

July 1, 2013

Adrienne Wonhof, Analyst
Office of Graduate Studies

Re: Davis Divisional Response: Proposed Graduate Studies Policy – Self-Supporting Graduate Degree Programs

The proposal was forwarded to all Davis Division of the Academic Senate standing committees and Faculty Executive Committees within the Schools and Colleges for comment. Detailed responses were received from Faculty Welfare Committee, Graduate Council, Planning and Budget Committee, Research Committee, and the Faculty Executive Committee from the College of Letters and Science.

This policy addresses most of the appropriate issues involved in creating a self-supporting graduate degree program. Yet our assessment was not universally positive, especially given the limited time that was available to review the draft policy. Specifically:

- Policy I.C should be rewritten to match the UC policy and be no more restrictive than the UC policy. Students in self-supporting graduate degree programs may have substantial professional experience that should be considered in a holistic admissions process. While we should not accept students with lower academic ability for admission into these programs, the metrics used to measure ability will vary. However, not all self-supporting graduate degree programs will focus on career professionals with experience; thus, criteria for admission must be flexible for self-supporting graduate degree programs.
- Section I.G. is not clear how academic units will sustain two “separate but equal” tracks. Although the draft policy uses stronger language to ensure the true costs of self-supporting graduate degree programs are accounted for, we remain concerned about the potential impacts this may have on UC Davis graduate education, and on faculty members who must continue performing their current jobs while being paid to teach in self-supporting graduate degree programs. If faculty are incentivized to teach in self-supporting programs then other graduate (and professional) programs may suffer. Given the rather tenuous position of non-departmental based graduate groups, which all have difficulties attracting sufficient faculty to teach their courses, this policy could exacerbate the problem and in the long-run erode the quality of our existing graduate programs and thus the research and teaching missions of the university.
- This policy complements PPM 200-26 and the Academic Senate’s review process for proposed new self-supporting graduate degree programs. We observe that the concept of “Lead Dean” is referenced throughout the document (Sections I.B, III.A.2, III.A.4.d, and V.E), but the role that academic Deans have

regarding graduate education remains unclear, especially in the context of the new budget model.

- We ask that the language of Section V.E be strengthened to include all relevant Graduate Programs/Groups among the entities with which MOUs should be established regarding how the marginal surplus revenue will be used.

It was noted that not all academic units are in a strong position to launch a self-supporting graduate degree program; departments in the humanities are far less likely to anticipate that they can generate future revenue streams by building a master's program under this policy.

Finally, as voiced in our response to the two versions of the white paper on faculty resources, the safeguard that protects faculty whose salaries are funded centrally from having financial interests affect decisions about merits and promotions appears not to protect faculty hired on other funding sources. We assume it is not the intention to make such a distinction, but the language in section II.E of the proposal under review emphasizes those academic units will be responsible for continuation funding. It should be recognized that the campus as a whole bears this responsibility for tenure track and tenured faculty.

The Davis Division of the Academic Senate asks that these issues be addressed prior to policy implementation and would like to review the updated policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Bruno Nachtergaele', written in black ink.

Bruno Nachtergaele, Chair
Davis Division of the Academic Senate
Professor: Mathematics