

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO
DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL
ACTION MINUTES
ORDER OF BUSINESS**

November 3, 2009

**John Peace Library 4.03.12
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Gabriel Acevado , David Akopian, John Alexander, Kim Bilica, Norma Cantu, Michael Cepek, Andrey Chabanov, Bill Cooke, Jim Dykes, Dorothy Flannagan, Larry Golden (for Heather Trepal), Sean Guidry, Anjali Gupta, Mary Kay Houston-Vega, Kim Kline, Myung Ko, Adrian Lipscombe, Fransisco Marcos-Marin, Greg Michel, Emeka Nwaeze, Anne S. Reamey, Joel Saegert, Can Saygin, Scott Sherer, Howard Smith, Ryan Sprott, Drew Steven, Ram Tripathi, Lila Truett, John Wald, Jose Weissman, Raj Wilson, Weining Zhang

Absent: Julie Bland, Richard Hartley, Don Kurtz, Elizabeth Murakami, Renee Nank, Sharon Navarro, Brian Smith, Garry Sunter, Mary Zey

Excused: Rena Bizios, Lance Lambert, Rudy Sandoval

Visitors: None

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Dr. Norma Cantú called the November 3, 2009 meeting of the Graduate Council to order at 3:34 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes (Jim Dykes, substituting for Norma Cantú)

The Minutes of the October 6, 2009 meeting were approved.

III. Reports

A. Council Chair (Norma Cantú)

No report

B. Dean of Graduate School (Dorothy Flannagan)

Dean Dorothy Flannagan reported that Brittany Kruciak in the Graduate School has been working with the Doctoral Program Chairs and the Institutional Research Office to collect the data for the 18 characteristics specified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB; Attachment A of the Agenda). Each Institution is required to post the 18 characteristics for its doctoral programs by December 1st. The problem with the average time to degree computation has been fixed and some operational definitions are still being standardized. The information will need to be updated each year. In response to feedback by many Institutions, changes were made to the 18 characteristics (Attachment B of the Agenda) and those modifications will be used in 2010. Drs. John Wald and Scott Sherer noted that the diversity categories differed from federal categories. Dean Flannagan explained that these categories are used by the (THECB) and are self-reported. It was noted that the first page of Attachment A sent

with Agenda was duplicated three times. The correct Attachment A was distributed at the meeting and was emailed to the Graduate Council on November 5th. Future documents will be sent in PDF format, but a Word format is available if requested.

Dean Flannagan noted a concern about graduation rates expressed at the state government level. In the past, the expectation was about 1 doctoral graduate per program every 3 years and 3- 4 master's graduates every 5 years. While the future expectations for graduate rates have not been finalized, they will increase. Programs will be reviewed on a rolling 5-year cycle. We do not currently have any low performing programs that have been implemented for 5 years, but we need to be diligent and proactive with respect to the guidelines (finalization is anticipated in about 6 months). Low performing programs may be eliminated or must adhere to a very structured plan for change. Depending upon the anticipated guidelines, some programs may be concerned in the future. Dean Flannagan invited any concerned program to discuss possible strategies with her. For instance a program might want to combine concentrations, since the guidelines will be applied to each individual concentration.

In response to a question by Dr. Michael Cepek about new program review, Dean Flannagan explained that a low graduation rate through year 3 would be noticed and would produce a warning in year 4. Year 5 is the final year in the review cycle. She also noted that the THECB reviews the current programs when it reviews new proposals (including number of students admitted, diversity, external funding, number of publications, and graduation rates). Each new proposal submits an annual approach and UTSA is accountable for the numbers in the proposal. It is critical that the projections be realistic (as opposed to best case) and that the information is consistent. Responding to Dr. Emeka Nwaeze's question, Dean Flannagan would be happy to meet with interested Doctoral Program Committees. Dr. Sherer asked about the impact of a hiring freeze on faculty. Dean Flannagan explained that the THECB sends notice to the University which then responds. She further explained that she anticipates future review of master's programs and expects that the review specified in the Handbook of Operating Procedures will be satisfactory. She does not anticipate a problem for UTSA given a robust review of our programs. A list of the current doctoral programs at UTSA was requested at the Administrative and Agenda Committee (Attachment C of the Agenda). It should have included the PhD in Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning.

