA/GRA appointments and can be relatively expensive. Thus, the scholarships do not seem to be facilitating the intended enrichment process. The Graduate School appears to lack
competitive funding programs for dissertation year fellowships or other means of effectively partnering with faculty to support the best and brightest doctoral students with research assistantships. As mentioned above, this situation places a heavy burden on faculty to generate and commit long term support to doctoral students at a time when federal funding of sponsored research is extremely tight. The funding issue represents a major barrier to scaling up recruitment of highly competitive graduate students.

**Recommendation 6: The faculty should consider strategies to diversify the research funding portfolio as a means of increasing available support for doctoral students.** Alternative funding sources such as the food industry in the northwest region may represent a means to obtain support for graduate students. The record of high productivity and visibility of the NGP core and adjunct faculty provide a sound foundation for seeking such support. The faculty is also encouraged to discuss the possibility of establishing an external advisory board of industry and government scientists as a means of securing additional funding, as well as opportunities for graduate student internships.

4. **Curriculum strength.** Admission into the NGP requires proficiency equivalent to bachelor’s degree level competency in human nutrition, biochemistry and physiology, otherwise these minimal competencies must be met in the graduate program of study. The doctoral core curriculum includes 22 credits of didactic course work in metabolism (6 credits), nutritional status (3 credits) and statistics (9-12 credits). Course requirements in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) can be fulfilled through IST 520 (1 credit) or MCB 557 (3 credits). The curriculum for neither of these RCR courses is likely to meet the NIH training grant standards. The core curriculum electives provide in depth and specialized instruction in nutritional aspects of cancer, bone physiology, energy metabolism, and metabolic disease. Concentration specific electives in biochemistry, genomics, epidemiology, public health, exercise, and functional foods provide both breadth and depth to the core curriculum. This curriculum appears to be excellent in fully supporting the NGP goals to span molecular and human nutrition, and provides a strong academic foundation for the NGP research programs. Current graduate students expressed satisfaction in the quality and availability of course offerings.

The curriculum does not include foundational courses in the social/behavioral sciences, and therefore does not support the long-term college vision of building a program that links healthy people, healthy families and healthy communities.
**Recommendation 7:** The NGP faculty should discuss the possibility of requiring a minor for the PhD to increase the breadth of doctoral students.

5. **Quality of personnel and adequacy to achieve mission and goals.**

The quality of the faculty associated with NGP has improved substantially since the previous review. This was achieved by hiring new faculty and by the inclusion of adjunct faculty, especially those from the Linus Pauling Institute, in the program. The committee reviewed core faculty extramural research support, publications, and Impact H-Index. There are many faculty with very strong funding and publications records, and only one faculty member currently lacked funding. These faculty provide a strong foundation for the NGP with its focus on molecular nutrition, but not necessarily the critical mass of core faculty required for a broad based program that provides quality training in both applied and basic aspects of nutrition.

The recent effort in increasing the quality and productivity of faculty members associated with the NGP has outpaced the recruitment of strong graduate students, especially PhD students. Faculty have choices regarding their commitment of time and effort to training graduate students and if they don’t find strong students in the NGP program, they have access to other graduate programs with potentially stronger students. As discussed above, investments in doctoral student recruitment and first year funding will be essential to support, leverage and maximize the successful investments in NGP faculty.

6. **Level and quality of infrastructure.** During the past decade, the institution and college have made considerable investments to re-build the Nutrition faculty by hiring strong senior and junior faculty into tenure track positions. Also, there has been major investment in renovating laboratory facilities in Milam Hall and Weniger Hall. These renovations continue and provide faculty with a modern research facility. Appropriate accommodations for the Moore Family Professor have been undertaken. Presently, space is adequate for the current faculty at their level of funding. Laboratory space also will be assigned to several core faculty in the NGP in the soon to be completed LPI building. This will provide additional workspace for graduate students and research staff, and also ensures continued and possibly increased opportunities for NGP core faculty to collaborate regularly with colleagues at LPI. Space for scholarly activities has the potential to be a limiting factor for consideration of additional faculty hires to the NGP.
In addition to the high quality of the physical facility, laboratories visited by the committee were well equipped with a wide variety of both state-of-the-art and standard instrumentation essential for addressing problems in cellular and molecular nutrition. Also, Dr. Traber and colleagues at LPI possess state-of-the-art instrumentation required for metabolism studies. Although specific information was not provided, it appears that the facilities were equipped by a combination of start-up packages and the success of the faculty with obtaining competitive funds. Students expressed appreciation for the willingness of faculty to provide training and access to the instruments, regardless of specific location and faculty advisor.

