

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS  
December 5, 2017

JPL ASSEMBLY ROOM  
4.04.22  
3:30-5:00PM

**Present:** DeBrenna Agbenyiga, Michael Bauman, John Bartkowski, Janis Bush, Ian Caine, Guadalupe Carmona, Michael Cepek, Fengxin Chen, Jonathan Clark, Lucila Ek, Jurgen Engelberth, Kandyce Fernandez, Ruyan Guo, Judy Haschenburger, Shamsad Khan, Myung Ko, Wing Chung Ng, Chris Packham, Ricardo Ramirez, Heidi Rueda, Elaine Sanders, Page Smith, Drew Stephen, Liang Tang, Firat Testik, Ram Tripathi, Victor Villarreal, Melissa Wallace, HungDa Wan, Zijun Wang, Alistar Welchman

**Absent:** Ernesto Alva-Sevilla, Lauren Bednarski, David Martinez-Prieto, Cyrus Melendez, Erica Sosa, Corey Sparks, Weining Zhang

**Excused:** Jackie Cuevas, Fathali Firooz, Doug Frantz, Shane Haberstroph, Ritu Mathur, Libby Rowe, Marie Tillyer

**Visitors:** Chad Mahoud

I. Call to order and taking of attendance  
• **Meeting called to order at 3:37pm**

II. Reports

A. Council Chair (**Mike Baumann**)

- Consent Agenda
  - Approval of Minutes
  - Special Membership Applicants (Attachment A)
  - Spring 2018 meetings
    - ❖ *No objections: consent agenda is approved*
- Review: process for removing programs
  - ❖ *2.35, 2.38 of the HOP provide overview of program changes*
  - ❖ *Can't make changes to program without review. A separate review process is required.*

*For example:*

  - *Required credit hours*
  - *Required courses*
  - *Changing level of courses*
  - *Can't change associated degree*
  - *Closing a program*
    - *Program abandonment has a slightly more complicated process, especially if it could impact tenured and tenure-track faculty*
      - *Program review committee*
      - *Faculty impacted have opportunity to respond in writing*
      - *If no impacted faculty, review proceeds as regular*

- If students still enrolled, must provide a teach-out plan to cover those students to give those students a reasonable opportunity to graduate.
- Question: Can you add a non-required course? YES
- Dean: There will be a program closing that will need to be reviewed by GC in February

B. Dean of Graduate School (**DeBrenna Agbéniga**)

- SACSCOC
  - Accreditation
    - ❖ Accreditation 2020 – Preparing for
    - ❖ Transfer of Credit: Catalog vs SACSCOC – we currently say it must be from an accredited institution, but SACS does not require accreditation
      - Undergraduate is taking accreditation requirement out
        - Only rationale is consistency with SACS
      - Exec Committee of GC does not believe a similar standard should be adopted by the graduate school
        - Does everyone agree? YES
  - Admissions
- 19-21 Catalog revision schedule
  - ❖ Documentation of timeline available from Graduate School
  - ❖ November 2017 – April 2018 timeline
  - ❖ April 27 2018 deadline for updates/changes
- Grading (+/-) System
  - ❖ Some use it, some don't. Even if program drops, faculty can technically still use it.
  - ❖ Creates a notable number of situations in which students go on probation because of the +/- grading system
  - ❖ Discussed among the deans over the summer; proposal to eliminate +/-
  - ❖ Mike Baumann: Because no A+ points, more opportunities to lose points than gain points; GARs should discuss with departments and come back prepared for a vote
  - ❖ Comment: +/- offers a better distribution and provides more encouragement for students when they are improving
  - ❖ Comment: A leaning towards +/- system in some departments; more reflective of distribution of students; need to consider within departments and then discuss with GC
  - ❖ Comment: Many faculty like the variability; grading on four point system forces faculty member to explicitly assign +/- rather than doing so inadvertently
  - ❖ Comment: Big fan when it comes to variability with undergraduates; need to make argument carefully that the experience is different at the graduate level; be sure to sort out arguments at the undergrad vs graduate level
  - ❖ Questions: What are the options?
    - Eliminate +/-
    - Keep +/-
    - Change grading scale in some meaningful way to equalize upside opportunities
  - ❖ Comment: Need to consider changing description of grading scale to more accurately reflect what the grad means
- Embark discussion
  - ❖ Students are applying
  - ❖ Training on the new system has begun; people have starting signing up
    - It's a quick training; Dec 6, Dec 7 and Dec 8
  - ❖ Everything has been migrating over

