Attending: Patricia Beeson (Provost’s Office and A&S, Chair), Kay Brummond (A&S), Stephen Carr (A&S), Sam Conte (Registrar), PJ Dillon (Graduate and Professional Student Assembly), William Dunn (Public and International Affairs), Jere Gallagher (Education), Robert Gibbs (Pharmacy), Amanda Godley (Education), Paula Grabowski (Interdisciplinary), Mary Elizabeth Happ (Nursing), Donald Hoffman (Dental), John Horn (Medicine), John Hulland (Business), Udaya Jagadisan (Graduate and Professional Student Assembly), Margaret Mahoney (Law), Robert Parker (Engineering), Jayant Rajgopal (Engineering), Mark Roberts (Medicine), Joan Rogers (Health Rehabilitation), Martin Weiss (Information Sciences), Stephanie Hoogendoorn (Provost’s Office)

Guests: Nicole Fowler from Medicine

Introductions
Patty Beeson welcomed the new members and asked each Council member to introduce himself or herself.

Approval of the Minutes
The minutes of the May 12, 2009 meeting were approved.

2008-2009 Annual Report of UCGS
The 2008-2009 Annual Report was approved. It will be posted to the UCGS Web site and available to the community.

Program Proposal: Dual degree program leading to the Master of Science in Clinical Research and the Doctor of Medicine. The proposed program provides a coherent course of study that allows students to complete the requirements for both degrees without unnecessary duplication of course content. This will make it possible for students to learn and practice clinical research skills throughout medical school.

Nicole Fowler, Assistant Director of the Institute for Clinical Research Education Research Education, and Mark Roberts presented the proposal and answered questions from Council members. Mark Roberts detailed the overlap of requirements and explained how the proposed program will better train these students.

Council asked how the students in the MS program would be funded. Roberts replied that there are many available funding opportunities for clinical research.

Council asked how students and research mentors are paired. Fowler responded that there are many opportunities for students to request mentors. After students complete their first two years of medical school, they know what area of research they want to focus on. They are
committed to making good matches. Once the official mentor pair is selected, both the mentor and the mentee sign a contract that details expectations.

Council discussed the proposed program. A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed dual degree program. All voted in favor of the motion.

**Program Proposal: Postbaccalaureate and Graduate Certificates in Advanced Emergency Management and Homeland Security from the College of General Studies and Center for National Preparedness** The proposal was tabled.

**Activities of Council in 2009-2010**
Vice Provost Beeson plans to ask representatives from the following areas to update Council on their activities.

**Office of International Services** There has been an administrative change and the person who is responsible for credential evaluation has been moved to the Office of Admissions because he also does undergraduate international admissions. He’ll be training more people in admissions to help with credential evaluations since there is a need to process these in a timely fashion.

**Center for Instructional Development and Distance Learning (CIDDE)** Cynthia Golden is the new Director.
- Pitt Online was launched last year with two new online programs, one each from Nursing and Education. Vice Provost Beeson would like the Graduate Procedures Subcommittee to evaluate the guidelines for the review of new Off-Campus/Distance Education Graduate Programs. Council drafted the guidelines in 2000. Are they still relevant and is the review process still working?
- CIDDE is considering offering a non-degree certificate in teaching for graduate students who complete a series of workshops.
- At the start of the fall and spring terms, CIDDE holds an orientation for new teaching assistants from across campus. CIDDE is in the process of working mental health issues into the existing teaching assistant workshop.

**Office of Research** Vice Provost Klinzing will report on graduate and professional students who receive funding as independent researchers.

**Survival Skills and Ethics Program** (time permitting) Their workshops are aimed at post-docs, graduate students, and early tenure-stream faculty.

