IPP Steering Committee Meeting
2013-2014
Wednesday, March 19, 2014, 1:00pm
179 Biochem Labs

MINUTES

Present: Dave Brow, Jim Keck, Ann Palmenberg, Ivan Rayment, Shruti Waghray

Absent: Margaret Clagett-Dame, Mike Cox, Mike Sheets

1. **Update on the development of the two-semester course for incoming IPP students** – Rayment
   a. Discussion of postponement until 2015 due to lack of teaching personnel
      Mr. Rayment opened the discussion by stating that negotiations with Chairs
      Craig and Kiley were ongoing to determine who will teach the new two-part
      biochemistry required courses. Mr. Keck commented that the new courses have
      already been advertised to prospective new students during recruitment
      weekends; therefore, the Steering Committee should make a concerted effort to
      push through their implementation by the Fall 2014 semester.

      The sticking point is determining which faculty can teach the first course and
      cover nucleic acids. After discussion, it was suggested that Peter Lewis could
      teach that section of the course with oversight and assistance from Mr. Brow, and
      that refinements would be made for subsequent years. This matter will be
      discussed with the chairs of BMC and Biochemistry.

2. **Adding more advanced seminars to the IPP curriculum** – Rayment
   Mr. Rayment plans to poll Biochemistry faculty to find out who is offering advanced
   seminars and on what topics. The goal of this effort is to broaden and strengthen the
   quality and quantity of the seminar offerings for students, determine if smaller seminars
   can be consolidated, and identify any topic gaps that need to be addressed. In addition,
   seminar offerings should be literature seminars and not group meetings. The results of
   this poll will be shared at the April IPP Steering Committee meeting.

3. **IPP Handbook (attachment)**
   a. Discussion of requesting a change in thesis committee members – Brow
      In response to a student’s request to change 3 of his 5 committee members only a
      few months before his thesis examination, the committee agreed that students
      should have the option to change their committee composition when it reflects a
      change in research direction, but this privilege should not be abused (e.g., to
avoid constructive criticism). The ECC will remain vigilant and approve requests as appropriate. Alternations to the handbook to reflect this change are attached.
b. Discussion of MS language per HLC (Higher Learning Commission) requirements – Raymen
   The committee agreed to update the MS language in the IPiB handbook to reflect the minimum credit requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). It was noted that IPiB’s minimum credit requirements for leaving the Program with an MS degree are already higher than the HLC’s minimum credit requirements; they just need to be documented. Changed language is attached.

4. Update on recruiting for 2014-15 – Keck
   Mr. Keck provided an update on student recruiting for the coming academic year (attached), noting that the third (and largest) recruiting weekend had yet to take place. He also pointed out that international applications are down (although the quality of those applications is up) and domestic applications are up.

5. Discussion on separating the Recruiting and Admissions Committee’s responsibilities – Keck
   The committee agreed that splitting recruiting and admissions responsibilities between two groups of faculty would make this long-term service commitment more manageable. Mr. Keck stated that most programs do separate these functions, with admissions doing the “paper” work (e.g., reading applications) and recruiting doing the “people” work (e.g., coordinating recruiting weekends). It was suggested that four faculty are assigned to admissions and three to recruiting, with the assignments being made by the chairs of Biochemistry and Biomolecular Chemistry. Mr. Keck agreed to draft a proposal for review at the April Steering Committee meeting.

6. Other business?
   a. The committee agreed to change the April meeting date to the 23rd.

Final Steering Committee Meeting for 2013-14: Wednesday, May 21, 2014
Discussion on requesting a change in thesis committee members

Current handbook language:

3.7.3 Committee Changes: Typically, a thesis committee is appointed for the duration of a student's degree program. Temporary or permanent committee changes will be considered by the ECC if a written request, signed by the thesis advisor and the student, is submitted to the Student Services Coordinator for ECC consideration. Any requested changes to the committee makeup require prior verbal approval from the substitute member.

Proposed handbook language (revised form attached):

3.7.3 Committee Changes: Typically, a thesis committee is appointed for the duration of a student's degree program, but temporary or permanent committee changes will be considered by the ECC. Any requested changes to the committee makeup require prior verbal approval from the substitute member.

To request ECC consideration, students should complete the “Request for Thesis Committee Member Change” form available on the IPiB website, and submit it to the Student Services Coordinator. This form requires a description of the reason for the change, which is of particular importance if more than one committee member is changing or if the student’s preliminary or final examination is less than six months away from the date of the request.

Discussion on MS language per HLC requirements

Proposed handbook language:

5. Graduation from IPiB with a Master’s Degree

The IPiB Graduate Degree Program does not admit students directly into MS candidacy. The following requirements apply only when a PhD student prematurely terminates from the program, by student or committee request, and qualifies for this lesser degree. The academic standards of the Graduate School still apply.

