To: The Senate

From: The Graduate Council

Date: April 16, 2012

Re: Graduate Council Minutes – March 2012

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Members Present: Edward Aguado, Lawrence Baron, Leland Beck, Andrew Do, David Ely, Eugene Olevsky, Ramona Perez, Radmila Prislin, Majorie Olney for Caren Sax, Anne Turhollow, Satchi Venkataraman, Larry Verity, and Joseph Waters.


Ex-Officio Members Present: Rita Baumann and Cristina Sanchez.

Visitors: Margarita Pina-Harlow.

1. Minutes: The minutes for the February 2nd, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Report of the Dean (Associate Dean, Dr. Radmila Prislin)

As discussed at the last meeting, Vice President of Research, Dr. Welter, approved an extension of the admissions deadlines for all programs on the regular admission cycle, as follows:

- March 30th: CSUMentor application
- May 1st: File completion
- June 15th: RDRs out to department review
- June 29th: RDRs returned to GAU
- July 13th: Intent to enroll deadline

This decision, made in consultation with the Graduate Deans Council and Enrollment Services, was made in response to multiple requests for a prolonged admission period in order to attract more and more qualified applicants to our graduate programs. The newly established deadlines apply to all programs except those that opt to adhere to the original February 1st CSUMentor application deadline and the programs on the early deadline of December 15th (9 JDPs and 11 masters programs).

Resident admission caps have been sent out to each college and are based on historical admission rates and the targeted growth of the graduate program. The overall goal is to grow graduate enrollment by 5% compared to Fall 2011, with some variations in targets for specific programs per their wishes. Resident admission caps apply only to California residents. There are no caps on non-resident (out-of-state and international) enrollment. Each program is free to admit as many non-resident students as they can accommodate. Importantly, overall caps set by the Chancellor’s office only allow for a 2% margin of error – if SDSU were to deviate from the caps by a margin greater than 2% by over-enrolling or under-enrolling resident students, there are penalties. The detailed cap
information has been sent to the Deans and Associate Deans, for their further distribution to each individual program.

As a reminder, Dr. Prislin emphasized that the Graduate Division does not determine nor define the criteria for a student to obtain California residency. The criterion that requires a student to demonstrate financial independence for the three years prior to submitting a residency request is not new; however, the Chancellors office requested strict enforcement of the rule about two years ago and our Registrar Office has complied. All SDSU attempts to convince the Chancellors office that such an enforcement is counterproductive have been unsuccessful.

The bad news regarding the reduced number of non-resident tuition waivers (NRTW) has been distributed – with only 160 available, the number is down 41 from last year’s 201 (20% reduction), and down 70 from the previous year’s 230. Dr. Prislin reminded the group that the California Education Code limits the total number of waivers to no more than 25% of the non-resident population. The 160 limit for AY 2012/13 is based on the projected number of non-resident students for the AY 2012/13. Each NRTW waives approximately $6600 of fees per academic year per student. Therefore, although we would like to distribute as many NRTWs as possible, each waiver distributed is a loss of revenue for the university. Additionally, non-resident students who attend with a NRTW do not count towards the non-resident population when calculating the allocation of waivers, thereby providing an additional incentive to intensify efforts to recruit non-resident students.

Recently, Dean Welter requested a vote on whether to adjust the distribution of waivers in round one from the previous year’s 65% to 80% (128 waivers). There were 17 total votes from the Graduate Council members: 14 voted to increase the distribution to 80%, and 3 voted to keep it at 65%. Therefore, 80% or 128 waivers will be distributed in round one. The priority for distribution remains as before with the continuing international students in good standing as the first priority, followed by new doctoral and new MFA students, merit scholarship recipients, students funded from grants in which non-resident tuition waivers were included in cost sharing, and all other domestic and international non-resident students.

During the nomination process, each program is asked to provide the specific number of waivers that are needed for their program. Although the NRTW deadline is in mid-March and some programs now have a later application date of March 30th, Dr. Prislin brought out that most programs would have most of their applications in by round one, with only a small number of applicants remaining.

3. Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee

• Information (51-03-12)

Policy Committee Report - None
4. New Business

- **Blended Masters Degree Program - Degree Requirements**  
  *(Rita Baumann and Cristina Sanchez)*

Rita Baumann explained the process for the 4+1 blended programs, where students complete both a bachelors and master’s degree at the same time: once the student has completed 120 units as an undergraduate, her or his status changes to a graduate student, the POS can then submitted, and once the graduate coursework has been completed, the student graduates with both degrees in the same semester.

The current GPA policy for all students in a master’s program is that a 3.0 GPA is maintained in a) all courses listed on the POS, and b) all courses, 300-level and above, taken at SDSU concurrently with or subsequently to the earliest course listed on the official degree program, including courses accepted for transfer credit. However, recently a director for a 4+1 program requested a student’s GPA be calculated without using coursework that was completed prior to his being classified to graduate student status, although some of that coursework did fall into the 300+1 category. Because of the apparent ambiguity in the interpretation of the 3.0 policy requirement, GRA was asked for a clarification. Upon discussion that emphasized a) 4+1 programs are meant to attract students with strong credentials who should easily satisfy the requirement, and b) potential negative ramifications of relaxing the requirement, GRA took a vote.

**Vote**: The Council voted unanimously to retain the current 300+1 policy on GPA calculation for all graduate programs, including the BMAC and 4+1 programs. Dr. Prislin added that she would inform the two programs in question of the Council’s decision and the GRA would include the decision in the following month’s MyGAP newsletter.

- **Exchange Student Course Credits (Dr. Prislin)**

Students enrolled in exchange programs take courses both here at SDSU and at a partner campus, and then return to SDSU to graduate. Currently, Financial Aid only recognizes up to 9 units of coursework taken at the alternate university and therefore has denied financial aid to students taking any additional units at the partner institution within an exchange program. After searching through historical documentation that pertains to the issue, the only document Dr. Prislin found was a memo from 1984 discussing undergraduate exchange programs. The memo, from then AVP for Academic Affairs Dr. Medeiros, stated that all coursework completed in undergraduate exchange programs carries resident credit. Therefore, the current situation brings up two issues to be decided by the Council: 1) can all coursework completed at the partner campus be counted as resident credits at SDSU, and if so, 2) because some exchange programs do not specify coursework to be taken at a partner institution, theoretically a student can take more units
at the partner institution towards a degree than here at SDSU. Therefore, GC is to decide how to address the issue.

**Vote:** The Council voted unanimously as follows: 1) all coursework taken at the partner university within an exchange program can be treated as resident coursework and can be counted towards the degree, and 2) a minimum of 50% of required units must be taken here at SDSU, excluding thesis units.

5. **Old Business**

Adjournment 3:30pm