University Council on Graduate Study  
Report on 2009-2010 Activities

As stated in its bylaws, the University Council on Graduate Study is to communicate its decisions to the faculty, students, and administrative officers of the University. If you have comments on the activities as reported here or suggestions for agenda items, please contact Vice Provost Patricia Beeson at 412-624-0790 or via email at beeson@pitt.edu.

Reports Given to UCGS

Update on the Center for Instructional Development and Distance Learning (CIDDE) from Cynthia Golden, Director, and Holly Shiflett, Associate Director

CIDDE provides a number of services to support teaching and learning environments, to apply current and emerging instructional technologies, and to deliver professional creative and production services for events and activities. Of these, their efforts are primarily focused on providing instructional and classroom support. Support aimed at faculty members includes the New Faculty Orientation, grant assistance, faculty book club, teaching and technology workshops, one-on-one consulting, and teaching excellence showcase. Since the introduction of Blackboard twelve years ago, the use of Blackboard has steadily increased and as of fall 2009 86% of Pitt students (about 31,000) use Blackboard. Support for teaching assistants and fellows includes the new Teaching Assistant (TA) orientation, workshops, the University Teaching Practicum, and classroom videotaping and analysis. In fall 2009 the TA orientation included a new session entitled “Dealing with Distressed Students” developed with assistance from the Counseling Center and at the suggestion of UCGS members. Throughout the year teaching assistants and fellows can attend workshops on the topics that include mentoring, teaching a six-week course, teaching portfolio, teaching philosophies, and interview skills to showcase teaching (first offered in 2010). Departments may also request specific workshops to be held for their students as needed.

Through Pitt Online, CIDDE provides instructional and technological support so that programs can offer existing professional graduate programs online under a consistent and supported environment. Pitt Online was launched in fall 2009 with the M.Ed. in English and Communications and the MSN in Clinical Nurse Leader. Three additional graduate programs are currently under review to be offered via Pitt Online. These students are provided with 24/7 technical support and have access to the same advising, library, bookstore, and registration resources as do on-campus students. New student and library orientations are offered online via interactive online conferences. Features of the Pitt Online Web site include an online course demonstration and the “Is online learning for me?” quiz.
UCGS Committee Activities

The Graduate Procedures Committee, chaired by Robert Parker, was charged with making recommendations on the implementation of several existing policies and documents.

- The subcommittee reviewed and approved the rubric to evaluate assessment matrices with minor corrections to improve the clarity of the document.

- The subcommittee reviewed the current procedure for offering conditional admissions and found that the current procedure is effective and thus a university policy is not needed. These requests are currently reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Vice Provost Beeson. Under exceptional circumstances that include strong evidence of both English Language Proficiency and research abilities, students may enroll in our English Language Institute. Once the student meets one of the criteria for demonstrating English Language Proficiency as established in University of Pittsburgh Policy 09-02-01, then they can be formally admitted.

- The subcommittee reviewed the minimum required score for the Internet based TOEFL, which is 80. Members agreed that the minimum does not need to be changed. Additionally members agreed that it is not necessary to require minimum section scores, noting that departments or programs can set their own section minimums as necessary.

The Graduate Student Affairs Committee, chaired by Mary Beth Happ, was charged with reviewing issues including recruiting students, health insurance, and accessing doctoral programs and making recommendations when possible.

- The subcommittee approved guidelines for the content of TA/TF/GSA and GSR appointment letters. The main sections of the letter include: details of appointment, appointment requirements, health insurance, merit scholarship, response necessary, and policy statement.

- At the 2010 Student Recruitment Seminar held on May 20, 2010, Pitt staff and faculty presented “Best Practices at Pitt for Using Technology for Graduate and Professional Student Recruitment.” Topics of discussion included using Social Networking tools (Face Book), online chats throughout the recruitment process (Chat University and WebX), and using Web sites to illustrate and articulate program goals.

Review of Proposals

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

**Ph.D. in Behavioral and Community Health Sciences**  
**Graduate School of Public Health**  
The purpose of this program is to prepare students to conduct research and to teach in the social and behavioral science areas of public health in academic settings. The curriculum examines the behavior of individuals, organizations and communities, research design and methods, statistical analysis, interventions and the integration of public health and research and practice. The existing doctoral integrative Research Seminar was reorganized to focus on grant proposal writing and writing for publication.

