

Biological Sciences Department

Status of the Graduate Program

a report to the Faculty

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The Graduate Program is critical to the educational efforts of the faculty, and hopefully you will find this brief report informative. 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, 1999, 2000, and 2001.

Enrollment

As of August 22, 2002, the program has 85 classified graduate students (list appended – not available on web version). This includes a few students who will graduate at the end of Summer Quarter 2002. 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 2001 was 62 students, the second highest ever. Over the past 10 years, enrollment has grown at an average of 6% per year. This is very rapid growth – at this rate the program doubles in size every 13 years. Clearly, the department has neither the faculty nor fiscal resources to maintain this rate, and enrollment must stabilize soon.

Admissions

The table below shows Admissions activity over the past seven 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	2000-01	2001-02
Admitted Classified	~14	11	16	35	26	23	26
Admitted Conditional	~6	6	5	1	1	0	0
Denied	~4	9	12	-	-	-	-
Incomplete/ No Action	~26	25	15	15	11	14	13
Total	~50	51	48	51	38	37	39

Note that 75 students have been admitted in just the past three academic years. 1998-99 was the first full year of admissions under the sponsored admissions procedure adopted by the faculty in May 1998.

A Philosophy for Sponsoring Applicants

The policy adopted by the faculty, 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, or where you have identified a major professor. For example, faculty who place students in the City of Hope program might sponsor a student planning to

enter COH.

I strongly recommend against sponsoring students who you have no intention to work with as major professor, and where there is no plan for placing the student. Although it is not against policy for you to do this, when you sponsor a student that you don't intend to advise, either 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.

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. Sometimes it is tempting to sponsor a student just because they are academically talented, and you'd like them to be in the program. However, please consider the needs of the student and the workload of your colleagues.

Information Requests

Year	Number of Packets Sent
1995-96	94
1996-97	133
1997-98	82
1998-99	76
1999-00	66
2000-01	28
2001-02	43

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 seven years appears in the table. I believe that the drop in total requests is due to more people accessing 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 11 of the 43 requests during the past academic year.

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

The Graduate Program home page serves as a recruitment medium and for the dissemination of information in an efficient manner.

Faculty Membership on Thesis Committees

Appended (not available on web version) is a list 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 (not available on web version) is list 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 (not available on web version – go to web site) 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, 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 linked from the graduate page, please send your URL to the graduate coordinator.

Graduate Student Research Funds

In the 1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01, and 2001-02 years, the department was able to allocate funds to support graduate research. A total of \$21,270.01 was awarded (see attached list - not available on web version) over the four years. Although we have a difficult budget situation, it is hoped this funding will continue.

Graduates by Quarter and Year

A new feature of the graduate program database is the addition of a field to track the quarter and year when students graduate. A listing is appended (not available on web version). Data for the 1995-96 period are likely incomplete because the database was in the process of implementation at that time. Information for this listing was obtained from the university BANNER system, so the dates reflect the quarter in which the degree was actually awarded. This may not be the quarter in which the student completed or defended the thesis.

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.

David J. Moriarty August 26, 2002

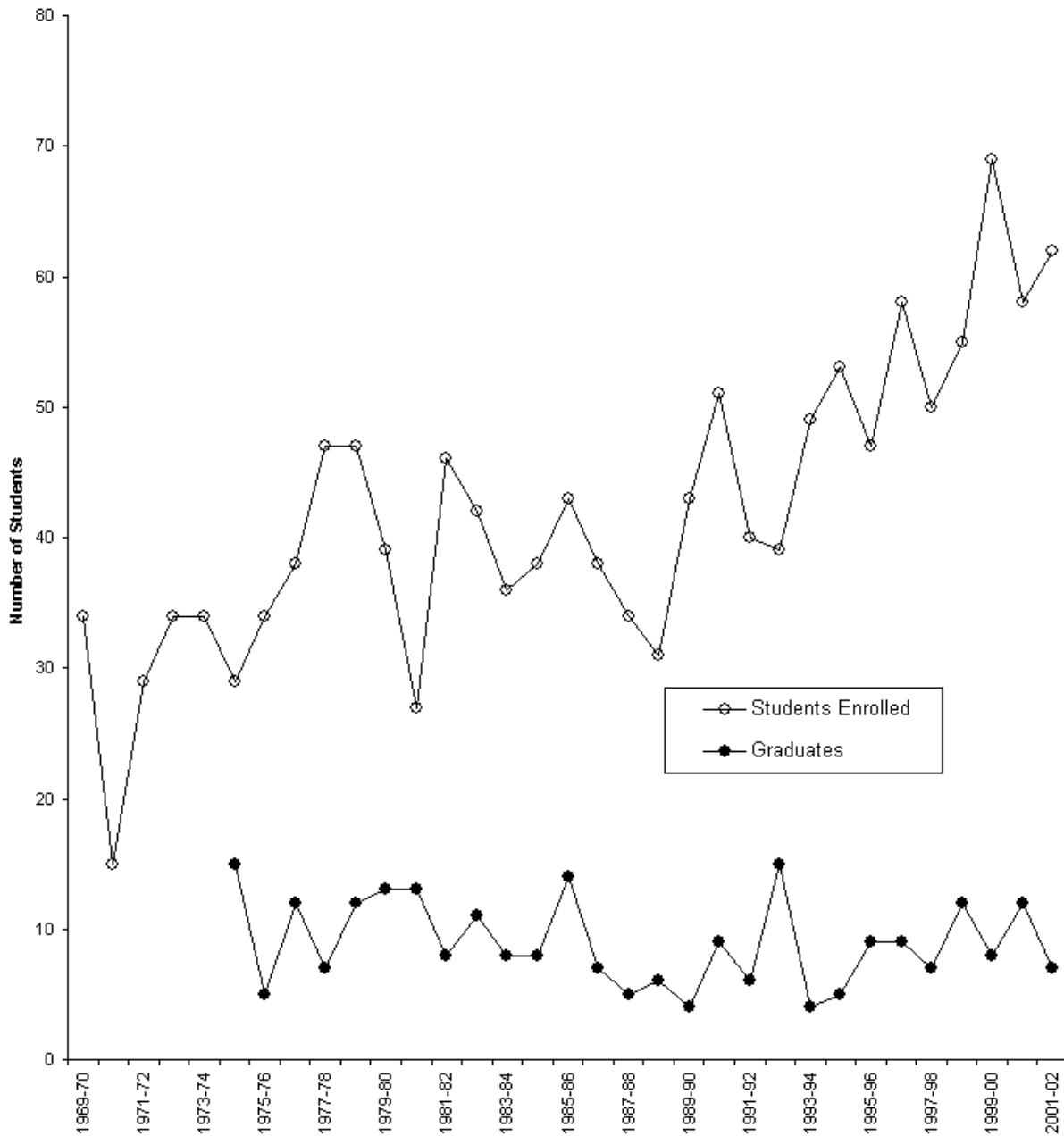


Fig. 1 Students enrolled in Fall Quarter 1969-1970 through 2001-2002 (open circles), and students graduated from 1974-1975 through 2001-2002 (filled circles).