

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes March 16, 2018

Graduate Council members in attendance: Beth Allison Barr, Timothy Burns, Sara Dolan, Kevin Dougherty, Jan Evans, Neil Fleming, Skip Gill, Gina Green, Steve Green, Bill Hockaday, Julie Holcomb, Dave Jortner, Bob Kane, Ryan King, Peter Klein, Mia Moody-Ramirez, Grant Morgan, Mark Morman, David Music, James Nogalski, Peter Park, Jim Patton, Dan Peppe, Van Pham, Alex Pruss, Richard Russell, Mark Sepanski, Joe Shim, Kevin Shuford, Doug Smith, Eunjee Song, Rishi Sriram, James Stamey, Tanya Sudia, Michael Trakselis, Suzy Weems, Trena Wilkerson, Darryn Willoughby, Laurel Zeiss.

Guests and substitutes in attendance: Jeff Strietzel, Lynne Miller, Todd Still, Denise Beaumont, Alden Smith, Dan Hanchey, Tony Talbert, Josh Been, Daniel Allen, Justin Nelson, Scott Cunningham, Timothy McKinney, Debra Burlison, Angela Bailey, Jeff Olafsen, Cole Matson, David Kahle.

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

Unable to attend: Erica Bruce, Gia Chevis, Gerald Cleaver, Jim Ellor, Ian Gravagne, Tim Kayworth, Dorothy Leidner, Sharon Mawet, Linda Plank, Mike Walker.

Graduate School Dean, Larry Lyon, introduced substitutes, guests and new graduate program directors. Dr. Grant Morgan led the invocation. The minutes from September 2017 were approved.

Graduate Student Association officers Lynne Miller and Jeff Strietzel spoke about GSA events that support their goals such as the three-minute thesis competition and the farmer's market. They expressed their appreciation for the graduate program directors' work on their behalf.

Josh Been, new digital librarian, talked about the Digital Research & Innovative Visual Explorations (DRIVE) summer scholars program which provides a series of hands-on workshops designed to help Baylor researchers learn about advanced data research methods, tools, and sources. Students in the program receive support for the analyzing of text and data visualizations, funding for summer research, and online instruction and support in six competency areas.

Truett Seminary Dean, Todd Still, presented a proposal for a PhD in Preaching. The new degree will be a hybrid online and on campus program. It will be financially independent and not competing against other programs for stipend/tuition support. The Graduate Council approved the Preaching PhD proposal by a vote of 33 yes, 3 no, and 1 abstain.

Tanya Sudia and Denise Beaumont presented a proposal for a Nurse Anesthesiology Doctor of Nursing Practice degree (DNP) in conjunction with the US Military. Program faculty will be classified as auxiliary faculty. The Graduate Council unanimously approved the Nurse Anesthesiology proposal (38 "yes" votes).

The Professional Development Committee gave a report on composition of thesis/dissertation committees. The committee recommended reducing committee size to 4 members (down from 5). If 5 are preferred, the GPD is allowed to require that. These are merely suggestions and you can always have more than the minimum requirement. Gina Green suggested that the verbiage be adjusted to read "in extreme cases, the GPD could allow someone to participate remotely." Beth Barr says this is a good first step, and we may eventually consider payment/stipend. Dean Lyon asked that committee make one more revision based on the discussion. The Grad School will send the revised proposal back out to members for a vote. **Update:** The revisions were approved by email vote. The new announcement of doctoral exam form is available [here](#).

Assistant Dean Chris Rios spoke about the Three-Minute Thesis competition. He explained that many other schools take the competition quite seriously, having preliminary rounds in which judges from the community are brought in. A few of Baylor's peer schools have made Three-Minute Thesis compulsory because it impresses people that matter to the university and it provides professional experience for the students. The Baylor Graduate School is considering requiring students to participate in Three-Minute Thesis in order to qualify for a travel award; however, we wanted to run this by the Graduate Council members first. The award for the winners can range from several hundred up to \$3K. Graduate Council members were not strongly in favor of making participation compulsory. Jim Nogalski offered an option of incentivizing participation (\$100 or so), rather than penalizing/making compulsory. Rios asked that GPDs more strongly encourage their students to participate. Dean Lyon recommended trying to determine if there is a way to encourage participation that reflects what was heard today.