**Graduate Procedures Subcommittee** Vice Provost Beeson would like Graduate Procedures to review and make recommendations as needed on the following issues:
- Continue the discussion about if Council should propose a uniform degree type for professional master’s degrees.
- Consider the procedure for offering conditional admissions. Is our current practice
working or should we consider adopting a university policy? Conditional admissions are made on a case-by-case basis initiated by a department or program with final approval granted by Vice Provost Beeson. Students who do not meet the English Language Proficiency Requirements request a conditional admission so that they may obtain a visa to study English for one year at the English Language Institute. Typically these students have funding from their government. Once the student obtains the required minimum score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System, then they are accepted into the program.

- Review the minimum score for the Internet-based TOEFL and consider requiring minimal scores in each section.
- Review the rubric to evaluate assessment matrices.

**Graduate Student Affairs Subcommittee** Vice Provost Beeson would like Graduate Student Affairs to review and make recommendations as needed on the following issues:

- Students receiving internal Pitt fellowships are given extra stipend funds to purchase health insurance. Must they use these funds to purchase insurance if they have existing coverage?
- The Association of American Universities is working on a core set of questions to access student satisfaction. Council should review these questions once finalized. These questions could be distributed online and schools could add their own questions to gather program specific feedback.
- Suggest a topic/speaker for the spring Recruitment Seminar for staff and faculty.
- What can Council do to enhance the visibility of our graduate programs?

One member asked if the review of on-line programs could include the use equipment to connect programs housed in different building on campus. Another member asked to consider how students benefit from on-line programs.

Members are asked to sign-up to serve on either the Graduate Student Affairs and Graduate Procedures subcommittee.

**Graduate and Professional Student Assembly Activities**

GPSA’s 2008-2009 report of activities was circulated. PJ Dillon, the Vice-President of Communications for GPSA and the President of the A&S Graduate Student Organization, presented an overview of GPSA’s planned activities for 2009-2010.

Dillon reported that the 2009-2010 GPSA available budget is $176,000, which is half of the collected graduate and professional student activity fee. Travel grants comprise the largest allocation of the budget. The current Assembly will implement the following changes to the travel grant allocation process:

1. There will be four funding cycles, increased from three. All applications must be pre-approved and funds for each cycle are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.
2. Grants for local conferences will be reduced to $50.
3. Food expenses are no longer reimbursable.
A member asked if students have to present in order to receive travel funds. Dillon responded the funding level varies by the type of participation:

- $200 awards are available for presenters at academic conferences or for students conducting academic research for a project/dissertation;
- $100 grants for students who attend an academic conference, who compete in an academic competition, or who attend a national organization as an elected officer; and
- $50 grants towards registration fees for students who attend an academic conference in Allegheny County.

The main goals of GPSA for the 2009-2010 year are increasing communication, participation, and visibility. Committee representation is an important priority. The Vice-President for Committees organized three committee orientations to help facilitate effective representation by graduate and professional students. The Vice Provost and Dean of Students, the Immediate Past President of the University Senate Council, and Vice Provost Beeson were invited to speak directly to the students who would be serving on committees that report to the Board of Trustees, University Senate, and Provost.

GPSA is working to enhance their communications. They have added multiple feeds to their Web site and are now producing a quality, monthly newsletter distributed to students by e-mail. Their goal is to directly communicate with 20% of the graduate and professional student population. To date 8% of the population has attended one or more GPSA events. In September GPSA hosted a welcome picnic that was attended by 125 students. This year GPSA has launched a new speaker series called “Politics and Pancakes” that will provide students the opportunity to meet and ask questions of prominent policy makers from the Western Pennsylvania region over breakfast. The first event held in September was quite successful and nearly 70 students attended to meet Congressman Mike Doyle. GPSA has many more unique events planned for its students, such as participating in the Pitt Alumni Association’s National Networking Day, initiating a graduate student health sciences development event at the Biomedical Graduate Student Association Research Festival, and co-hosting a Health Care forum with Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting of Council is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20 and we are thinking of suggesting that the subcommittees meet at 3 and 4 p.m. on this date. An alternate meeting date will be scheduled if there are any proposals that need to be reviewed in October.