C. Secretary (Jim Dykes)

Dr. Jim Dykes referred to the membership list for Graduate Council Committees (Attachment D of the Agenda). He thanked Dr. Kim Kline for her work on the Nominating Committee and thanked Dr. Kim Bilica for joining the Graduate Programs and Courses Committee. He also noted the five remaining vacancies: two on the Academic Policy & Requirements Committee (a Graduate Council representative from the College of Business and a Graduate Council representative from the College of Liberal and Fine Arts), one on the Graduate Program Evaluation Committee (from the College of Business), one on the Graduate Programs & Courses Committee (from the College of Architecture), and one on the Membership Committee (College of Architecture).

D. Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses (Gabriel Acevedo)

Dr. Gabriel Acevedo explained that the 2011- 2013 Graduate Catalog Revision Schedule (Attachment E of the Agenda) was redistributed in order to highlight important dates in red. His committee will review the draft copy at both the 1604 and Downtown campuses. He will update the Graduate Council of progress in the Spring and we will vote on Chapters 1- 6 at our April 6 meeting.

E. Membership Committee (Scott Sherer)

Dr. Sherer presented the list of 26 applications for Special Members of the Graduate Faculty (Attachment F of the Agenda). He noted a typographical error in Dr. Shatha Dallo's listing (Biology). His committee unanimously approved all applicants. All have earned the terminal degree in their area. The entire list was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council.

Dr. Sherer reminded members that the application forms are available for download from the Graduate School website and that they should be submitted by February 15th for committees of Spring graduates. Dr. Cantú suggested starting early since the review process does take time.

F. Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (Howard Smith)

No report

G. Committee on Academic Policy and Requirements (Andrey Chabanov)

No Report

IV. Unfinished Business

Dr. Cantú reminded the Graduate Council that the issue of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for international students had been tabled last year. She opened the floor to discussion. Dr. Acevedo noted that, as a result of Sociology hiring a new faculty member, the issue of TOEFL had become relevant to some new international students. They were admitted, but were not aware of the English Language Assessment Procedure (ELAP) and the subsequently required course work. Dr. Howard Smith explained that students admitted with a TOEFL score between 500 and 600 are required to pass either the ELAP test or specific English for International Students (EIS) course work in oral communication, reading, and writing. Each course has a cost and may be repeated. He noted that there had been discussion of combining the three courses into a single course, but some students only need development in one of the proficiencies. He further noted the state requirement that Teaching Assistants have proficiency in English. Dean Flannagan explained that ELAP is only relevant for international students who meet the TOEFL criterion for admission, but fall below the higher criterion for avoiding ELAP. She suggested that interested programs could meet with Jim Kelim (ESL Office Coordinator). Dr. Acevedo stressed the importance of admitted students understanding the impact of scoring in the middle range of TOEFL scores. Dr. Cantú noted that newly admitted students should be aware of the lack of funding for the EIS in order to avoid an unexpected expense.

Dr. Smith referred to the list of Research and Statistics Courses (Attachment G of the Agenda). Taking advantage of the expertise of colleagues in other departments is

especially important given our Quality Enhancement Plan for quantitative scholarship. Beyond adding other courses to the list, Dr. Kline noted that the same course could be taught in very different ways by different instructors. Dr. Sherer noted that there might be few students qualified to take some of the listed courses in other areas due to prerequisites. Dr. Ram Tripathi agreed with respect to courses in Management Science & Statistics and Dr. Mary Kay Houston-Vega recommended removing two courses (SWK 5303 and 5313) due to their required background. Updates to the list should be sent to Ginger Hernandez in the Graduate School.

V. New Business

Dr. Can Saygin asked if software could be made available to track students admitted provisionally. Currently it is up to the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR) to check across multiple databases (including BANNER, a College list, and a Graduate Program Committee list). Software could simplify the procedure. Dr. Smith noted that we can put a hold on registration if there are outstanding parking tickets or unpaid fees. It might be possible to have a similar procedure for provisions of admission. Dr. Bilica noted that having too many holds can lead to course cancellations. Dr. Can suggested that a flag sent to the GAR would really help. Dr. Cantú asked the Graduate School to check on possibilities.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.