

**GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL
2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT**

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

In academic year 2006-2007 the Graduate and Research Council (GRC) met thirteen times in person and conducted some business via email. The issues that GRC considered this year are described briefly as follows:

Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) Proposals

In October 2006, the Graduate and Research Council reviewed four MRI proposals in accordance with the National Science Foundation (NSF) review criteria (intellectual merit, broader impact, and management plan). Following discussion, and based on the presentation of each project, the committee reached consensus on the following:

- 1- *Immersive Display and Motion Capture Equipment*
- 2- *Flow Cytometer for the Analysis of Environmental, Microbial, Aquatic Samples*

Shared Equipment Proposals

GRC reviewed eleven proposals and ranked them for funding using the following prioritization criteria: 1) consider proposals where funds are identified; 2) consider proposals that would allow faculty members to conduct research immediately; 3) consider proposals involving multiple users. Due to limited funds (\$28,000), one proposal requesting \$100,000 was removed from consideration. GRC awarded funds to five proposals totaling \$27,985.19.

Faculty Research and Travel Grants

Funds in the amount of \$75,000 were allocated to provide seed funding for faculty research and travel grants. GRC members agreed that the maximum amount to be awarded to a single faculty member in one year would be \$5,000. Travel expenses per single faculty award were limited to \$2,500 in one year (up from \$1,250). Proposers were advised that larger requests would be evaluated on a more competitive basis, and that only a small number of applications would likely be funded at the maximum award amount.

Twenty-nine proposals (totaling \$134,325.58) were reviewed by GRC. Each proposal was assigned two reviewers: lead - affiliated to the School that is proposing - and a secondary reviewer randomly assigned to the proposal. GRC members associated with a proposal did not participate.

Following discussion, and based on the presentation of each proposal, the committee reached consensus and funded 21 proposals totaling \$75,000.70.

Graduate Groups

In November 2006, GRC initiated the review of the following graduate group proposals.

- **Biological Engineering and Small-Scale Technologies (BEST)**

This graduate group was formed in response to the need to recruit engineering graduate students. BEST would like to provide an umbrella for engineering-related research programs and co-exist with the UCM's graduate groups.

Graduate Programs proposals submitted to the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) for review need to demonstrate sufficient levels of administrative support to guarantee the program's sustainability.

GRC reviewed the BEST Proposal and recommended approval. The proposal was subsequently submitted to CCGA for review. Graduate programs proposals submitted to CCGA need to demonstrate sufficient levels of administrative support to guarantee the program's sustainability. The BEST graduate group emphasis area was reviewed and approved by CCGA under the interim-individual graduate program approval umbrella (IGP).

- **Environmental Systems**

GRC acknowledged that serious attention should be paid to the issue of facilities and graduate resources. The ES proposal was approved subject to a few revisions. The revised proposal was placed on the CCGA April 3, 2007 agenda. The proposal will be reviewed according to the normal system-wide review process; not under the review process specified by the IGP authority.

- **Mechanical Engineering and Applied Mechanics (MEAM) – Emphasis Area under the Individual Graduate Program (IGP) Umbrella**

The committee approved the proposal subject to modifications discussed at a GRC meeting. The proposal was edited according to the committee's recommendations and was forwarded to CCGA for approval. It was placed on the April 3, 2007 CCGA Consent Calendar.

Course Request Forms

During the academic year, GRC reviewed and approved over 70 new courses and/or edits to existing courses.

Genome Core Facility

During AY 2005-2006, a Genome Core proposal was put forward by the School of Natural Sciences Genome Core Executive Committee. GRC recommended that the proposed Genome Core Facility demonstrate broader interest among the School of Engineering faculty. The committee's main concern resided around the allocation of resources, revenue stream, administrative support and management of facility. No action was taken on this item during 2006-2007; however, GRC will resume discussion during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers for International Graduate Students

Most campuses attempt to waive non-resident tuition contingent on the availability of funds. Non-resident students enrolled at UC Merced and have been here for at least one semester were supported on teaching assistantships in 2006-2007, and research assistantships the following year. GRC would like UCM to have a mechanism that would enable the university to rescind non resident tuition for graduate students. During a GRC meeting the Vice Chancellor for

Research/Dean of Graduate Studies Traina indicated that he would meet with the appropriate UCM agencies to develop a sustainable funding model. This will be revisited in 2007-2008.

