

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

May 25, 2005

Johnson Hall Conference Room

Present:

Deborah Baumgold, Colleen Bell, Herb Chereck, Hilary Gerdes, Dave Hubin, Anne Laskaya, Tyler Neely, Julie Newton, Steven Pologe, Ron Severson, Karen Sprague, Mark Thoma, Laura Vandenburgh, Amalia Gladhart, Paul Engelking

Absent:

Deborah Exton, Peter Gilkey, Marth Pitts, Kathy Roberts, Shelly Kerr

Announcements:

- Scheduling grids were distributed, with members urged to return their availability reports to the UGC recording secretary in a timely manner so that the Fall meeting schedule could be set.
- Departing members were thanked by the UGC for their excellent service to the Council:
 - Deborah Baumgold, retiring as Chair and concluding her term as UGC member
 - Tyler Neely, student representative, who is graduating and moving on to graduate school at the University of Arizona in physics (optics).
- Karen Sprague announced plans for the University Convocation scheduled for Sunday, September 25, 2005. Faculty will be encouraged to wear regalia for the event. The Convocation's guest speaker will be Dr. Jim Gates from the University of Maryland. Karen said she had the opportunity to hear him during a presentation on May 23, 2005 at the UO Institute of Theoretical Science and found him to be an excellent speaker. His presentation was lucid and held the interest of his audience, both physicists and non-physicists.
- New student representatives will be named by the ASUO to replace departing student representatives, Emily Gilkey and Tyler Neely.

Chair Election

A new UGC Chair was nominated for 2005-2006.

Hilary Gerdes nominated Peter Gilkey as Chair for 2005-2006. The nomination was seconded by Paul Engelking and Tyler Neely.

The Council's endorsement of Peter Gilkey as UGC Chair for 2005-2006 was unanimous.

Agenda

Proposal to change name of School of Music

The School of Music petitioned the Office of Academic Affairs to change its name to The School of Music and Dance.

(See: [Proposal to Change the Name of School of Music](#))

- **Discussion**

Steve Pologe explained that the name change was consistent with the industry standard and more accurately reflected the interrelationship of music and dance studies on the UO campus.

The UGC unanimously recommended that the name change proposal be accepted.

Previous Discussion of Grade Inflation:

Mark Thoma presented a preliminary report on data he gathered regarding the relation between instructor rank and the occurrence of grade inflation. He reported that an initial hypothesis re. grade inflation appeared to be confirmed, i.e. younger, less experienced faculty tend to give higher grades.

- **Discussion**

- Overall, grade inflation may be occurring because of naivete, inexperience, and ignorance of the University's expectations re. grade distributions.
- Perhaps grade distributions can be made part of the tenure eligibility file.
- Grade distribution is now considered in evaluating candidates for teaching awards.

Dave Hubin pointed out that the data in Mark's reports is what is necessary in the 2007 Accreditation self-study and is the sort of information accreditors will look for in their examinations.

Karen Sprague reported that grade inflation is affecting the University's Phi Beta Kappa program. Differential grade inflation discriminates against students in majors where the inflation rate is lowest.

Grade inflation skews the distribution of Latin Honors in the same way.

It was suggested that the UGC may also want to study the effect of grades awarded by non-academic programs on grade inflation.

Grading Policy samples:

Some units have adopted internal grading policies designed to curb inflation. Samples of such policies from the Lundquist College of Business and the Department of Economics were distributed to council members. Recommendations re. the general development of department- or school-based grading policies will likely be considered by the Council next year.

Meeting was adjourned.