- ❖ Will look at additional training dates, if necessary
- ❖ Question: Can GARs receive this training? YES, this is for everyone, chairs, admins, GARs, etc.
- ❖ Question: Who should be trained? Anyone working with the application system should be trained, including admins, chairs and GARs; notice was sent to Deans, Chairs on December 1<sup>st</sup>
- ❖ Notice sent out will be sent to the GC following this meeting

C. Secretary (**Jonathan Clark**)

D. Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses (**Victor Villarreal**)

E. Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (**Vacant**)

F. Committee on Academic Policy and Requirements (**Elaine Sanders**)

- Emeritus Faculty
  - ❖ As it stands emeritus faculty are permitted to be on doctoral committees, but are not encouraged to chair committees
  - ❖ Does the Graduate Council have any opinions about that policy?
    - Should they be allowed to serve as chairs?
    - How long should you be considered academically qualified following retirement?
      - Currently no policy about time since retirement
  - ❖ The policy is a little bit in flux, but its probably going to be a "blood bath"
  - ❖ Rules come from the HOP (Senate), Our piece has to do with service on doctoral committees
    - Currently treat them just like special members
      - Special members can be co-chairs (not solo chair)
      - HOP currently encourages participation, but not chair, doctoral committees
  - ❖ What would we like to do differently? Need to open the conversation
  - ❖ Committee: Emeritus should not be subject to time requirement post-retirement; emeritus faculty have earned recognition and made significant contributions to the institution
  - ❖ Question: Can you only become emeritus in the year you retire? NO, there isn't a specific policy with respect to when it is conferred
  - ❖ Question: If they have been out a few years and want to come back and serve on committees, would they still have to go through special membership process?
  - ❖ Question: If they have already gone through the emeritus process, does GC need to review as special membership, in addition?
  - ❖ Comment: Policies were not written with these situations in mind. We need to review and decide whether these situations require special considerations.
  - ❖ Comment: Special membership is considered every three years, what do we consider in that review? Degree, terminal, dean has to sign off; usually if department faculty sign off, the committee follows suit
    - If person granted special membership, very unlikely to be denied upon renewal. Academic qualifications not a major consideration.
  - ❖ HOP does not require emeritus faculty to serve on committees or teach
    - If not doing those things, special membership is not even a consideration

- ❖ *Key Issue: If not taught a class and have not been on committees and show up and want to do so; or time has passed, and now they want to be made emeritus to serve on committees and teach.*
  - *Two separate issues*
- ❖ *Key Issues:*
  - *Do we give emeritus automatic treatment for a while?*
  - *Does it depend on when they became emeritus?*
  - *Do we want to give them a special term, apart from what we provide to special members?*
- ❖ *Comment: There is consideration to change the HOP; qualifications to change; opportunity to let the faculty senate know our perspective on how the HOP should/shouldn't be changed.*
  - *Might want to wait to discuss/decide until the HOP updates pass through the senate*
- ❖ *Comment: We clearly do not do things right in this university. Growing pains. Emeritus process is much simpler at other universities. Getting emeritus based on contributions to university, not an application for a new job. But once emeritus, need to go through special membership review. We need a more logical policy and review process.*
  - *The policy might become even more stringent based on the HOP changes*

III. Unfinished Business

- None

IV. New Business

- None

V. Adjournment

- **Meeting adjourned at 4:34pm**