

## **Meeting of Graduate Advisers and Graduate Assistants January 17, 2008**

### **Andrew Szeri, Dean of the Graduate Division**

#### **Fundraising for Graduate Fellowships**

- Matching funds are being explored for about 40 of the 100 potential new Hewlett Chairs. A new policy on endowed chair payout for other existing endowed professorships will allocate some fraction (depending on yield) to graduate student support. This is being done for chairs under Chancellorial control, and strongly encouraged for chairs under local control.
- Graduate Division support efforts have helped secure a new \$6M endowment from the Mellon Foundation which will support graduate students in the Arts & Humanities. Other opportunities for Graduate Division to help are available.
- Graduate Division has continued to meet with deans of all schools and colleges to determine precisely programs' current financial "gaps" and future needs for graduate student support.

#### **Fellowship competition and block allocations**

- Last year's yield on offers exceeded expectations by 18 fellowships.
- As Graduate Division has no new money for fellowships available this year, fewer offers must be made this year in view of the high rate of acceptances of offers. The target number of fellowships remains the same.
- Over-allotments for diversity fellowships will cease this year, as broad campus participation has been achieved.
- Block allocations are steady. The state budget deficit is likely to result in fee increases that will not be fully covered. Admission committees should be mindful of this when recommending offers of admission.

### **Joseph Duggan, Associate Dean for Admissions, Appointments, Degrees, and the Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) Teaching and Resource Center**

#### **Admissions**

In Fall 2007, 2,977 new graduate students enrolled, with a total enrollment of 10,314, the highest since the 1960s.

Admission allocations have been mailed to all departments and graduate groups. Please contact Corinne Kosmitzki, the Interim Director of Admissions, if you have not yet received yours. Questions about the allocations themselves should be addressed to Judi Sui, Director of Data Management and Analysis, and special requests about the size of the allocations should be addressed to Associate Dean Duggan in writing.

As previously announced, in October 2007 the Graduate Council decided that the admission of applicants who earned three-year Bologna Process degrees would not be considered exceptional admits. In effect, this shifted any special consideration to departmental admission committees. Admission Committees should take into account that, while such applicants have normally undergone as much preparation in their majors as recipients of four-year degrees, they may have less breadth in their educational backgrounds. Whether they need additional course work before being admitted to Berkeley is a decision resting with departmental faculty. It should be remembered, however, that applicants are either admitted or rejected: “conditional admit” is no longer an option, so applicants in need of additional course work would have to apply again in a subsequent admission cycle.

Recommendations for admits will, as always, be processed in the order in which they are submitted. The evaluation times may be longer during the processing of the Fellowship Competition in the periods of February 4-8 and February 25-29. Please delay forwarding your admission recommendations during those two periods.

Difficulties with our new system of on-line letters of recommendation were experienced by some. Campus Information Systems and Technology, which wrote the software, has succeeded in resolving most of the problems. Please contact Corinne Kosmitzki in Graduate Admissions if difficulties continue. We may consider the possibility of having recourse to an outside vendor before the system is put in place for the next admission cycle. In contrast, the on-line application has worked successfully. So far we have received almost 21,000 applications and over 22,000 on-line letters of recommendation, of which problems were reported for 108 (half of one percent).

## **Degrees**

Proquest University Microfilms has raised the charge for archiving doctoral dissertations, resulting in an increase in the advancement to candidacy fee to \$90 from the current \$65. This increase will take effect on July 1, 2008.

Please be sure to submit applications for the Qualifying Examination at least three weeks in advance of the examination date, to ensure that the committee is validly constituted.

Dean Szeri sent a memo to the campus mid January calling the attention of Chairs, Head Graduate Advisers, and Graduate Student Affairs Officers (GSAOs) to the importance of following proper procedure in the case of graduate students with disabilities. We stress the importance of consulting with the Disabled Students Program when students who may have disabilities encounter difficulties with their course work or other aspects of their programs. In case of doubt, please contact the Graduate Division, or Derek Coates, the Disability Resolution Officer, or Sarah Hawthorne, the Assistant Provost for Academic Compliance and Disability Standards, who addressed this group last fall.

