

Biological Sciences Department

Status of the Graduate Program

a report to the Faculty

David J. Moriarty
Graduate Coordinator
Fall Quarter 2000

The Graduate Program is critical to the faculty's efforts as educators and scientists, and it is hoped that the information in this brief report is of assistance. Your comments on this report (especially with respect to how it can be improved) are welcome, and should be directed to Dave Moriarty. Previous reports were issued in Fall 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999.

Enrollment

As of October 26, 2000, the program has 80 classified graduate students (list appended – *not available in web version*). This is an increase of 10 over last year. These numbers fluctuate continually as students enter and leave the program. It is important to realize that not all of these students enroll in classes (supervisory or traditional) every quarter. Some students take formal leaves of absence, and many graduate students are adept at “stopping out” for a quarter without losing their enrollment.

Enrollment in the graduate program, as measured by the number of students taking classes in Fall Quarter, is strong (Fig. 1). Enrollment in Fall 2000 was 58 students, the second highest ever.

Admissions

The table below shows Admissions activity over the past five academic years. Data for 1995-96 are approximate because the database to track activity was not implemented until midway through the period.

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
Admitted Classified	~14	11	16	35	26
Admitted Conditional	~6	6	5	1	1
Denied	~4	9	12	-	-
Incomplete/No Action	~26	25	15	15	11
Total	~50	51	48	51	38

1998-99 was the first full year of admissions under the “new” procedures (i.e. sponsored admissions) adopted by the faculty in May of 1998. Note that 61 students have been admitted in just the past two academic years.

Faculty Sponsors

Twenty-three faculty have sponsored students into the graduate program (as of October 13, 2000). The distribution of the number of students sponsored per faculty member is shown on an attached bar graph, which shows that ten faculty have sponsored one student, three faculty have sponsored two students, and so on. One faculty member has sponsored 19 students. These data include all students sponsored since the admission procedures were changed (May 1998), and therefore total number of students sponsored does not correspond to the number of students currently in the program.

A Philosophy for Sponsoring Applicants

First, allow me to repeat the policy adopted by the faculty, which is that sponsoring an applicant does not constitute an agreement to be the major professor for the student. However, I strongly recommend that faculty use the sponsor procedure to control how many graduate students you have under your direction, and who they are. In other words, I recommend that you only sponsor students that you intend to have as your graduate students.

I strongly recommend against sponsoring students who you have no intention to work with as major professor. While it is not against policy for you to do this, when you sponsor a student that you don't intend to work with, one of two possibilities will result:

- You have made a lot of work for an unsuspecting colleague, or:
- We have a student in the program who cannot find a major professor, and therefore has no hope of ever graduating.

I don't find either of these alternatives acceptable. Even if you warn such a student that they will have to find a major professor, they do not have the background to fully realize what it means to have a major professor and thesis committee. Remember, most of our applicants have no previous experience with graduate education, they only have undergraduate experiences as a point of reference. When you speak to them about a major professor, they think it is like their undergraduate advisor - someone they know exists, but not someone they really need to deal with.

Information Requests

Year	Number of Packets Sent
1995-96	94
1996-97	133
1997-98	82
1998-99	76
1999-00	66

Requests for information are received by mail (electronic and traditional) and the telephone. The number of informational packets sent to prospective students for the past five years appears in the table. Although the substantial variation in this area is unexplained, some drop in total requests might be expected as more people access the information over the world wide web rather than direct contact.

The department is listed at the "gradschools .com" web site:

<http://www.gradschools.com/listings/institutions/CSUPomona.html>

This listing is the source of many requests for information.

The Graduate Coordinator continues to receive many "form" email messages sent by students from the Peoples Republic of China and India. A packet is not sent in response to these requests. Instead, a response containing all application information is sent via email. This does not provide the prospective applicant with the Admissions booklet, but they are invited to request a booklet by traditional mail from the Cal Poly Admissions Office (they are told that email requests will not be honored). Applicants are also given the URL of a web site maintained by the Chancellor's Office which allows them to apply online, if they have access to the world wide web (which many foreign students do not). ***If you object to this procedure, please discuss with Dave Moriarty. If necessary, the matter could be discussed at a Department Meeting.***

World Wide Web Site (<http://www.csupomona.edu/~biology/gradprog/>)

The Graduate Program home page is effective as a recruitment medium and for the dissemination of information in an efficient manner. A graduate policies page has been implemented, so that policies and procedures adopted by the faculty can be permanently accessible.

