I. Approval of Council Minutes

After agreeing that the minutes of the November 14, 2002, Graduate Council meeting did not clearly reflect the decision taken, the Council added a new paragraph at the end of the section on that topic in the 11/14/02 minutes that reads as follows: “To comply with the recommendation, students would be required to include stand-alone graduate credits as a minimum of 50% of all graduate work in their programs of study (exclusive of capstone credits, i.e., thesis, research-in-lieu-of-thesis, or internship.)” The motion to accept the minutes from November 14, 2002, as amended, was passed.

II. Category I Proposal for a Master of Business and Engineering in Construction Engineering Management

David Sillars (Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering [CCEE]) introduced the new Category I proposal with a letter of support from Harold Koenig, Chair of the Graduate Program in College of Business. The Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering proposes to create the Master of Business and Engineering in Construction Engineering Management. The new degree program is funded primarily through an endowed fund known as the Robert C. Wilson Program in Construction Engineering Management.

The curriculum will consist of approximately 50% graduate level course work in the College of Engineering and 50% graduate courses in the College of Business. Students will be able to choose between capstone activities of an internship or a project, or a degree program of all course work. Working professionals will be the target students; the goal is to improve both business and technical skills. Course work may be completed through both of and off-campus studies. Because selected MBA courses are offered once per week in the evening, the CCEE department plans to offer classes in the afternoon of the same day to minimize students’ travel time to and from Corvallis. Another feature of the proposed program is that it will allow the entry of students who do not have a background in engineering so that they can participate in the program and enter into the construction business field. Because those in business and architecture are already employed and active in construction engineering management, this feature will allow them to pursue graduate study without interrupting their careers.
John Selker (Engineering) noted that this program would draw students from very diverse backgrounds. Because engineering and business are both in the title, minimum levels of expertise in these areas should be expected of students. However, little discussion is provided in the proposal about ways that students with limited formal academic backgrounds will be able to meet prerequisites associated with advanced level course work. Sillars responded that students taking business courses will be required to meet all prerequisites for those courses, either before enrolling in the program or as part of the program, and before they take the graduate business courses. The proposal includes the necessary prerequisites for both the business and engineering courses required in the curriculum. To participate in the engineering courses, the program requires three years of experience or work in the field of civil engineering. To Selker’s question whether prerequisites for engineering courses were required, Sillars said yes. Ken Williamson (Head of the Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering Department) noted that this program would focus on a very narrow group of students; most potential students who are interested in this program usually have some background in the area. Williamson also noted that the Civil Engineering department also has stringent requirements for the membership on the advisory committee of each student.

The proposed program would allow the transfer of Portland State University (PSU) courses, but because the program is not a joint-campus activity, only 15 credits of PSU courses could be transferred to the OSU graduate program of study. Martin Fisk (Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences) asked whether the cost of PSU courses that might be transferred has been investigated. Sillars said that prerequisite courses are available at PSU and that he is setting up a meeting with the appropriate people at PSU to learn more about their MBA program.

Alex Sanchez (Education) noted that the committee that oversees the program does not have any members from the College of Business. He argued that, since the program is closely linked to the MBA program, someone from the College of Business should be on the oversight committee. Williamson said that these are Construction Engineering Management students, but that Business faculty will be on the students’ committees. Sanchez said that this does not truly connect the two programs/departments the way the proposal states it would. Because Master's degree students are not required to have to have a program planning committee meeting, there is no real communication between CEM and Business faculty on the student’s committee prior to the final examination. In response to a question about the way that the committee described in the proposal would operate, Williamson answered that the students’ programs of study in CCEE are approved by a departmental standing committee by routing the programs through departmental mail; then Williamson signs off on the routed programs.