**Modification to the Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) in Behavioral and Community Health Sciences**  
**Graduate School of Public Health**  
The modified program will better prepare students for positions of leadership in the social and behavior sciences areas of public health practice at the local, state, and federal levels of government. The modifications are based upon the newly developed Association of Schools of Public Health competencies. Students admitted to the program are now required to have completed an M.P.H degree. A three-semester executive management practicum and four courses from the Department of Health Policy and Management will be added to the required curriculum.

**Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs in Mining Engineering**  
**Swanson School of Engineering**  
The certificate programs will prepare students to solve the significant health, safety, and environmental issues facing the mining industry. The graduate-level certificate program will be open to all students currently enrolled in a graduate program in the Swanson School of Engineering and the post-baccalaureate certificate program will be open to professionals with a baccalaureate engineering or science degree.

**Documents and Web Sites Available to the University Community**

- Regulations Governing Graduate Study at the University of Pittsburgh, University Council on Graduate Study, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/regtoc.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/regtoc.html)
Online Graduate and Professional Bulletin, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.bulletins.pitt.edu/graduate/index.html](http://www.bulletins.pitt.edu/graduate/index.html)

Policy Statement for Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, and Graduate Student Assistants, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/TATFGSAPolicyStatement.pdf](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/TATFGSAPolicyStatement.pdf)

Policy Statement for Graduate Student Researchers, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/GSRPolicyStatement.pdf](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/GSRPolicyStatement.pdf)

Elements of Good Academic Advising, University Council on Graduate Study, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advising.html)

The Guide to Graduate and Professional Programs, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [https://www.pitt.edu/Graduate/](https://www.pitt.edu/Graduate/)

Graduate Faculty Membership Roster, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. Updated three times a year at [http://www.ir.pitt.edu/gradfac/homepg.htm](http://www.ir.pitt.edu/gradfac/homepg.htm)

Choosing A Dissertation Advisor, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advisor.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/advisor.html)

Cool Pittsburgh, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.coolpgh.pitt.edu/](http://www.coolpgh.pitt.edu/)

Format Guidelines for Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Preparation at the University of Pittsburgh, Office of the Provost, University of Pittsburgh. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/pdf/ETDformat.pdf](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/pdf/ETDformat.pdf)

Thesis and Dissertation Word Templates (Revised 2005) [http://www.library.pitt.edu/etd_tutorials/support/ETD_Template.doc](http://www.library.pitt.edu/etd_tutorials/support/ETD_Template.doc)

ETD LaTeX Template. [http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/latexdl.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/etd/latexdl.html)

### 2009-2010 UCGS Standing Committees

**Graduate Procedures**: Chair, Robert Parker  
**Graduate Student Affairs**: Chair, Mary Elizabeth Happ
2009-2010 UCGS Members

Patricia Beeson, Economics and Office of the Provost, Chair
Kay Brummond, Arts and Sciences/Natural Sciences
Troy Boone, Arts and Sciences/Humanities
Steve Carr, Arts and Sciences/At-Large
Nicole Constable, Arts and Sciences
Valerie Copeland, Social Work
PJ Dillion, Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Organization
William Dunn, Public and International Affairs
Maggie Folan, Pharmacy
Robert Gibbs, Pharmacy
Amanda Godley, Education
Paula Grabowski, Interdisciplinary
Mary Elizabeth Happ, Nursing
Donald Hoffman, Dental Medicine
John Horn, Medicine
John Hulland, Business
Udaya Jagadisan, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Daniel Jimenez, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Margaret Mahoney, Law
Karin Norris, Medicine
Robert Parker, Engineering
Anthony Petrosky, Education
Sandra Quinn, Public Health
Jayant Rajgopal, Engineering
Louis Sabina, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Mohammad Shawaqfeh, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Richard Smethurst, Arts and Sciences/Social Sciences
Mehmet Soyas, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Mark Roberts, Medicine
Joan Rogers, Health and Rehabilitative Sciences
Martin Weiss, Information Sciences

Observers:
Barbara Repasi Heron, Associate Registrar
Stephanie Hoogendoorn, Assistant to the Provost