

MINUTES OF THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO  
5240 N. JACKSON AVENUE, M/S UC43  
Fresno, California 93740-8023

Office of the Academic Senate                      Ext. 8-2743

November 27, 2007

Members Present:                      M. Perez (Chair), S. Brown-Welty D. Dickerson,  
T. Dull, G. Kriehn, N. Mahalik, T. Skeen,  
Z. Wang.

Members Absent:                      R. Yazdipour (excused), C. Barnes (Student).

The meeting was called to order by Chair Perez at 2:04 p.m. in the University Center, Room #203.

1.     Minutes:     MSC to approve the Minutes of 11/13/07.
2.     Agenda:     MSC to approve the Agenda as distributed.
3.     Communications and Announcements.  
  
None.
4.     Department of Plant Science Graduate Program Review -  
Time Certain 2:25 p.m.

Chair Perez distributed copies of the Plant Science Graduate Program's Student Outcome Assessment Plan (SOAP) and Recommended Action Plan for the next 5-7 years. The committee discussed mainly the strengths and weaknesses of the program as stated in the program review report. Committee members had questions about item 4 on page 3 (a \$75K endowment for attracting students) with respect to item 6 on page 4 (limited core funding), item 4 page 4 (lack of infrastructure) and item 7 (5-year time limit to graduate) as reasons for the low number of graduates (varying between 2 to 7 in the past 5 years, see statistics table).

At 2:25 p.m., the department chair Jim Farrar and graduate coordinator Sharon Benes were invited to the meeting for further discussions and questions. Dr. Benes explained that: (1) the department adopted a policy for students to do theses for possible publications in journal rather than the project type; (b) the department is evaluating the feasibility of the project type and the non-thesis, non-project option (i.e., comprehensive exam); (3) the department now emphasizes on the student learning processes by requiring a thesis proposal defense and frequent meetings with advisors; and (4) the department has been seeking more funding to

improve infrastructure and attract international students. These new measures will benefit more of the part-time students with employments in the agricultural industry, as 60-70% of the graduate students are part timers.

Dr. Farrar explained that the \$50K to \$75K endowment was for full-time students only and not guaranteed. The lack of infrastructure means the lack of analytical instruments for basic studies rather than the field studies on the Fresno State Farm.

Graduate Dean Dr. Dickerson finally commented that the department faculty need to: (1) meet the students' career and curriculum needs rather than incline towards faculty's research interests; (2) create a clear formal recruitment plan; (3) revise SOAP objectives to reflect student learning.

The committee decided to discuss the final recommendations at the next meeting.

MSC to adjourn at 3:00 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting of the Graduate Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, December 4, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. in the University Center, Room #203.

Agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes 11/27/07.
2. Approval of the Agenda.
3. Communications and Announcements.
4. Department of Plant Science Graduate Program Review - Committee Recommendations.
5. Graduate Admissions.