Faculty Membership on Thesis Committees

Appended is a list (*not available in web version*) of thesis committee membership for each faculty member. Students for whom the faculty member is the major professor are indicated. *Please inform the graduate coordinator of changes that should be made to this information.*

Students Who Have Not Filed a Program of Courses (GS-101)

Appended is list (*not available in web version*) of students who have been classified graduate students

for at least one year, but have not yet filed their Program of Courses. The major professor for each student is also listed. Faculty are urged to have their students file the program as soon as reasonably possible. When funds are available to support research for graduate students, one of the usual eligibility requirements is to have the program on file.

Graduate Faculty Information

Included with this report is a listing of graduate faculty and research interests and/or other pertinent information. This information is included in the informational packets sent to prospective applicants (remember, 66 were sent out last year alone), as well as on the Graduate Program world wide web page (see above). *Please inform the Graduate Coordinator of any changes to your information.* Informational packets are printed "on demand", so your changes become effective as soon as they are received. The web page will also be updated as information is received. If you have a personal web page that is not currently linked from the graduate page, please send your URL to the graduate coordinator.

Graduate Student Research Funds

In the 1998-99 and 1999-00 years, the department was able to allocate funds to support graduate research. A total of \$11, 870.77 was awarded (see attached list - *not available in web version*) over the two years. The value of such support greatly exceeds the dollar amount, and it is hoped this funding will continue.

Acknowledgment

I thank the faculty for their strong support of the Graduate Program. The faculty are not credited for the WTU they generate through graduate supervisory courses, for serving as major professors, or for serving on thesis committees. I know you do this work because you recognize the value of a strong graduate program to our students (both graduate and undergraduate) and our faculty. Thank you for your sacrifices. You are a credit to the profession, and I am proud to be your colleague.

s David J. Moriarty
October 26, 2000

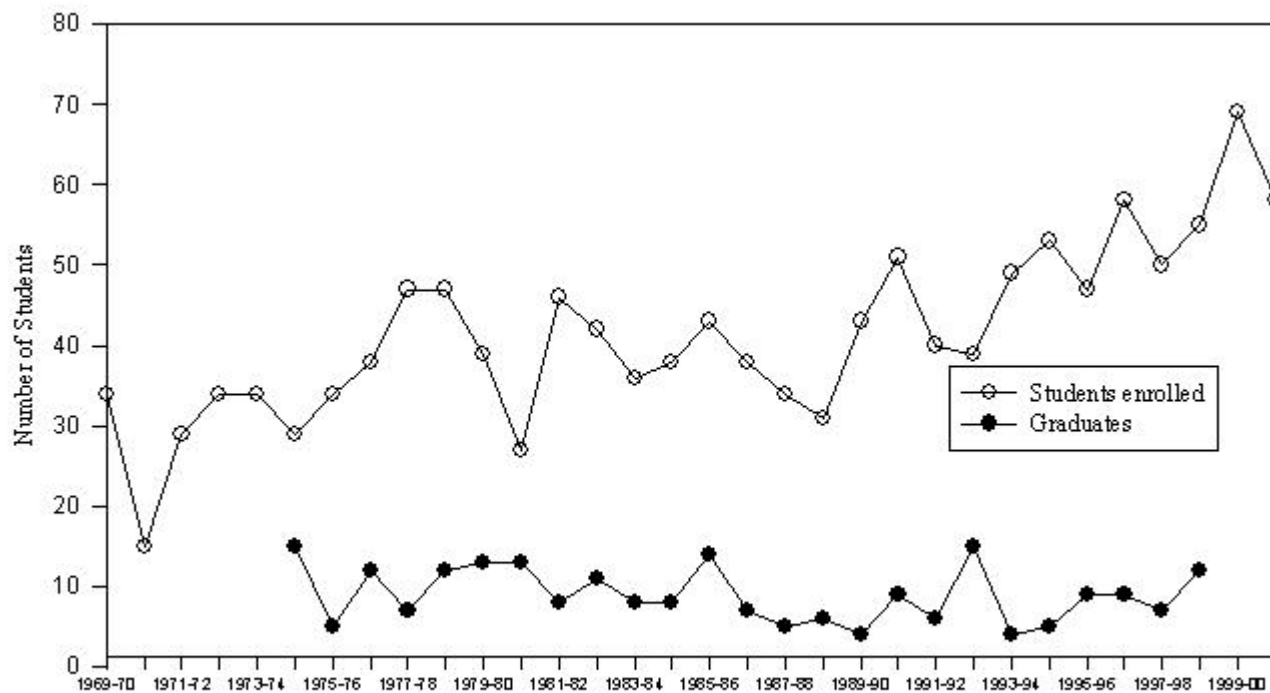


Fig. 1 Students enrolled in Fall Quarter from 1969-70 through 2000-2001 (open circles), and students graduated from 1974-75 through 1998-99 (filled circles).