## **Appointments**

A new system-wide contract between the University and the United Auto Workers is now in force through September 30, 2009. The contract is available on the web as a pdf

document through the Human Resources web site and all who deal with Academic Student Employee appointments are encouraged to read it. For those new to advising, "Academic Student Employees" is a term of art in the U.C. system: it refers to Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs -- called teaching assistants at other universities), Readers, Tutors, and Acting Instructors-Graduate Student --but not to Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs -- research assistants). Many details in the contract will change the process you and your staff go through to make appointments. To alert you to these changes, Debra Harrington will address this meeting.

Beginning this semester, to fulfill obligations of the contract, all first-time GSIs, Readers, and Tutors are required to attend one hour-long orientation session organized by the campus Office of Labor Relations. These orientations will be held on January 17 and 23, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. and on February 1, 2008, at 8:30 a.m., in 150 University Hall. If an appointee to these titles does not attend one of the sessions, he or she must attend an orientation the following semester or be ineligible for future appointments.

### **GSI Teaching & Resource Center**

Please ensure that all first-time GSIs teaching in your department this semester are apprised of the Graduate Council requirements for GSI teaching preparation: (1) attendance at the Spring Teaching Conference for GSIs (scheduled for 1/18/08); (2) completion of the *Online Course on Professional Standards and Ethics in Teaching* by the end of the third week of teaching; and (3) enrollment in a semester-long, departmental 300-level course on teaching. The Graduate Council Policy on Appointment and Mentoring of GSIs can be found at <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/faculty/mentoring.html>.

All first-time GSIs who do not speak English as a native language must fulfill the English language proficiency testing requirement. This requirement holds for both graduate and undergraduate GSIs. Information on the GSI Teaching and Resource Center's Language Proficiency Program can be found at <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/lpp/index.html>.

The Graduate Division will again sponsor the very successful Summer Institute for Preparing Future Faculty. A collaboration of Graduate Division's Academic Services unit and the GSI Teaching and Resource Center, the aim of the program is to assist Ph.D. candidates in preparing for future faculty careers. Please contact the GSI Teaching & Resource Center, [gsi@berkeley.edu](mailto:gsi@berkeley.edu) for further information. Application information for the Summer Institute and quotes from former Institute Fellows can be found at [http://gsi.berkeley.edu/conf\\_wkshop/institutes.html](http://gsi.berkeley.edu/conf_wkshop/institutes.html).

For information on the programs of the GSI Teaching and Resource Center, please see the Center's Web site: <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/>.

### **Debra Harrington, Director, UCB Labor Relations**

Debra Harrington addressed issues raised by the new UAW contract. A handout, *Agreement between the University of California and the UAW: Summary of key changes*, was distributed. Highlights included:

- All Academic Student Employees have personnel files which they have the right to review.
- Limited childcare reimbursement will be offered from the Chancellor's office; more information to come in late spring 2008.
- There are significant changes concerning paid leaves, see handout.
- Undergraduate GSIs at or over 25% are entitled to remission of the Education Fee and Registration Fee.

Please see the PDF of the handout at:

[http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/faculty\\_staff/pdf/uaw\\_07\\_09.pdf](http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/faculty_staff/pdf/uaw_07_09.pdf).

## **Carlos Fernandez-Pello, Associate Dean for Fellowships, Diversity, Communications and Events**

### **Fellowships**

#### Fellowship Competition Review Committee

The number of reviewers for the Fellowship Competition Review Committee has been increased to 23, with those faculty representing Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Social Science, Engineering, and Professional Schools. We gratefully thank all the faculty who have volunteered to serve as members on the Fellowship Competition Review Committee. Faculty members who serve on this committee feel that they have made substantial contributions to students' futures and to the quality and diversity of graduate students at Berkeley. Your help encouraging faculty to volunteer in the following year is greatly appreciated.

#### Special Funding Requests

Requests for funding of special needs or activities continue to be considered but are increasingly more difficult to grant.

### **Graduate Diversity Program**

#### Diversity Day Travel Grants

Travel grants will again be offered for admitted prospective students visiting campus for Diversity Day on Sunday, March 16, and departmental visits on Monday, March 17, 2008. You will receive information soon on the procedures for requesting travel funds.