Tony Talbert presented a proposal for a Master of Arts in Teaching (plus MAT/BSEd). The Graduate Council approved the proposal by a vote of 38 for and 3 against.

Dan Hanchey presented a proposal for a Master of Arts in Classics (plus BA/MA in Classics). He said that the classical school movement has caused a double in number of teachers teaching Latin in Texas. The program would have all the elements of a traditional humanities graduate program, and all expenses would be offset by the certificate program. The Graduate Council approved the proposal by a vote of 37 for and 4 against.

A new website has been developed to address the issue of graduate students and mental health. It can be found [here](#).

Steve Driese mentioned a seminar in grant writing being offered for Fall 2018 for all STEM graduate students. Two sections will be offered as GEO 5V90. The course will help students develop grant-writing skills, prepare an NSF-style Ph.D. dissertation proposal and presentation, and assist with the submission of NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program application

Driese talked about the English for Academic Purposes program (ESL instruction). He mentioned that some schools charge students for this type of instruction. Driese proposed creating a joint lectureship for this position. He asked that GPDs:

- 1) Have students interested in taking the GEO Grant-Writing Seminar during the Fall Semester of 2018 contact Driese and Ms. Paulette Penney in the GEO Office to enroll and receive a permit to register for 2 credit hours of 5V90.
- 2) Have ESL Graduate students interested in taking the EAP English-Speaking Course with Ms. Qingqing Chen in either the Summer (1 month) or Fall semester 2018 contact her directly. There will be no charge for the course, subsidized by the Graduate School.
- 3) Ask their Chair about his/her willingness to help support a dedicated lecturer line for EAP instruction, starting in January of 2019, and committing \$1K/student/semester from the department's operating budget to help subsidize this program.
- 4) Have students interested in taking the ENG 1301 English writing course for international ESL graduate students in the Fall semester of 2018 contact Driese and the instructor, Ms. Juliet Brown ASAP.

Dean Lyon gave a presentation about moving Baylor toward R1 status. He concluded that on the path to R1, all kinds of grants count. Lyon said that Baylor must produce more research doctoral graduates.

Chris Rios mentioned that the Graduate School will be working to increase the retention of doctoral students. The retention rate is currently about 60% and we would like to bump that up to 80%. Rios pointed out that student retention has a lot to do with student satisfaction.

Sociology doctoral students Justin Nelson and Daniel Allen talked about exit survey analysis and their findings on student satisfaction. They found that the top five indicators of student satisfaction are:

1. Program has good relations between students and faculty.
2. Program activities foster a sense of intellectual community.
3. Student received adequate advice from department on how to search for and secure a job.
4. Program content supports student's research/professional goals.
5. Program structure encourages student collaboration/teamwork.

The doctoral GPDs participated in round table discussions to address the following questions:

What are you doing and what is working?
How can students help?
How do we move the conversation forward?
How do we engage the dept faculty?
How do we improve what we are doing now?
How do we know that things are better?

Round table reports:

Table 1 - In some departments there is a built-in culture for students leading, mentoring, community, etc. We need to find ways to involve faculty: allow them to be mentors in teaching and facilitate ways for them to feel invested with these students.

Table 2 – Provide early assessment/feedback for students who are not going to make it. Organize student lunches for mentoring each other. Set up a common meeting place for them. Encourage the senior students to take care of junior students. Invest funds to promote socialization among students.

Table 3 – Listen to the students' voices. Meet with your GSA representative each semester. Have a student governance committee. Develop a process to help students find their match for an advisor. Educational Psychology is putting together a document of minimal expectations for mentoring so that everyone is on same page. Require faculty to participate in co-mentoring before doing it on their own. PsyD has students put together and administer a survey of the program each year. Then we try to do at least one thing each year to improve the program, suggested by the students. Keep students' work at 20 hours per week or less so as not to overwork the students.

Table 4 – Recommend administering surveys at different times during the year rather than just at the end of the program or one year out.

Table 5 – There are limits to what we can do in terms of R1...more funding means you can support more grad students. We should not increase retention rates by lowering standards so that all students graduate. Would like to have a way to focus on quality during the admissions process, but not sure what best predictors are.

Rios said that the GPDs will hear from us in coming weeks and months about how we can get together to talk about these things: How to make the experience better for our students and be better stewards of our resources.