

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
February 20, 2019
Minutes

Chair James Cox called the third meeting of the Graduate Assembly for the 2018-2019 academic year to order on Wednesday, February 20, 2019, at 1:30 PM in the Flawn Academic Room, FAC 328.

Faculty members present: James Cox, Catherine Weaver, Tasha Beretvas, James Buhler, Allan Cole, Sue Cox , Hugh Daigle, John Deigh, Alison Frazier, Elizabeth Gershoff, Linda Golden, Michael Holleran, Christopher Jolly, Maria Juenger, Wonsuck Kim, Jack Lee, Stephen Limberg, Andreas Matouschek, Julia Mickenberg, Francisco Polidoro, Kavita Radhakrishnan,~~–~~, Sharon Strover, Jo Worthy

Faculty members absent: Andrew Dunn, Catharine Echols, John Hasenbein, John Hatfield, Thomas Hunt, Christina Markert, Karen Rascati, Loriene Roy

Student Members Present: Samantha Fuchs, Jennifer Follen

Ex Officio Members Present: Charlotte Canning

Representatives from the Office of Graduate Studies present: Dean Smith, Dean Hackert, Michelle Broadway, Dean Dalton, Dean Neikirk, Shannon Neuse, Rebekah Sylvia, Bridget Wilson, Nancy Riley

Guests: Dr. Yan Zhang (on behalf of Loriene Roy), Dean Paul Goldbart, Anita Vangelisti, Tim Yeh, Molly Gully, Eric Hirst

Order of Business

- I. Approval of the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting
Minutes unanimously approved.
- II. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School, Mark JT Smith
 - A. Applications for admissions are up 4.45% overall (about 2~~-~~% domestic and 6.77% international).
 - B. Graduate Education Task Force – Chris Kirk and Tonya Paull will be faculty co-chairs. The objective of the committee is to look holistically at ways to support graduate education across campus, using constrained optimization, in order to come up with a strategic approach that can be sustained.
Charlotte Canning (Theater and Dance) expressed concern that this may mean funding cuts for smaller, less well-funded, departments.
Dean Smith replied that it was meant to free up funds for more strategic use.
 - C. In 2017-2018, a climate survey was conducted, and results will be released soon. Some of it may be useful to the Task Force, as it can highlight areas with the most need.
 - D. Also, the next capitol campaign might provide some increased resources for graduate education.

III. Report of Chair (James Cox)

- A. -The Resource Guide to Mental Health Services for Graduate Students and Graduate Programs has been posted to the graduate school's webpage. Two other University committees are addressing similar issues – the Student Life Committee and the Responsibilities, Rights, and Welfare of Graduate Student Academic Employees Committee.
- B. Imagine PhD is a tool created for graduate students in the Humanities and Social Sciences to help with career planning. Charlotte Canning and I hosted a webinar, and one of the co-creators of Imagine PhD, Annie Maxwell, will join UT in April as Director of Graduate Career and Professional Development. Charlotte Canning (Theater and Dance) reported positive comments from the students who attended the webinar. Alison Frazier (History) mentioned it is an AHA initiative and AHA and MLA have been advocates, and it is recommended that students start in their first year of graduate school and continue each year.
- C. As discussed before, with the implementation of Workday, some procedures were interpreted to be in violation of State Laws.

Marv Hackert (Graduate School) commented on this issue. It is no longer an option to provide summer health insurance funding for graduate students who are not registered in the summer session and would not be UT employees in the Fall session due to funding through a Fellowship. In addition some current students on fellowships who opted to pay for the staff insurance plan were dropped inadvertently from the plan. Please contact Marv if you know of any students in this situation. He also expressed interest in creating a graduate student insurance plan.

IV. Academic Committee (Catherine Weaver)

- A. A Graduate Portfolio in Health Communication was unanimously approved in November, but we want to open it up for discussion.

No comments or objections, so approved to be submitted to Dean Smith and the Provost.

- B. Proposal to create an integrated program in Biomedical Engineering, which allows a student to receive a Bachelor's and Master's degree in 5 years.

Approved

- C. Proposal to create a Graduate Portfolio in Digital Studies

Approved

D. Proposal to create a Master of Music degree with a major in Conducting

Approved

E. Graduate Certificate Policy Development (Pending)

This has been in committee for 2 years. A large amount of feedback was received in the last week, and the feedback needs to be addressed before a final vote is taken.

A few caveats – Certificate programs would be offered for between 9 and 15 credit hours. Degree seeking students can also pursue a certificate. Non-degree-seeking students also must satisfy admissions criteria. These criteria are defined by each program.

Also, a cap of 15 credits was added to how many credit hours could be transfer number of transfer credits to red if the student was accepted into a degree program after completing a certificate.

Friendly amendment number one is to change the cap to 18 hours, so a person with two 9-hour certificates could transfer those courses to the MS, as they may be the same courses required for an MS.

Friendly amendment number two recommends that instead of limiting the 15 or 18 hours, limit the number to 50 percent of the credits for an MS. The example was the Master's in Public Policy, which is 48 hours. Approval of this amendment would allow 24 credits from stacked certificates.

Kavita Radhakrishnan (School of Nursing) asked about the 27-hour certificate they offer.

Kate Weaver replied that pre-existing certificates are grandfathered in, so this new policy only applies to new certificates.

Friendly amendment three for consideration: for the limit on transfer credits, use a maximum of 18 hours or up to 50% of the total MS credit requirement.

V. Administrative Committee (Elizabeth Gershoff)

A. Move the deadline for oral dissertation defenses to two weeks before the last day to submit the final dissertation to the Graduate School

45% of defenses occurred in the last 2 weeks of the semester and 15% were in the last week. The change would take place in 2021 since it will have to be a change in the University Calendar. There is a new checkbox on the application for a defense date, and if it is scheduled within the last 2 weeks of the semester, everyone on the committee must agree to that exception.

This was approved.

VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Tasha Beretvas)

- A. MBA Proposal to waive the GRE/GMAT requirements for selective applicants to the MBA Option II (Evening & Executive) and Option III (Dallas & Houston) programs
- B. Proposal to waive the GRE/GMAT requirement for selective applicants to the Masters in Identity Management & Security Option III program

Both Approved

VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Samantha Fuchs)

- A. Support of Graduate Education Task Force
- B. Working on mandated TA training issue
- C. Problems with portfolio programs folding without notification
Michelle Broadway (Graduate School) replied that this issue was discussed 8-9 years ago, and she plans to look up the previous legislation and modify if needed.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM



—Karen Rascati, Secretary
