Summary of Decisions – Graduate Programs – MAY 2016

Graduate program and course issues are addressed throughout the academic year as needed. Our primary assessment exercise occurs during a one-day faculty in-service Planning and Assessment Workshop held at the end of the school year. This workshop was held 8 May 2016, 8:30a – 4:00p

Information used to support planning at the meeting:

IDEA surveys for individual courses and department summary
Enrollment, graduation, and placement for WATS graduate students: 2005-2016
Review of graduate student performance in qualifying exams, thesis and dissertation defenses, and the annual Graduate Student Research Symposium

Principal Decisions

1. Courses

We continued discussion of the role of a common introductory course beyond the Graduate Induction Course in August.

Action: we will offer an introductory graduate course in Freshwater Ecology Spring 2017 (taught by Atwood) and an introductory graduate course in Physical Dynamics of Watersheds Fall 2017 (to be developed). Neither course will be required, but we will expect and encourage enrollment in one or both classes for all entering graduate students.

Discussion of a general introductory graduate course (Induction II) was tabled.

Supporting information: survey of current graduate students; copious independent opinion of faculty.

2. Teaching Assistantships

We discussed whether the current system of ‘graders’ and ‘teaching assistants’ could be turned into a full semester support for a limited number of students. We discussed whether such full, one-semester teaching assistant support is the domain of the instructors of large enrollment classes or the faculty as a whole.

Action: Wilcock will examine costs and available funding for expanding teaching assistants and report to faculty in fall.

Submitted by

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