

## **Graduate Council Meeting Minutes March 31, 2017**

**Graduate Council members in attendance:** Beth Barr, Erica Bruce, Timothy Burns, Gia Chevis, Gerald Cleaver, Sara Dolan, Kevin Dougherty, Jim Ellor, Jan Evans, Neil Fleming, Charles Garner, Greg Hamerly, Bill Hockaday, Julie Holcomb, Randall Jean, Dave Jortner, Chris Kearney, Mia Moody-Ramirez, Mark Morman, David Music, James Nogalski, Peter Park, Jim Patton, Dan Peppe, Van Pham, Alex Pruss, Mark Sepanski, Joe Shim, Doug Smith, Rishi Sriram, James Stamey, Tanya Sudia, and Trena Wilkerson.

**Guests and substitutes in attendance:** Debra Burleson, Elise Leal, Jeff Strietzel, David Schlueter, Mark Bryant, Alexine Burke, Amy Ames, Qingqing Chen, Gina Green, Kevin Shuford, Eunjee Song, Michael Trakselis, Laurie Wilson, and Darryn Willoughby

**Graduate School deans and staff in attendance:** Larry Lyon, Laine Scales, Denny Kramer, Chris Rios, Steve Driese, Anna Henderson, Sherry Sims, and Candice Prose

**Unable to attend:** Gary Carini, Dorothy Leidner, JL Radford-Williard, Col. Scott Shaffer, Suzy Weems, Matthew Wood, and Laurel Zeiss.

**Unknown attendance status:** Steve Green, Ryan King, Grant Morgan, Richard Russell, and G.W. Willis

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Graduate School Dean, Larry Lyon, introduced substitutes, guests and new graduate program directors.

Bill Hockaday led the invocation.

The minutes from October 2016 were approved.

The Graduate Student Association president and vice president, Elise Leal and Jeff Strietzel, spoke about the GSA and graduate orientation. The GSA is working with a strategic vision to provide more focus and a sense of purpose. They have discovered that students want a holistic graduate experience encompassing research, career preparation, collegiality, and personal well-being. Some GSA events help to bring together two or more of these goals.

Proposal for a BA/MA joint degree in Communication Studies – Laine Scales, chair of the Graduate Curriculum Committee, brought this proposal from the GCC as a recommendation to the Graduate Council. Dr. Morman and Dr. Schlueter presented an overview/history of the Communication program and proposal. Competition and financial reasons were factors in the decision to offer the joint degree. The joint degree makes it possible for a student can get an MA in one more year instead of two more. The joint degree does not take away from the undergraduate course requirements at all. The Graduate Council approved the degree proposal by a vote of 37 for and 0 against.

Grading practices for thesis and dissertation: Laine Scales brought a recommendation from the ad hoc committee via consensus/unanimous vote. There are three options effective June 1, 2017: CR, I, and NC. 1. CR (Credit) – This option gives you the opportunity to avoid having to go back and make all of those grade changes. 2. I (Incomplete) – Incomplete is still an option, if that is your preference. 3. NC (no credit) – this option should be used very sparingly and a conversation with the student should take place. A document outlining the three options has been emailed to Graduate Council members. No vote was needed because the actual policy remains the same. The Graduate School procedures are updated to include the option for a CR to be given at the end of the semester.

Graduate Studies Professional Development Committee – Laine Scales and Chris Rios talked about how various offices across campus have been more interested in how to better serve graduate students. In response to this interest, they have formed a Graduate Studies Professional Development Committee. It is modeled after the Graduate Curriculum Committee, but will meet only once per semester (beginning in June). Committee members are Beth Barr, Bill Hockaday, Grant Morgan, Amy Ames, Debbie Davendonis-Todd, Lance Grigsby, a representative from the Academy for Teaching and Learning, and two graduate students.