Bruce Rettig (Graduate School) pointed out that, because this proposal creates both a new degree and a new major in that degree, it is the precursor for a number of new programs coming from the College of Engineering. Rettig also noted that the College of Business is expecting this to be the precursor of several new degrees and the connection with the College of Business should be strong from the start. Sillars stated that this liaison is being established. Fisk emphasized the importance of the Business courses in the program, which suggests Business must be consulted and must be in on the ground floor of the establishment of the degree. Selker asked about the future of the program. Is there a committee that will adjust the program as it matures and evolves? Sillars responded that the Construction Engineering Management program will be
growing and will have the primary responsibility for reviewing course work. Potential changes will also be considered by the Graduate Committee within Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering and by industry consultants. Selker suggested that the process of evolution and maturation be outlined more clearly in the proposal. David Brauner (Liberal Arts) asked about expectations of students, since most of them will be non-traditional. It was also noted that the outcome of the Internship is unclear in the proposal, and that it is not clear whether there is a final exam. Sillars stated that, because he expected many students would be sponsored by the company for which they work, internships could result in the student solving a problem for his/her own company. A two-hour final oral exam is required. This examination, along with a final document, which will be presented to the student's committee, would be the capstone requirements for the degree. Tony Collins (Pharmacy) noted that, on page 19 of the proposal, the words minimum and maximum seemed to be interchanged. In response to a question about whether funding has been assured by the College of Engineering, Williamson said that the endowment is being established through the sale of property, but that the College of Engineering is contributing other funds as well.

Lynda Ciuffetti (Science) asked whether Council members were concerned about the potential for conflicts of interest when students do internships at the place of their employment. Brauner also wondered whether an internship in one's own company could really give students the broad and varied experience promised by the proposal. Selker argued that there is a difference between a conflict of interest and an ideal educational experience. As long as a professor can grade a project without any hindrance, there is no conflict of interest. But he felt that the learning experience is less than ideal because there is the potential for a lack of diverse learning possibilities. David Gobeli (Business) suggested that the key is the faculty person overseeing the internship. Faculty must make sure that a meaningful learning experience takes place. Collins asked Gobeli, who has had a great deal of experience with internships, how common conflicts between the faculty and the company are. In particular, who would have the final say as to what the project would be if faculty suggest one topic and the company says that regular work must be done. Gobeli explained that the College of Business has learning contracts, which must be signed before the internship can be started. Wendé Feller (student member of the Council) noted that the internship could increase the student’s workload substantially if separate job requirements and internship activities were required. Mary Prucha (Graduate School) pointed out that paragraph b on page 6 speaks to the internship question. Language on that page indicates that four hours of internship are required on student's programs if they choose the internship option.

Feller (GPSA) moved to approve the "Proposal for the Initiation of a New Instructional Program Leading to the Master of Business and Engineering in Construction Engineering Management,” provided that the proposal incorporates the changes reflected in the minutes of the December 12th meeting of the Graduate Council.” Those changes are:

1) In Section 3 “Course of Study,” paragraph a, the following sentence must be added, “The topic of the internship will be approved for its academic content by the student's major professor prior to beginning the activity.”

2) Liaison with College of Business must be established, specifically by way of the committee that approves student programs and program changes.
3) Required course work must be clearly outlined in the proposal.

4) In addition to recommended changes, the Council also suggests that a liaison be established with Portland State University and the University of Oregon.

The motion as amended passed.

Selker (Engineering) asked that the minutes reflect the Graduate Council’s pleasure at the work of this group and the Council’s encouragement to continue the good work.

III. Category I Proposal to Move the College Student Services Administration Program from the Graduate School to the School of Education

During the October 24, 2002, Graduate Council meeting, consideration of the proposal to move the College Student Services Administration Program from the Graduate School to the School of Education was delayed due to the inability to understand budget issues in the proposal. The Council passed a motion “that feedback be given to the presenters of the proposal that 1) the Graduate Council is very favorably disposed to this proposal, but, to move it forward with approval, there should be assurance of adequate funding for the program and 2) a liaison document from at least one key client, namely Student Affairs, as well as one other department, should be included in the proposal.” Subsequent to that meeting, a letter was sent from Larry Roper, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, to Sam Stern, Dean of the School of Education. In that letter, Roper indicated the support of Student Services for the funding of CSSA and described funding available during the current academic year. The motion to support the transfer of the CSSA program from the Graduate School to the School of Education passed with one abstention.

