

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

September 6, 2011

**University Room, BB 2.06.04
3:30 p.m.**

Present: Gabriel Acevedo, Mark Bayer, Kimberly Bilica, Rena Bizios, Lorenzo Brancaleon (for Andrey Chabanov), Michael Cepek, Youn-Min Chou, William Cooke, Samer Dessouky, Sara DeTurk, Sedef Doganer, Jim Dykes, Antonio Figueroa, Dorothy Flannagan, Rhonda Gonzales, Myung Ko, Rebecca Krohn, Donald Kurtz, Michael McDonald, Michael Moyer, Clarissa Ozuna, Patricia Quijada, Mahdy Saedy, Joel Saegert, Patricia Sanchez, Elaine Sanders, Can Saygin, Johnelle Sparks, Jennifer Stone, Garry Sunter, Ram Tripathi, Lila Truett, Jay Vega, John Wald, Honjie Xie, Weining Zhang

Absent: David Akopian, Santiago Daydi-Tolson, Branco Ponomariov

Excused: Richard Hartley, Goutham Menon, Sharon Navarro, Drew Stephen

Visitors:

Gregg Michel Chair Department of History

I. Call to order and taking of attendance.

Dr. Kim Bilica called the September 6, 2011 meeting of the Graduate Council to order at 3:31 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes (Kim Bilica)

The Minutes of the May 3, 2011 meeting were approved.

III. Reports

A. Council Chair (Kim Bilica)

Dr. Bilica appreciated Dr. Kim Kline's excellent service as Chair of the Graduate Council and, noting Dr. Kline's expertise in Communication, said that a high bar had been set. Dr. Bilica welcomed both the first time, new members and the repeating "multiple-termers" and thanked both for their dedication. Using a PowerPoint presentation, she explained that the Graduate Council is advisory to the Faculty Senate and subsequently to Vice-Provost Dorothy Flannagan (Dean of the Graduate School) and Provost John Frederick (Vice President for Academic Affairs). Information about the Graduate Council and our *Bylaws* are posted on the Graduate School website:

http://www.graduateschool.utsa.edu/faculty_and_staff/detail/the_graduate_council .

The Graduate Council is "action-based" with regard to all matters relating to graduate education at UTSA. Our Bylaws describe our four standing committees: Committee on Graduate Programs & Courses (which evaluates new program proposals), Membership Committee (Dr. Scott Sherer was thanked for his long term and outstanding service as Chair of the committee that reviews applications for Special Membership of the Graduate

Faculty and Adjoint Faculty), Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (which has transitioned to new procedures for reviewing graduate programs), and Committee on Academic Policy & Requirements (which receives charges to review aspects of graduate education). Dr. Bilica emphasized the importance of the work of the committees and encouraged members to volunteer to serve by contacting Dr. Elaine Sanders (Nominating Committee).

Dr. Bilica noted that she would typically discuss the outcomes of the Faculty Senate meeting in her report, but that the Faculty Senate will not meet until Thursday. She attended the Executive meeting and will keep the Graduate Council up to date.

B. Dean of Graduate School (Dorothy Flannagan)

Dean Dorothy Flannagan welcomed everyone, including first-time members and returning members. She reported having a good summer (except for breaking her ankle) and is enthusiastic about the new academic year. Current enrollments are looking good, with increases in applications as well as enrollments. There are over 700 doctoral students enrolled this Fall (up from 656 last Fall), including 11 in the new PhD in Mechanical Engineering program. Enrollments at the Master's level have increased by over 200 students (from 3550 to about 3760). That represents an overall increase of almost 6%; but, more importantly, there is a 14% increase in new students. The UTSA Strategic Plan calls for an increase in the proportion of graduate students rather than just an increase in number. The goal is to increase graduate enrollments faster than undergraduate enrollments so that graduate enrollments rise to 15% of total enrollments by 2016. As of last Friday, we were close to reaching that goal: 14.46% of enrollments were degree-seeking graduate students (no special, non-degree-seeking students were included in that percentage). While graduate student enrollments have increased, admission criteria have been raised for undergraduates.

