Memorandum

TO: Fred Hartmeister, Dean
    Graduate College

FROM: Jeff Williams, Chair
      Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work

DATE: 15 September 2008

RE: Response to the review of graduate programs in Anthropology & Sociology

I have attached my response to the review the graduate programs (MA) in Anthropology and Sociology in my department. This was routed through Interim Provost Winer on Thursday, 11 September, for comment.
Response to the 2007 review of graduate programs in Anthropology and Sociology

In the memorandum dated 25 June 2008, the chair of SASW responded to some of the inaccuracies of the Review of Graduate Programs, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, dated May 2008. That dissatisfaction still holds and the earlier response is attached herein.

It was made evident in the meeting that the committee performed a less than adequate job of gathering materials to review. Their inadequacies reflected poorly on SASW's performance in terms of the measures that were used to evaluate the MA programs in Anthropology and Sociology.

However, one important point was raised during the discussion that has already been addressed as follows. Dean Hartmeister made note that a TA in the graduate program in Sociology had commented that she/he was being required to work more than 20 hours per week. Provost Marcy stressed the need to ensure that TA/GPTIs do not exceed the 20 hour/week limit. The department chair brought this comment to the attention of the faculty and is continuing to work with the faculty and Graduate Program Directors in both programs who supervise TA/GPTIs to make sure that no student is working more than 20 hours per week. During the first week of the fall semester 2008, the department chair and the Graduate Program Advisors met with the graduate cohorts in each program to reiterate this policy and to inform students of their rights as employees. The students were also told that if they have concerns or are working more than 20 hours per week to speak with the department chair immediately.

Recommendations

1. Continuation of teaching load reduction/scholarship enhancement
   In the 2002 graduate program review, the basic goal for SASW was stated to be reduction in faculty teaching loads with the goal of promoting enhanced faculty scholarship. The reduction in teaching loads did not begin until spring semester of AY06-07, and since that time approximately 50% of the departmental faculty have had teaching load reductions of 1 course per year, on average. The remaining 50% of the faculty have not engaged in other activities that would permit any reduction in their teaching loads. It should also be noted that during 2007, the faculty of SASW exceeded previous levels of productivity in publications and grantsmanship (please see the accompanying memorandum of 06/25/2008).

   The recommendation is to continue to reduce teaching loads in those cases where it can be accomplished (faculty are generating far beyond the 18 teaching credits as required and are actively engaged in scholarship and/or significant service). This entails also reconfiguring lower level undergraduate classes through the combination of small sections (50 or less students) into larger sections of 100+.
2. Faculty salary adjustment
During AY06-07, the faculty of SASW completed a report on salary which demonstrated the need for adjustments due to compression and market equivalencies. A proposal has been approved by the full-time faculty of SASW to cannibalize two positions (one in Anthropology and one in Sociology) to help address salary inadequacies. No discussion has ensued in regards to how those dollars would be distributed among the faculty, and also how the faculty in Social Work would be involved since they are not contributing a position.

The recommendation is to revisit the issues of salary inadequacies and salary compression with the incoming Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences and the newly appointed Interim Provost in hopes of developing a plan to address the salary issues and implement that plan at the start of FY10.

3. Departmental reconfiguration
A discussion to reconfigure SASW by removing Anthropology and forming a new unit with Geography, while maintaining Sociology and Social Work, was initiated during AY07-08. Further talks will take place during AY08-09.

Continue to pursue the viability of a structural reconfiguration of SASW through the appropriate lines of faculty governance and administrative oversight.

4. Graduate program reconfigurations
During AY07-08 SASW began to reconfigure the structure of the delivery of the graduate curricula in Anthropology and Sociology in an effort to reduce the number of ‘piggy backed’ classes. In Sociology, a motion was passed that would institute a rotational system for offering graduate seminars which has reduced the number of graduate offerings while at the same time, increasing the enrollments in each section. This permits the course to make and be offered as a standalone course.

The recommendation is to continue to reduce the number of piggybacked undergraduate/graduate classes in Anthropology and Sociology towards the goal of having the undergraduate and graduate curriculum delivery independent of each other in both programs.

5. Update SASW Strategic Plan
There is no dispute that the Strategic Plan for SASW is in need of revision.

The recommendation made by the Graduate Program Review Committee to update the Strategic Plan will be pursued by the departmental faculty, in relation to point (4) above.