The committee did not visit the Nutrition and Physical Activity laboratory directed by Dr. Manore.

**PRODUCTIVITY**

1. **Level and Quality of Student Performance.** Current graduation rates are averaging about 71% for both MS and PhD students, with an average 2.5 years and 4.5 years to completion of the MS and PhD, respectively. Efforts are underway to reduce attrition although these numbers continue to be relatively high (Between 2005-2010, only 67% of students finished in less than eight years).

Doctoral students and some MS students are regularly publishing in leading peer reviewed journals in the discipline, including the *Journal of Nutrition, American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* and the *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry*. As modern nutrition is an integrative science, it is noteworthy that students are also co-authors of papers published in other high impact journals that often serve as vehicles for dissemination of nutritional biochemistry and nutrition and physical activity including *J. Lipid Research, Experimental Biology and Medicine* and *Medical Science of Sports and Exercise*. Students reported during their interview that they felt “publication pressure” from their major advisors. A large number of students are making scholarly presentations at professional meetings. For example, eleven nutrition grad students have given presentations/abstracts at professional meetings during the first four months of 2011. The meetings include the annual meetings of Experimental Biology and the American Chemical Society, which are important venues for molecular nutrition scientists. It appears that all faculty encourage students to attend professional meetings, although students report that some faculty provide financial support to attend and present at professional meetings, whereas others promote but do not.

In interviews with the students, we heard that the fellowships were relatively small (~$1-2,000/per term) and were primarily used to pay student fees. Students also suggested that notification of
information about fellowships is not necessarily distributed to all and depends primarily on the PI/major advisor. There was limited evidence that Nutrition Graduate students have been successful in attracting external awards, although over the years several have won poster competitions at the American Society of Nutrition meetings.

**Recommendation 7**: Characterize causes for lack of completion of the degree and develop strategies to increase completion rate.

**Recommendation 8**: Continue publication expectations for students and provide support for travel to present results at a professional meeting at least once during the PhD degree program.

**Recommendation 9**: Encourage faculty and graduate students to seek prestigious graduate fellowships, including OSU Graduate Fellowships.

2. **Level and Quality of Faculty Performance.** The department reports a highly commendable increase in research productivity as measured by receipt of grants, publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts, and presentations at professional meetings, both in absolute numbers and on a per faculty basis. The department has been intentional about encouraging research and recruiting senior faculty with active research agendas and the success of this strategy is most evident. Over the last five years, scholarly activity increased substantially by a variety of metrics including peer reviewed publications and presentation, citation counts and external funding. The self-study reports that the H-Index (index of impact) ranges from 4 to 46. Several faculty members have won internal awards for scholarship, and two have received professional awards for excellence in scholarship. This success is echoed in reports from students who are impressed by the quality of faculty, believing they are pushing the forefront of nutrition and human medicine. Students appreciate the ability to collaborate closely with this productive faculty.

Recognizing the difficulties of finding resources to support graduate students, there does appear to be inequities in the distribution of mentoring responsibilities. Some faculty members do not appear to mentor NGP PhD students, although they may work with students from other PhD programs. It was mentioned that Nutrition Graduate students may not be sufficiently strong to participate in emerging
faculty research programs. This further supports the need for aggressive recruitment of strong students to NGP by the faculty.

**Recommendation 10:** Include mentoring Nutrition Doctoral Students as part of every faculty member’s Position Description and consider the success of graduate students in faculty performance reviews.

3. **Viability of Scholarly Community within Which Students Can Interact.** Both students and faculty shared that there are weekly seminars in the department at which research from both OSU and external researchers is discussed. There was some concern among students that the topics of the seminars were not always of interest as they addressed physical activity rather than nutrition. Students suggested that the time might be better used to talk about their research with other nutrition students in informal settings. Although the College of Health and Human Sciences has several interdisciplinary centers (e.g., Healthy Aging, Children and Family), students do not identify these as part of their scholarly community (neither did most faculty members). Finally, we did not hear from either faculty or students that students were engaged in any program or departmental governance or decision-making.

**Recommendation 11:** Review required and elective slash courses to ensure that they have appropriate learning outcomes and assignments for graduate students.

**Recommendation 12:** Find ways to engage students in program decision-making as part of their professional development (e.g., serve on search committees, participate in curriculum reform, etc.).