In addition to the new PhD program in Mechanical Engineering, there are two proposed programs under review: the PhD in Translational Science (a joint program with the UTHSCSA and the UT Austin College of Pharmacy) and the PhD in Psychology. The PhD in Translational Science proposal had a site visit in June. The reviews were very positive and the proposal was approved by the UT Board of Regents at its August meeting. It is on the Agenda for the October meeting of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). If approved, the program would still need to be reviewed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The hope is for a January 2012 implementation and there is a list of interested students. The PhD in Psychology proposal had a site visit in late July. The comments of the reviewers (received in mid-August) were positive. Dean Flannagan is working with the Department with regard to recommendations about the curriculum. The response is due October 1st with a goal of being on the January Agenda of the THECB. If approved, the program could be implemented in Fall 2012. The positive reviews of these proposals were very good news, especially given the difficult political climate.

Dean Flannagan discussed program development. There is a new MS proposal in Advanced Materials Engineering with courses in both the Colleges of Engineering and Business. It is currently being reviewed by the Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses. Also, we have had a very positive outcome with regard to a report sent by the THECB last February on "low performing programs". Such programs are not graduating an average of two doctoral students per year or five Master's students per year. In response to a question by Dr. Patricia Sanchez, Dean Flannagan explained that it is a 3-

year rolling average. At UTSA, four programs were listed. Two were concentrations in the MBA program and were easy to justify as exceptions. The other two might have been shut down without good justifications. With the full support of the Deans and Provost, considerable time was spent preparing those justifications. They were submitted in June and UTSA was informed about a week and a half ago that the THECB found them compelling. Those programs received a 4-year extension to increase enrollments.

In short, Dean Flannagan is optimistic. Graduate enrollments are up, new program proposals are under review, and current programs are developing. Her office is happy to provide additional information. In response to a question by Dr. Weining Zhang, Dean Flannagan reported that 68 Doctoral degrees were awarded last year (an increase of eight over the previous year).

C. Secretary (Jim Dykes)

Dr. Jim Dykes discussed the list of Graduate Council representatives for the 2011-2012 academic year (Attachment A of the Agenda). Dr. Michael McDonald will represent Management and Dr. Michael Cepek will represent Anthropology (replacing Dr. Carolyn Ehardt who is on leave at NSF). Dr. Lorenzo Brancaleon will substitute for Dr. Andrey Chabanov this Fall as the representative for Physics and Astronomy (Dr. Chabanov is on faculty leave this Fall). We still need representatives for Educational Leadership & Policy Studies and for Art & Art History.

Dr. Dykes thanked Dr. Elaine Sanders for her excellent work on the Nominating Committee. Referring to the list of Standing Committees (Attachment B of the Agenda), he noted how members of the Graduate Council have volunteered to serve on our committees. Each committee needs at least three members of the Graduate Council and that requirement has been met. Elections are on-going to elect Chairs. We also have five vacancies, so members were encouraged to recommend colleagues to Dr. Sanders. In response to questions by Dr. Sara DeTurk, Dr. Dykes explained that the Chair of each committee is elected from amongst the Graduate Council members on the committee and that all members of the Graduate Faculty (including Department Chairs and programs under review) are eligible to serve on our committees.

D. Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses (No Chair)

Dr. Bilica noted that there is no report and that a Chair needs to be elected.

E. Membership Committee (No Chair)

Since the Chair has not yet been elected, Dr. Sanders (a member of the committee) gave the report. She noted that the Committee recommended 116 new Special Members of the Graduate Faculty last year (up from 92 the previous year) and an additional 12 Adjoint Faculty. All were approved by the Graduate Council. To help students seeking graduation over the Summer, two Special Members were recommended by the Committee and approved by the Graduate Council via email. Referring to Attachment C of the Agenda, Dr. Sanders indicated that the Committee recommends 13 new Special Members and four new Adjoint Faculty. All hold the terminal degree in their area. Both lists were approved.

F. Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (Sharon Navarro)

Dr. Bilica moved that the Bylaws be suspended to allow Dr. Gregg Michel to join in our discussion of the review of the MA in History program. The motion was

approved. Since Dr. Sharon Navarro has a class conflict, Dr. Bilica presented the schedule of graduate programs being evaluated (Attachment D of the Agenda). Noting the transition from the old process of graduate program review to the new process of reviewing all departmental programs (both graduate and undergraduate), she explained: a) all old process reviews will be one-year follow-ups, b) two Departments (Modern Languages & Literatures and History) have been reviewed to date under the new process, and c) five Departments will be reviewed this year under the new process.

Dr. Bilica presented the MA in History program review (Attachment E of the Agenda). The site visit by Drs. Curtis Ellison and Wendy Venet was in June. She noted that Dr. Michel is the Chair of History and that Dr. Rhonda Gonzales is the Graduate Advisor of Record and is a member of the Graduate Council. For program strengths, she cited the enthusiasm of the students and quality of the faculty (whose scholarship is moving toward “Tier 1”). Another strength is student progress: a) the years-to-degree is now 2.97 years (18% faster than in 2005) and b) graduates are transitioning to very good doctoral programs. Dr. Bilica described two weaknesses / challenges. First, the heavy faculty workload interferes with faculty scholarship. The 136 graduate students are supported by 19 tenured / tenure-track faculty and 21 non-tenure track faculty. The teaching ratio of 36:1 exceeds the department’s goal of 25:1. In addition to hiring new faculty, the outside reviewers recommended tightening admission standards and having Teaching Assistants lead “breakout” discussions. Second, the outside reviewers recommended a programmatic “focus”.

Dr. Michel noted that being one of the first in a new process is always challenging, but described the review as a very worthwhile, year-long process. He explained that the outside review was very consistent with the internal report. There are on-going discussions about enrollments, faculty, and “focus”. In particular, the program is intensely discussing how this program (undergraduate and graduate) is different from other programs, the role of American Studies, and how the Department can help the University move toward Tier 1. Dr. Rena Bizios asked about the enrollments and graduation rates since the program started. Dr. Michel explained that the program started in the 1980s, that about 10- 15 students graduate each semester, and that total enrollments are about 135 students (including part-time students and students who may take off a semester). Dr. Zhang asked about Teaching Assistants. Dr. Michel stated that students are hired as Reader Graders, but not Teaching Assistants. Dean Flannagan noted that different programs adopt different approaches, but that “breakout” sessions may open new opportunities for students. The report was unanimously accepted.

G. Committee on Academic Policy and Requirements (No Chair)

No Report.

IV. Unfinished Business

No Unfinished Business.

V. New Business

Dr. Bilica explained that she had received a question about voting rights as specified in our *Bylaws*. She quoted our *Bylaws*:

I.5. Voting Rights

The right to vote at department-level Graduate Faculty meetings and in elections of the membership to the Graduate Council is granted to Members of the Graduate Faculty.

Individual departments may allow Special Members to participate in Graduate Program Committees, but Special Members may not vote in department-level Graduate Faculty meetings nor in elections to the membership of the Graduate Council. At meetings of their appropriate Graduate Program Committees both Members and Special Members have the right to vote.

Then she asked whether we need to clarify our *Bylaws*. She explained that there are departmental differences in how the Graduate Program Committees are comprised. Due to shifting numbers of non-tenure track faculty, the Special Members now outnumber the Members of the Graduate Faculty in some departments. Dr. Bizios suggested that such an important issue should be referred to the Academic Policy and Requirements Committee for consideration. The Graduate Council unanimously agreed. Dr. Bilica charged the Committee with considering the voting rights issue as described in our *Bylaws*. That was added to the Committee's charge to consider the role of the Graduate Council in the new process of program review. Dr. Sanders requested members to decide where they want to help graduate education at UTSA by bringing their talent to our standing committees.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:29.