#### The Berkeley Edge

The Berkeley Edge is a recruitment, retention and advancement program designed to increase the number of underrepresented minority students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We're pleased to announce that once again Berkeley has received funds from the National Science Foundation for this program. In particular, the 2008 Summer Fellows Program will offer research stipends to underrepresented minority students entering science and engineering doctoral programs in all colleges including Letters and Science, Engineering, Public Health, and Natural Resources. (Please note that students in Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities are not

eligible for this program.) Interested departments should contact Colette Patt, Director of the Berkeley Edge Program, whose hard work enables this program. Colette, we thank you!

## **Communications & Events**

### Graduate Division Website

Our web site is reaching a global community. In the past year, over 1.1 million visitors from 211 countries and territories browsed 3.8 million web pages on our site in 192 different languages.

### The Graduate

The Graduate magazine's next issue will focus on alumni.

## **Susan J. Muller, Associate Dean for Program Reviews, Student Life, and Academic Services**

New monthly GSAO meetings with Associate Dean Muller and Graduate Division CAO Moira Perez have been initiated. Topics at the meeting in December included "The Future of Admissions," a discussion of the online application and demonstration of the letter of recommendation submission with GD Admissions Director and staff. Topics at the January meeting included "Recruiting for Diversity" with Carla Trujillo, Director of Graduate Diversity Programs, and Cynthia Ladd-Viti, Graduate Outreach and Summer Research Coordinator. It's a great forum and good for sharing information and networking.

A call for nominations for the Sarlo Award for Graduate Student Mentoring will be sent soon. This award, sponsored by the Sarlo Foundation, recognizes faculty members who excel at mentoring graduate students.

University Health Services is offering several workshops on health insurance for dependents of graduate students; details are on *eGrad*.

Dissertation writing workshops are offered by Sabrina Soracco, Director of Academic Services in the Graduate Division; see handouts and our website.

Funding is underway for an international student parent grant, similar to the student parent grant that the Graduate Division supports for students who file a FAFSA. Ivor Emmanuel of Berkeley International Office will administer the grant in partnership with the Graduate Division. More information to come soon.

## **Gibor Basri, Vice Chancellor for Equity and Inclusion**

<http://vcei.berkeley.edu>

Vice Chancellor Basri, an expert on star formation and stellar activity, has been on UC Berkeley faculty for more than 25 years and most recently served as Chair for the Department of Astronomy. Before taking his new position as Vice Chancellor, he

chaired the Faculty Workgroup of the UC Regents' Study Group on University Diversity, chaired the campus's Status of Women & Ethnic Minorities (SWEM), and was a member of the Berkeley Diversity Research Initiative (BDRI) Steering Committee.

### “Advancing Diversity at Berkeley”

- Our shared goal is to increase the enrollment, retention, and degree completion of underrepresented minorities, and their rate of hiring as faculty members.
- The faculty role formerly known as Graduate Affirmative Action Adviser has been retitled as Equity Adviser. Duties have been broadened to encompass all aspects of diversity at the departmental level, including hiring of faculty.
- A climate survey of campus-wide staff will be launched this spring.

### **Dean Szeri: “You asked, We answer”**

Q: Why are rents so high for graduate student housing at UC's Albany Village?

A: Aging housing stock needed to be replaced in order to conform to current housing standards; rents had to be increased to cover costs. This strains the budget of many students supported by GSRships and other campus employment. The Graduate Division is exploring ways and means to increase financial support for those students most in need.

Q: Will departments get a fee rebate as a result of the Kasmiri lawsuit?

A: The Kasmiri class action lawsuit was brought against UC for raising student fees in 2003 after admission offers had gone out and acceptances had been received; the lawsuit was ruled in Kasmiri's favor UC's appeal was recently denied by the California Supreme Court, which affirmed that UC must reimburse those students who paid the higher fees that year. Departments who covered such fees for those students will not be entitled to a refund.

Q: Can this bi-annual meeting for Graduate Advisers and Graduate Assistants/GSAOs be moved to a later time to accommodate those whose childcare arrangements preclude early morning meetings?

A: With a show of hands and brief discussion, the sense of the meeting was to adopt a starting time of 9:00 a.m. (with refreshments and informal conversation available at 8:30 a.m.).