RSCA Working Group on Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs
2015-2016
SUMMARY

i. 2015-2016 Accomplishments:
   a. Committee met to identify opportunities and challenges related to interdisciplinary graduate programs
   b. Determined that there is both need and demand for interdisciplinary graduate programs at UNLV, and the role of this committee is to identify and address policies and practices that hinder faculty development of such programs
   c. We identified four key types of interdisciplinary graduate programs: inter-College, intra-College, design-your-own, and those in Centers & Institutes
      i. Reviewed existing IDGPs at UNLV
      ii. Reviewed existing IDGPs at aspirational peers

ii. Recommendations
   a. Infrastructure to properly support IDGPs needs to be established
   b. Development of boilerplate guidelines regarding program policies and procedures would be helpful to faculty
      i. Need to create graduate coordinator model
      ii. Establish program coordinating committee
      iii. Create sample program and curriculum proposals as guidelines
   c. Determine best practices and policies for various types of IDGPs

iii. 2016-2017 Goals
   a. Address Working Group Recommendations from ’15 – ‘16
      i. Identify and remove barriers
         1. Location
         2. Governance
         3. Coordinators
         4. Faculty home
         5. Student Admissions
         6. WSCH/FTE and Graduation Data & Incentives
         7. Staff & infrastructure support
      ii. Boilerplate for IDGP program proposals
      iii. Make policy and program recommendations to implement IDGP

Infrastructure to Support Specific Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs
The purpose of this white paper is to explore the infrastructure necessary to support the development of additional interdisciplinary doctoral programs (IDGPs) at UNLV. This guide will review existing IDGPs both here and at other institutions. It will review existing literature regarding IDGPs. And finally, this guide will provide suggestions for the governance, development and implementation of additional IDGPs.

What is an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program? There are generally two variants of IDGPs in the United States. The first could be considered a general IDGP where a student proposes a course of study and research (e.g., Cal Berkeley). The second variant is a specific IDGP which represents a collaboration of two or more academic programs – these may be intercollege, intracollege, or housed in Centers/Institutes. This document will focus on the latter category. We recommend production of a similar document in 2016-2017 to address the general IDGP type program.

Example: Two Existing IDGPs at UNLV

*Interdisciplinary Health Sciences PhD*

The [Interdisciplinary Health Sciences](#) PhD, approved in Fall of 2015, was jointly proposed by Schools of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences. Students in the program take 24 credits in the IHS core, 12 of which are dissertation credits. An addition 36 credits are completed in one of four sub-plans: Health Physics, Kinesiology, Nursing, or Rehabilitation Sciences. The program is jointly directed by the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinators for each of the four available sub-plans.

[Program Guide](#)

*Learning & Technology PhD*

The [Learning & Technology](#) PhD was jointly proposed by the departments of Educational Psychology and Curriculum & Instruction in 2002. The students in the program take core courses in research methodology, learning technology and educational psychology. The students have a committee composed of graduate faculty from at least two of the three core areas. The program is administratively housed in the Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education. The program is directed jointly by one representative from each of the two collaborating departments.

[Learning & Technology Program Bylaws](#) and [Program Guide](#)
Other IDGPs to Review in AY16-17

**PhD in Bioengineering** - Northeastern University

**PhD in Biomedical Engineering** - University of Arizona

**Bylaws**

**PhD in Biomedical Informatics** - University of Nebraska Omaha

**PhD in Design, Environment and the Arts** - Arizona State University

**PhD in Environmental Sciences, Studies and Policy** - University of Oregon

**PhD in Human and Social Dimensions of Science and Technology** - Arizona State University

**PhD in Modeling and Simulations** - University of Central Florida

**Graduate Interdisciplinary Programs** - University of Arizona

BioMedical Engineering - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Key Questions to Consider in AY16-17 Report

**Issues & Models of IDGP Governance:**

Chair; Graduate Coordinator; Definition of Faculty; Program Bylaws; Deans

See [U. of Arizona Process](#)

**IDGP Faculty Questions:**

Faculty Homes; Workload; P&T; Support; Graduate Faculty Status Guidelines; GA Allocations

**IDGP Student Issues:**
Recruitment; System Coding & Tracking; WSCH & Completions; State GAs; Comprehensive Exams; Dissertation Committee Composition; Financial Support

**Grants & Contracts:**

Student Support; F&A Distribution; OSP Processes

**University, College, Department Bylaws & Policy Issues:**

Grad Faculty Status (GFS); Systems & Data; Barriers possibly posed by existing policies, procedures and/or practices; Bylaws review