U.S. Immigration Policies and Recruiting International Students – Associate Dean, Denny Kramer, introduced Alexine Burke and Mark Bryant from the Center for Global Engagement. They spoke about new federal immigration policies that have impacted some of our international students. Four staff members have been designated school officials to handle this issue: Mark Bryant, Alexine Burke, Leslie Hicks, and Treva Hall (Alexine Burke works specifically with graduate students). Ms. Burke outlined the immigration process for graduate students. The students are encouraged to submit the required admissions materials to the Graduate School before they come to the Center for Global Engagement. There is a mandatory attendance of an international student session. Fulltime enrollment is 9 hours. Start dates and end dates are very important and must be accurate. Two years are allowed for a master’s degree; usually five years are allowed for a PhD (sometimes six). H1B processing is done through General Counsel. You should be aware that there is a step-by-step process for inviting scholars to campus – an email will be sent out soon explaining these steps.

Deadline to Defend Dates – Chris Rios explained that the current date is a little early, particularly for our thesis students. Occasionally it will cause a student to have to delay graduation. Starting next year, we are going to push back our deadline to defend dates. This year, the deadline to defend date was October 28 (2016) for the fall; and March 3 (2017) for the spring. Next year, the deadline to defend dates for the fall will be October 27 (2017) *for dissertations* and November 7 (2017) *for theses*; the dates for the spring will be March 16 (2018) *for dissertations* and March 23 (2018) *for theses*. We may push the date even further back the following year.

Career Services for Graduate Studies – Chris Rios spoke about a new partnership with the Office of Career and Professional Development. He said that 40% of our doctoral students do not end up working in the academy when they leave Baylor. How can we help these students get employment in non-academic fields? Amy Ames addressed this topic. She said that there is a lack of awareness that the CPD office exists or that it can serve graduate students as well as undergraduates. Amy asked that the graduate program directors help get the word out and refer graduate students to CPD. The CPD office is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, west wing, of the Sid Richardson building.

More on “Professional Behavior” – Chris Rios continued the conversation from last fall’s Graduate Council meeting regarding the meaning of “professional behavior” in reference to graduate students. The statement from the Graduate School catalog reads as follows:

In keeping with the Baylor University’s commitment to mutual respect and personal integrity, the Graduate School expects that all students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting their professional identity. This includes personal conduct towards faculty, staff, peers, and colleagues both on and off campus. Failure to display professional conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the graduate program.

English for Academic Purposes – Steve Driese asked the program directors to contact him if they have a student who would like to enroll in the English writing course for international ESL students. Qingqing Chen, a PhD candidate in Curriculum & Instruction, is the instructor for the EAP speaking course. The course is intended to help them find a job, improve their communication with their students, and develop a better understanding of US campus teaching culture.

Break: Only doctoral issues are considered after the break.

Dean Lyon discussed the rate of acceptances for stipend enhancement offers. The more money we offer, the less likely they are to come here. This is because the students we offer the most money to are also the ones with the best qualifications and the most options. He concluded that we must have the scholarship and the faculty to attract the students at the highest levels.

Academic Analytics – Dean Lyon stated that Academic Analytics provides a measure of our scholarly prowess. Since Academic Analytics is not a reputational measure, doesn't take as long to improve as USNWR, for example. In the state of Texas there are two really strong universities for scholarly research: the University of Texas and Rice University. Dean Lyon shared various aspects of AA that GPDs might like to investigate on their own.

PhD Assessment Pilot – Lyon outlined the new PhD assessment process. He said that there will be reports from the pilot programs in the fall.

Suggested Stipend Levels – Lyon mentioned that the current suggested yearly stipend levels for graduate students are: \$23K (STEM), \$21K (Social Sciences), \$19K (Humanities), and \$20K (Other). He asked that the GPDs try to get these amounts to be the modal level for their programs, if possible.

Thesis/Dissertation Authorship – Lyon asked for input on recent changes observed in thesis/dissertation author credit, especially in the STEM fields. Occasionally, the person earning the PhD is not listed as the first author. Rios mentioned that when he investigated the practices of other institutions, he found that most specify that the thesis or dissertation author *must be the lead contributor* to the work submitted, normally represented by sole author or first author on all manuscripts. In cases of multiple authorship, the contribution of each author (not just the dissertation writer) must be explained in the introduction or on a separate attribution page. **Dean Lyon asked that GPDs review dissertations and be sure that they conform to these criteria before the dissertation goes to the Graduate School.**