To: The Senate

From: The Graduate Council

Date: 11/13/2012

Re: Graduate Council Minutes – October 4, 2012


Ex-Officio Members Present: Rita Baumann, Janet Rodgers, Margarita Piña-Harlow, and Cristina Sanchez.

1. Minutes: The minutes for the September 6, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Report of the Dean (Dr. Welter)

   Dean Welter updated the group on current fall 2012 graduate enrollment figures, stating that they were good and met the FTE target. This was important since the university would have been negatively impacted had the figures gone too far either over or under the target. Dean Welter followed with an update on the Strategic Planning meetings, stating that while there have not been explicit discussion of graduate education within the meetings, there has been a series of open forum meetings recently that were opened to the public for general discussion.

3. Committee Reports - None

   A brief discussion ensued regarding the Student Affairs Committee, its purpose, and whether or not it should be disbanded. Dr. Glembotski brought out that it was initially formed because the students who would attend the Graduate Council, who also attended the Associated Students meetings, had issues they would like to discuss and so the committee was created as a forum for these discussions. Dean Welter decided not to disband the committee and see if it is useful over the upcoming academic year.

4. New Business

   • Fall 2012 Graduate Student Enrollment (Dr. Prislin)

      Dr. Prislin brought out that the current graduate class is 11% bigger than last year, the exact percentages of which vary between colleges, from a 12% increase in the College of Arts and Letters to a 27% increase in the College of Education. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (see Appendix A) she demonstrated that while figures are still below the stellar year of 2008, SDSU enrolled 6.6% more resident students than last year. One of the goals of the university has been to increase the proportion of foreign and out-of-state students. This increase is not at the expense of resident students, since the number of slots for resident students will not be reduced based on the number of foreign
or out-of-state students who enroll. Instead, these non-resident students who pay non-resident tuition fees, will bring additional funds to the university.

Dean Welter raised the question of whether programs should be incentivized to increase foreign and out-of-state enrollment. Dr. Prislin followed by emphasizing the department yield rates are quite low indicating that- there must be a more aggressive approach to motivating admitted students to enroll. Dr. Prislin added that three colleges account for 75% of the foreign population (Business, Engineering, and Sciences). To the goal of improving recruitment, Dr. Prislin has arranged two workshops for graduate recruitment presented by graduate advisors whose departments are performing admirably (scheduled for Sept. 28th and Oct. 5th).

- **Weber Scholarships (Dr. Prislin)**

  When our previous president, Dr. Weber, retired from the university, he and his wife left an endowment to fund scholarships for students to SDSU. The Graduate Division approached the donors and suggested the funds go to graduate students, and this was approved. This year, five stellar graduate students received the scholarships: John Bellettieri (Public Health), Britani Harris (Civil Engineering), Talya Jacob (Audiology), Jessica Torres (Bioinformatics), and Ashley Ware (Psychology).

- **Graduate Student Classification (Dr. Welter)**

  Bob Wolfson in Foundation has been working to standardize the doctoral student work contracts. After his first review of the contracts, he found that there were varied titles and benefit packages available, and he has been working to establish a series of standardized categories. Initial efforts to standardize have been challenging due to the great variety of needs and requests from the programs. However, Mr. Wolfson has come up with a draft proposal which would allow programs to have a range in pay as well as select a specific fringe benefit package which would be appropriate to their program, within the constraints of labor laws.

- **Strategic Planning (Dr. Welter)**

  Dean Welter asked if the group would like to have input into SDSU’s strategic plan. The strategic planning groups have been picked by the Senate, and he is currently on four working groups. If the Graduate Council would like to, they could draft and send a written letter to either one of the working groups directly, or send a letter through Dr. Welter himself. Dr. Welter suggested the Council break into two groups during the current meeting and brainstorm a list of major obstacles and possible solutions to enhancing graduate education. The group broke into two groups and created a list (see Appendix B).

5. **Old Business - None**

Adjournment 4:00pm
APPENDIX A

Graduate Student Population

Fall 2012 Graduate Enrollment

4,977 students or 15.73% of the total (31,631) SDSU student population

- **By Degree:**
  - Doctoral: 513 or 10.31% of the graduate population
  - Master’s: 3,863 or 77.62% of the graduate population
  - Other: 601 or 12.08% of the graduate population

- **By Residency Status:**
  - Resident/Exempt: 4,422 or 88.84% of the graduate population
  - Out of State: 265 or 5.32% of the graduate population
  - Foreign: 290 or 5.82% of the graduate population

Graduate Student Enrollment by Degree
APPENDIX B

Question: What are the major obstacles and possible solutions for enhancing graduate education?

Group A

- New directions for doctoral programs – what are implications for funding those?
- More focus on scholarships/fellowships for graduate students.
- Increased focus on research in graduation education.
- Provide examples of how faculty mentor students in research efforts (publications, presentations); example: contributions to community college leadership research in the independent doctoral program (Ed.D. in Educational Leadership/Community College Leadership).
- Example: Library was given funding for special collections; however, those only benefit a small number of students; they see far more needs to support graduate students in the way of services and research support.
- Consider implications for sustainability of the resources and how the initial funding can generate more funding; i.e., attract more international students, support more CA students, etc.
- Give the fundraisers the stories to tell!
- Provide more information – marketing the “teacher-scholar” model.
- Supporting our students to learn more systematically how to function as a professional when they graduate – i.e., successful graduates training current students (career planning, entering their professions, providing mentorship).
- Providing more support for graduate students to pursue research (changing the culture to support this growth).

Group B

- The universally shared sentiment that greater TTT faculty numbers, more tuition waivers, more GA positions, better scholarship support for graduate students would all improve our programs.
- Greater flexibility in the admissions cycle for programs with idiosyncratic calendar issues, e.g. in College of Ed.
- Greater flexibility and innovation in how graduate courses are offered, e.g. "stacking" 700 and 500 level courses. This would allow for more graduate elective offerings without new resources. The practice is currently unavailable.
- In recruiting and marketing of programs, emphasize the extraordinary and early research opportunities for graduate students, especially in JDP programs.
- For doctoral programs less well positioned for self-support with external funding, university may provide more state funding GA positions, or alternatively better services for grant development to help such programs become more self-supporting.
- A similar idea for graduate students: re-emphasize grant writing and the submission process in the curriculum. Self-support becomes part of graduate students' training.
- Strategic fund-raising on graduate programs and research; educate potential donors about the research mission of the university, and the good work their gifts could support.
- For the longer term, the university should seek to build distinctive graduate programs deriving from our natural and historical strengths. A recognition that the campus cannot offer the widest variety of programs without generous state support.