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July 18, 2014

WILLIAM JACOB, CHAIR

UC Academic Council
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200

RE: Review of the Updated Self-Supporting Graduate Professional Degree Programs Policy (SSGPDP)

The request to review the updated Self-Supporting Graduate Professional Degree Programs Policy was forwarded to all Davis Division of the Academic Senate standing committees and Faculty Executive Committees from the schools and colleges. Responses were received from the Committee on Planning and Budget, College of Letters and Sciences and Graduate Council.

The enclosed Graduate Council response to the updated SSGPDP proposal reflects the Davis Division's position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruno Nachtergaele".

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

Enclosure

June 5, 2014

RFC: 2nd Review – Self-Supporting Graduate Degree Program Policy

Graduate Council discussed the proposed SSGDP policy at its February and June 2 meetings. The policy was reviewed by Graduate Council's Academic Planning and Development committee prior to each Graduate Council discussion.

In its response to the previous RFC on the draft policy for SSGDPs, dated 4 February 2014, Graduate Council noted: 1) Graduate teaching on an overload basis should not be allowed as standard practice; and 2) Economic accessibility and diversity of the student population should be monitored, preferably using a specific set of measures.

The current (2nd revised) draft did not address the first of these two points. In particular, the current draft allows for graduate teaching on either an overload or a "buy-out" basis, without indicating a preference for one or the other, and without clarification of a standard definition of "overload."

On the second point, the current draft policy is essentially the same as the previous draft (i.e., significant changes were not introduced). However, the previous and current drafts contain a section on financial accessibility, which states "SSGDPs must have a financial accessibility goal for their student population and a student financial support plan for achieving this goal." Furthermore, as part of triennial processes for certification of self-supporting status and Presidential approval of program charges, SSGDPs must provide UCOP with "a description of the SSGDP's student financial support plan and the extent to which it is attaining its financial accessibility goal." The financial support plan should be compared to those of other UC programs offering similar degrees. However, additional details on the monitoring of financial accessibility are lacking. Statements regarding diversity of the student population and its monitoring are lacking.

APD's noted other sections that may need wording changes and clarification, such as within the introduction to the draft policy text (section III, part A), SSGDPs are described as "a necessary educational strategy". In the following paragraph, however, the draft policy requires that "a compelling case be made for why a SSGDP cannot or should not be state-supported and assurances that the SSGDP will not have a detrimental impact on a school's or a department's ability to carry out its state-supported teaching, research, and service responsibilities." The notion that SSGDPs are necessary, and must be supported by compelling arguments, is potentially confusing. It is suggested to remove

“necessary” from the text, such that SSGDPs are “an educational strategy”.

Within the description of comparable faculty (section III, part F), the draft policy allows for a higher proportion of non-Senate faculty instructors for “certain practice-oriented degree programs.” This statement is open to broad interpretations, particularly since SSGPDPs are defined (in section III, part B) as “graduate programs that primarily serve professionals seeking to advance their careers.” In some fields, the terms “professional” and “practitioner” are synonymous. One could argue that all SSGDPs are practice-oriented. Thus, all SSGDPs could potentially justify a higher proportion of non-Senate faculty instructors. Based on that definition, Graduate Council is concerned that this provision would be quite widely exploited.

This concern is linked to another comment regarding the proposal. The heading for the section on comparable quality (section III, part E) implies comparison to “regular state-supported graduate programs.” Why does the text within this section refer to comparison with other graduate professional degree programs? The message of this section is not clear regarding the comparison group for SSGDPs.

Within the section on initiation and approval of SSGDPs (section III, part H.1), the text limits the consideration of detrimental impacts to the “unit proposing the program”. Surely, SSGDPs should not have significant detrimental impacts on any state-supported teaching, research or service.

Sincerely,



Rachael E. Goodhue, Chair
Graduate Council

/vm

C: Gina Anderson, Academic Senate Executive Director