

May 2nd, 2012

Dear Members of the SEC,

At last week's SEC meeting, which the chairs of the Senate's various standing committees were asked to attend, I remarked that the delineation of CoRGE's responsibilities regarding graduate education, and in particular the committee's relationship to Graduate Council, was still a work in progress. I was asked, as a result, to provide the SEC with a report on CoRGE's activities this year and recommendations for next year's SEC to consider in the process of trying to define CoRGE's appropriate role.

First, the report on our activities this year. CoRGE collaborated with CAB throughout the year in an effort to resolve the PBRC problem, and this included, of course, looking carefully into the grounds for the proposed closing of the Kewalo Marine Laboratory. CoRGE began work on drafting a graduate student bill of rights, although this project was postponed once the GSO made it clear it did not want to proceed with this until their efforts to get the unionization of TAs approved bore some fruit. CoRGE provided some informal feedback to the VCRGE's office on the subjects of conflict of interest and whistleblowing. CoRGE produced a resolution calling for President Greenwood to reverse her decision regarding the shifting of the Hawaii Cooperative Fisheries Research Unit to Hilo from Manoa. CoRGE produced a joint resolution with CPM to approve JABSOM's proposed change in tenure policy. CoRGE brought four new graduate programs (or certificates) before the Senate for approval. CoRGE began a discussion with Graduate Division about the appropriate criteria for determining which graduate program reviews should be sent from Graduate Council to CoRGE for further consideration. And finally, CoRGE brought a resolution before the Senate endorsing the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee's proposed policy regarding the financial support of Ph.D. students across Manoa.

I mention above that a crucial discussion with Graduate Division regarding the role that CoRGE should play in overseeing graduate programs has only just begun. Much detail still needs to be worked out in this regard if CoRGE is to assume serious responsibility for the oversight of graduate education in Manoa. If the Senate, and in particular the incoming SEC, takes no steps to ensure that this discussion is continued and carried to a satisfactory conclusion, I am afraid that the transformation of CoR into CoRGE this past year will in fact have made very little difference to the way Graduate Division operates. At the moment, Graduate Council is still used by the Dean of Grad Division as the primary consultative body for matters affecting graduate education. The presence of effective (and outspoken) Senate representatives on Graduate Council is therefore quite essential. This year it was an advantage having one of those representatives be the chair of CoRGE. It was clear that this added significant weight to his observations, in the estimation of the Dean of Grad Division. And I would strongly recommend that, if at all possible, next year one of the Senate's representatives on Graduate Council be once again the chair of CoRGE. I realize, from personal experience, that this is asking a lot of one senator. Being the chair of CoRGE is demanding in itself, and serving on Graduate

Council means a fair bit of additional work. But the danger of having the status quo quietly preserved by Graduate Division make it imperative, in my opinion, that we have the strongest possible representation of the Faculty Senate on Graduate Council. It would probably also be very useful to have the SEC schedule a few face-to-face meetings with the Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate Division to discuss the details of the role that should be assigned to CoRGE in the oversight of graduate education.

Satisfying CoRGE's constituency requirements will no doubt continue to be an ongoing problem for the Committee on Faculty Service. But I strongly recommend that those constituency requirements continue to be taken very seriously. When issues relating specifically to graduate education arise, it is essential that there be a reasonable number of people serving on CoRGE who understand the issues, based on their personal experience as graduate chairs.

Cordially,

Ron Bontekoe, Chair (outgoing)
Committee on Research and Graduate Education