Representative Guidelines for an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program

The guidelines provided here are provided as representative for an interdisciplinary graduate program (IGP) that is administered by the Graduate School. The objective of guidelines here is to provide structural guidelines for the administration of an IGP, while allowing flexibility for the unique needs of each program.

1) Guidelines for Establishing a New IGP: Requests to establish a new IGP should be submitted to the Graduate School for consideration by the appropriate Graduate Council area committee. The proposal should outline the structure and management of the proposed program in light of the following suggested structure:

a) Name of proposed IGP and planned date of initiation of the program.

b) Statement of the mission of the proposed IGP, including its research and training focus and the essentiality of an interdisciplinary approach to this focus.

c) Availability of a critical mass of faculty and facilities to address the area of focus. This should include a listing of faculty (by department) who will be involved initially in the IGP.

d) Support and approval of all academic units that will be involved in the proposed IGP (i.e., signatures from all department heads and deans with faculty to be involved in the program).

e) Potential for success of this IGP. Success may be measured by improved ability to attract and retain superior students and faculty, to secure funding for research and training, or to enhance the quality of education and the reputation of Purdue University. Indicate the potential number of students this program could enroll.

f) Logistical details, including planned curriculum and needed curricular changes (new courses, etc.) and procedures for admitting and graduating students.

2) Structure and Function of the IGP: The following committees are recommended to provide administrative support and guidance.

a) Executive Committee: Each IGP should be administered by an executive committee made up of faculty representatives from the IGP. Duties of the executive committee should be clearly delineated and may include some or all of the following:
i) Establish by-laws for the IGP, including standing committees needed for managing the IGP.

ii) Develop and implement mechanisms for selecting and screening faculty members for membership in the IGP.

iii) Develop and implement procedures for recruitment, admissions, curriculum, student supervision, and program requirements.

b) Liaison Committee: In an effort to establish and maintain communication among administrators involved with the IGP, formation of a liaison committee is recommended. This committee should meet annually, at a minimum.

c) IGP Director: The director of the IGP will be selected and/or approved by the executive committee, with the approval of the liaison committee and the dean the Graduate School. The director will manage administrative matters regarding the IGP and represent the IGP to the University, funding agencies, etc.

d) Faculty Membership: Membership of faculty in an IGP must be approved by the faculty member’s home department head and then approved by the executive committee and communicated to the Graduate School. Membership will be based on criteria developed by the executive committee. All members are then eligible to participate in all activities of the IGP.