

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE



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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521-0132

November 21, 2014

TO: José Wudka, Chair  
Academic Senate

FROM: Jennifer Doyle, Chair  
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Response to the Senate Doctoral Student Support Review Packet

CHASS Executive Committee supports the system-wide effort to improve the competitiveness of graduate funding. Transparency in offers, stronger support for out-of-state students, and more competitive support are all necessary to making our graduate programs more competitive.

We would like to share a few comments and observations regarding the forth area of improvement: Diversity.

- Faculty tapped to mentor students through summer research projects, or to run/contribute to summer programs for students of color are themselves often members of the communities these programs aim to serve. Efforts to increase our activity in the summer must acknowledge the impact engagement over ten summer weeks (the length of some of the summer programs under discussion) on faculty research, and they must also incorporate such pedagogical work into accounting for faculty teaching loads. And this must be balanced with the expectations and service burdens that fall on faculty of color. The most effective means for supporting that level of mentoring is through course release.
- Summer programs offer our own PhD students a chance to contribute to supporting the development of strong programs building a diverse community. If UCR is looking at summer programs for students attending HBCUs, HSI, and TCUs, perhaps we might consider engaging existing graduate students in the running of these programs as well. Graduate students in CHASS, for example, often teach composition through the summer, or teach at community colleges: this impedes their progress, and it does not give them valuable work experience. This kind of work experience might make our graduate students competitive on the job market by giving them the kind of administrative and programming experience that opens up other career possibilities.
- We also have concerns that some of these programs aim too low in their supporting programming, offering "corporate" professionalization (e.g. public speaking skills, offered through a local Toastmasters chapter) that is out of sync with the interests and the needs of

students aiming for PhD-level research. (This is, it should be said, a small element of existing programs, which are, in their overall quality, excellent.)

- Although we are sure the ten week programs offer a lot of benefit to students, we also wonder if a shorter program might also be effective, especially for students who work over the summer. Shorter summer programs are easier, furthermore, for faculty to engage.

Regarding recruiting from Cal State campuses: one excellent means for recruiting PhD students from Cal State campuses might be through collaboration between specific departments at UCR and at local Cal State campus: afternoon symposiums featuring a mix of invited speakers, local faculty and graduate students would function as a good avenue for recruitment.

Jennifer Doyle, Chair

UCR CHASS Executive Committee