5.1 MS Course Requirements:

5.1.1 Required Coursework: Coursework for admission (Section 2.2) and IPiB course requirements for the PhD (Section 3.1) must be met.

5.1.2 Seminars: After the first semester of graduate work, MS candidates must maintain continuous seminar enrollment each semester in one of the approved advanced (900-level) seminars (Appendix 10.D).

5.1.3 Graduate School Requirements: Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement: The academic standards for the MS degree are the same as those for the PhD (Section 3.5 above). IPiB requires a minimum of 48 graduate
residence credits for a Master’s degree, achieved through a combination of required coursework, continuous seminar enrollment, and advanced research credits. A minimum of 10 credits of graduate-level didactic or laboratory coursework taken at the University are required for the MS degree, and a minimum of 16 credits (including 990 research or seminars) must be completed, in total.

5.1.4 Thesis Committee Determination: Upon completion of the Graduate School, IPiB’s minimum requirements for a Master’s degree, whether or not to confer the Master’s degree is up to the student’s thesis committee and their determination of the student’s achievement of scholarly activity.

5.2 MS Thesis Committee
In order to leave the IPiB program with a Master’s degree, the student must obtain a minimum of three signatures on the Graduate School warrant from among his or her thesis committee members, one of which must be from the student’s thesis advisor. For more information on this option, students are encouraged to speak with their thesis advisors and/or the Graduate Student Services Coordinator.
IPIB admissions update – March 19, 2014

This is a brief statement summarizing the results of our recruitment efforts thus far for the 2014 IPIB class. IPIB faculty projected having funding for 17-18 new students based on a survey conducted in January 2014. This survey established our recruitment target at ~17-18 new students in the upcoming class. Based on our historical average of 40% of students accepting our offer of admission, we aimed to interview ~43-45 applicants to reach this number. We have held two recruiting weekends thus far and a third is schedule for Friday, March 21. We were also vigorous in our international student recruitment efforts.

**Applications:** We reviewed a total of 175 applications for domestic, permanent resident and international students living in the US. Individual admissions committee members also reviewed 87 applications from international candidates living abroad. This is the largest number of domestic applications in our history but, interestingly, this was also the fewest number of international applications we have ever seen. (see graphic on the other side)

**Number of applicants interviewed/offered admission thus far:** We have invited 53 applicants to interview for our program (50 in person and 3 international students via Skype). Of those offered in-person interviews, 24 have interviewed (23 have been offered admission) and 15 will be interviewing on March 21. Eleven students declined to interview. Six of the invited students were AOF-eligible and 2 received the award. All 3 of the Skype-interviewed applicants were offered admission.

**Composition of our incoming class (thus far):** Of the 26 offers made to date, 6 students have accepted our offer of admissions, 3 have declined our offer and the remaining 17 have not yet replied. Our deadline for acceptance is April 15. Prospective students who rejected our offer will be attending the following graduate schools next year: Berkeley (1), Michigan (1), and Stanford (1).

**Chem/Biol joint recruitment efforts:** Of the students who interviewed with us, 6 opted to also interview with individual faculty in Chemistry through our Chem/Biol joint recruitment mechanism. Our second and third weekend interview dates were chosen so that they align with Saturdays when Chemistry was scheduled to recruit.

**Faculty contact with interviewees:** We have continued a program where I match faculty members with accepted students after each visit for a second year. The goal is to have the faculty member contact the student to let him/her know how excited we are to have them join us as a member of the 2014 IPIB class. Opinions from our most recent class indicate that this program added a personal touch to the recruitment process last year and that it established important contacts with individual faculty with whom recruits had good connections during the visit.

**Feedback?** I urge anyone with feedback on the admissions and recruitment process to contact me at any time (ilkeck@wisc.edu or 263-1815). We have been able to make a number of immediate and constructive changes to the process and I am always looking for ways to improve our recruitment.
Historical data:

- **Number of applications and interview/off er/acceptance tables:**

  - Number of Applicants
  - Interviews, offers, and acceptances

  - *Percent acceptance: 2008 (28%), 2009 (36%), 2010 (48%), 2011 (52%), 2012 (33%), 2013 (45%)
  - *# of non-URM/URM: 2008 (12/1), 2009 (24/1), 2010 (27/2), 2011 (18/3), 2012 (14/1), 2013 (19/6)

- **Quality metrics of incoming IPIB students:**

  - Avg. GPA of matriculating students
  - Avg. verbal GRE of matriculating students
  - Avg. quantitative GRE of matriculating students
  - Avg. analytical GRE of matriculating students