IV. Graduate Level Learning Actions

a. Catalog Language Update

Prucha was asked at the last Graduate Council meeting to identify what changes in Graduate Catalog language would be required to reflect changes in the graduate level learning requirements. She shared a handout that showed changes in policy for master’s and doctoral degrees and changes in program of study requirements. Barbara Bond (Forestry) proposed that the Council consider whether the 400 level courses could be included on graduate programs of study. Rettig pointed out the complexities that could arise from including undergraduate courses on graduate programs of study and suggested that the Council consider this issue as a separate agenda item at a future meeting. Discussion ensued as to whether the Catalog changes include the language that was struck from the minutes of 11/14/02. Consensus that all sentences referring to “the remaining course credits may include the 500-level component of dual listed (400/500) courses” should now be deleted from the Catalog language. Prucha remarked that the Catalog is on-line and the new language might not appear there until Fall 2003. Ciuffetti suggested that the second sentence in the changed Catalog language could stay since it says, "may include." Council consensus was to retain the second sentence at this time.
b. Category II Subcommittee Discussion

Rettig noted that Graduate Council changes concerning slash courses and graduate level learning are having an impact on how the Category II subcommittee of the Graduate Council is doing its work. He asked the Council for feedback for the Category II subcommittee regarding 500 level courses. Selker remarked that a single page description of what satisfies the difference between the 400 level and 500 level courses would be a very useful tool to send to the departments if there is any question whether a Category II proposal meets the graduate level learning guidelines. Fisk noted that the Council had not yet passed the "50% rule" when the Category II proposals were coming in, and because of that, the Category II committee felt the need to enforce the difference between the 400 level and 500 level courses. He believes that Category II proposals now should be much less of a concern. Bond remarked that if a 500 level course shows up on a student's transcript, then the Category II subcommittee should be responsible for making sure that this 500 level course is truly a graduate level learning experience. Selker suggested that, in addition to explaining Graduate Council expectations for slash courses, the policy change regarding "50% graduate level learning" should be communicated very thoroughly to the entire university.

Collins observed that the importance of 500 level courses on the program of study depends on the allowance of 400 level courses on the program of study and the real issue is: “Are we satisfied with the grad students having just 50% graduate level learning or do we want 100%?” Sanchez noted that the confusion arises from three levels of expectation for courses that might be on programs of study: 1) strictly 500 level (i.e., graduate standalone), 2) 400 level course work that might be acceptable for programs of study, and 3) the 500 component of slash courses. Sally Francis (Dean, Graduate School) asked whether, while these issues are being sorted out, practice-as-usual should be pursued or whether new courses should be held to a higher level of expectation. Brauner added that some slash course proposals coming to the Council would not have passed under the OLD policy.

Francis urged all Council members to look at the OSU 2007 work, particularly that work done by the Curriculum Issues Group, since work done by that group may impact work done on this issue by the Graduate Council. She urged Council members to make comments on the Curricular Issues Planning Team report prior to January 15, 2003. Ciuffetti asked whether a comment from the Council as a whole was appropriate. Francis noted that any changes to the curriculum by the OSU 2007 effort would not be affected by the Council unless the Council makes the effort to communicate their own views.

Sanchez reminded the Council that a major source of the concern about slash courses was that student complaints were expressed to the Accreditation Committee. He felt that the slash course issue is being addressed by the Council but only by "the back door.” He argued that the Council should continue to be strict in enforcing its expectations for Category II proposals regarding the graduate level learning experience. Rettig described recent actions by Academic Affairs in bypassing the Graduate Council in processing X course approvals, the dropping of old courses, slight changes in titles and prerequisites, and minor changes in course descriptions. The question was whether these actions should be taken solely by the Curriculum Council and bypass Rettig, who has been reviewing them under responsibility delegated by the Council. Rettig asked for
feedback from the Council regarding his role in this decision-making. Sanchez remarked that the Council is losing some control over graduate level learning if it does not have a say in these decisions. Rettig reported that because of the new system on the Web for approving Category II changes to courses, it usually takes only about a few minutes to process them. The consensus of Graduate Council is to have Rettig continue to approve these proposals on behalf of the Graduate Council.