**Recommendation 13:** Encourage the Nutrition graduate students to organize and lead a “journal club” as a means of sharing interests and expertise with one another.
OUTCOMES

1. Professional viability of Graduates. As indicated earlier, previous to the arrival of the current program leadership, the Nutrition Graduate Program (NGP) was in a state of disarray. Consequently, records for graduate placement prior to 2005 are not available. Since 2005 ten MS and five PhDs have graduated from the program. Of the five PhD graduates, one owns a nutrition consulting business, one is a sports nutrition specialist with adjunct faculty status, one is employed as an industry research scientist and two are postdoctoral fellows. Thus, while the total number of PhD graduates from the program is very low, success of the PhD students as determined by placement within their respective areas of study is noted. Many of the MS students were completing undergraduate DPD (Didactic Program in Dietetics) requirements to qualify for admission to a Dietetics Internship program, a requirement to become a Registered Dietician (RD). Available data suggest that the majority of these students have been admitted to dietetic internship programs. Of the students for which placement data are available, the majority are employed as Registered Dieticians or in a related field.

2. Satisfaction of Students and Graduates. Data for the satisfaction level for graduates of the program was obtained through a survey conducted in late 2010 and consisted of six responses. Although quite limited in scope, graduates generally indicated satisfaction with their experience in the NGP.

Data for satisfaction of current graduate students is based on a meeting with eight of the graduate students during the on-site review and a student survey conducted toward the end of 2010. The survey was sent to 14 students in the program and responses were received from eleven individuals. Responses for the survey indicated satisfaction that met or exceeded the averages obtained from the OSU Graduate School graduate exit survey for all OSU graduate programs. During the meeting of the committee with Nutrition graduate students, they expressed an overall, very positive assessment of the program. It was felt that significant improvements have recently been made in the curriculum and core requirements for the program. Program-related courses are provided in a timely manner such that there are no problems with availability. Students felt that the program provided a positive learning environment that inspired a great deal of camaraderie. Students were pleased with the research facilities and indicated a high level of collaboration and sharing of facilities. A significant point of dissatisfaction was expressed over the quality of the student office space. There are plans for extensive renovation of these office facilities in the near future. Most students felt that the diversity of research conducted in the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Science presented a strength for the NGP, but
were disappointed by the limited number of collaborations occurring between faculty in the program and other members of the Department. Some students also commented that the research diversity in the Department was reflected in the Departmental Seminar series and often led to seminars not relevant to their interests. One student expressed strong concern over limited rigor in slash courses; several other students agreed with this assessment.

3. **Rankings/ratings.** Recent NRC (National Research Council) ratings for the NGP from OSU (out of 44 programs surveyed) produced an S-ranking of 31 (5\textsuperscript{th} percentile) and 41 (95\textsuperscript{th} percentile) and an R-ranking of 16 (5\textsuperscript{th} percentile) and 32 (95\textsuperscript{th} percentile), suggesting that the NGP at OSU is ranked fairly low among other comparator programs. NRC rankings were based on data spanning the period of 2000-2006. However, the NGP has undergone significant changes since 2005. Consequently, current NRC rankings are not a valid reflection of the current state of the program. Comparison of a number of metrics associated with program success from the period reflected in the NRC rankings (2000-2006) with the period since the reorganization of the program (2005-2011) suggests substantial improvement. For example, the average number of faculty publications/year increased from 0.85 to 7.8, faculty with external grants increased from 42.5\% to 87.5\%, and first year student support increased from 25\% to 100\%. These metrics suggest that the program is currently on an improved trajectory.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The NGP program experienced difficulties during the late 1990s, necessitating complete restructuring of the faculty, renovation of the physical facilities, and revision of the graduate curriculum. The unit can proudly conclude that it has successfully accomplished these goals. The committee was very impressed by the scholarly productivity and positive attitude of the faculty, the quality of the research environment, and the enthusiasm of the graduate students, especially in regards to the learning experience they are receiving from the faculty. The program is now well positioned to address the major problem of recruiting and retaining a sufficient number of strong students to produce the standard number of graduates expected by the Graduate School. The current funding model and the distribution of the limited funds to both the MS and PhD programs represent the major barrier to accomplish this goal. The graduate faculty need to develop a strategic plan for recruiting more doctoral students to the program. The faculty and the administration must partner to develop a more diversified funding portfolio for shared support of graduate students in order to achieve the aspirations of the NGP. The NGP is the only program in Oregon that confers the PhD in Nutrition. This and the widespread
recognition that diet and physical activity are key environmental factors that determine the balance between health and chronic disease make it imperative that the program is retained and expands capacity for training more graduate students in nutrition and its intersection with physical activity. Such growth is expected to increase the quality and visibility of NGP both on and off campus. It is noteworthy that Professor Wilcox stated strong support for retention of the NGP when directly asked his opinion by the review team.