Organized Research Units (ORU)/Sierra Nevada Research Institute

A proposal to establish the Sierra Nevada Research Institute (SNRI) as a formal Organized Research Unit was forwarded to GRC for recommendation. Four external reviewers were solicited. Comments were received and compiled into a synopsis. GRC has not yet acted on this item. After favorable review by the Division Council, the proposal will go through the proper channels for review/approval.

Graduate Advisor Handbook

GRC was asked by Graduate Division Dean Traina to review the provisional *AY 2006-2007 UC Merced Graduate Advisor's Handbook*. Upon conducting a thorough review of the document, the committee compiled a list of comments and concerns which was forwarded to Dean Traina. A revised copy of the handbook (addressing GRC's comments and concerns) was approved by the committee in April, 2007.

H1B Visas

GRC met with VC for Research/Dean of Graduate Division Traina to discuss this matter. It was agreed that a mechanism had to be developed to help facilitate the payment of visa fees through faculty grants, gift funds or other sources conform to state legislation. This will be re-addressed next year.

Lead Deans

Members agreed that clarification was needed about who makes teaching versus research appointments. This raised a broader issue regarding the administrative responsibilities of graduate groups, particularly with respect to space and administrative support for graduate students. Although graduate groups now have lead deans, it was not clear whether administrative support for graduate students and graduate coursework were also being supplied to lead deans, or whether these activities remained housed within the Division of Graduate Studies. Also, there was not a clear policy regarding space allocations for graduate students. VC Traina acknowledged GRC's concerns and informed the committee that he was working on resolving these issues.

Policy on Stipends for Graduate Studies

The Atomic and Molecular Science and Engineering (AMSE) graduate group submitted a policy regarding stipends to be reviewed and approved by GRC. Members recommended a few edits to the policy. Revised policy was reviewed and approved by the committee in April, 2007.

AMSE Name Change

GRC approved the AMSE graduate group name change request from Atomic and Molecular Science and Engineering to **Physics and Chemistry**. The rationale for the request was that most students wanted to enroll in a graduate program/ discipline they recognized.

Applied Mathematics Bylaws, Policies and Procedures

Revised policies and procedures for the Applied Mathematics Graduate Studies were approved by the Council in May, 2007. Bylaws were approved in August 2007.

Indirect Costs Return

GRC felt it would be useful to inquire about the indirect costs distribution at UC Merced and across the UC system. There was also some discussion on the use of indirect costs return (overhead recovery) within the UC system.

Systemwide Items discussed within GRC:

Industry-University Cooperative Research Program (IUCRP)

Regents' Proposed Re-89

Multi-campus Research Units (MRU)

Review of Research Organizations

Institutional Review Boards (IRB)

GRC was joined on occasion by EVC/Provost Keith Alley and Division Council Vice Chair Tom Harmon. Ex-officio (non-voting) member Dean of Graduate Studies/Vice Chancellor for Research Sam Traina was also a welcomed and active participant.

Respectfully submitted,

David Kelley, Chair, CCGA Rep. (Natural Sciences)

Valerie Leppert, Vice Chair (Engineering)

Peggy O'Day (Natural Sciences)

Jennifer Manilay (Natural Sciences)

David Noelle, UCORP Rep. (Engineering)

Matt Meyer (Natural Sciences)

Tom Hansford (Engineering)

Anthony Westerling (Engineering/SSHA)

Ex-officio

Shawn Kantor, Division Council Chair (SSHA)

Tom Harmon, Division Council Vice Chair (Engineering)

Sam Traina, VC for Research/Dean of Graduate Studies