

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO  
DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL  
ACTION MINUTES  
ORDER OF BUSINESS  
FEBRUARY 2, 2016

**Assembly Room**  
**JPL 4.04.02**  
**3:36-4:54pm**

**Present:** DeBrenna Agbenyiga, Richard Armendariz, Mike Baumann, Mehdi Beygahi, Whitney Chappell, Jonathan Clark, Alberto Cordova, Dennis Davis, Heather Edelblute, Kevin Grant, Vaidya Gundlupet, Ruyan Guo, Seok Kang, Adolfo Matamoros, Lucinda Nevarez, Sharon Nichols, Chris Packham, Elaine Sanders, Ram Tripathi, Lila Truett, Hongjie Xie

**Absent:** Curtis Brewer, Kinitra Brooks, Michael Cepek, Derrick Brian, Yusheng Feng, Doug Frantz, Shane Haberstroh, Jingqi Li, Rongjie Liu, Marcela Lopez, Margarita Machado-Casas, Barbara McCabe, Catherine Nolan-Ferrell, Drew Stephen, Liang Tang, Joshua Thurow, Daphne Villarreal, Jennifer Woods, Weining Zhang

**Excused:** Rahman Azari, Youn-Min Chou, Sharon Nichols, Corey Sparks, Marie Tillyer

**Visitors:** Richard Boon, Guadalupe Carmona-Dominguez, Mari Cortez, Karen Daas, Lance Lambert, Fernando Martinez, Lee Mason, Elizabeth Pate

- I. Call to order and taking of attendance  
The February meeting of the Graduate Council was called to order at 3:36 pm by Dr. Mike Baumann, Council Chair.

- II. Reports

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

- Consent Agenda
  - i. Approval of Minutes
  - ii. Special membership applicants (Attachment A)

Dr. Baumann extended an opportunity for members to remove items from the consent agenda for discussion. No one chose to remove items. The consent agenda items were approved.

Dr. Baumann gave a brief update from Faculty Senate about the campus carry legislation. It seems unlikely that we will have gun free classrooms. This decision cannot be left to individual professors. The process is still ongoing to determine the gun-free zones.

- B. Dean of Graduate School (**DeBrenna Agbenyiga**)

- Update on Spring Enrollment  
Dr. Agbenyiga provided tentative numbers on graduate enrollment prior to census date. The numbers are similar to last year. There were 3259 Masters

students last spring and 3200 this spring; 749 doctoral students last spring and 708 this spring. Doctoral applications appear to be on par with last year as well.

- **Revisions for Catalog 2017-2019**  
The process will start soon. Associate Deans will have a memo with timeline and instructions for using the CourseLeaf system. The Dean is encouraging departments to remove the untaught courses from the system.
- **Update on VIP Application**  
Changes are being made to make the program a better experience for our students. These include changes in dates and process. Associate Deans have information about the new nomination form and timelines.
- **Update on Decision Desk**  
This is the new online application system for UTSA. Associate Deans are sharing information with colleges about the process. Trainings for the system are being offered to colleges on a rolling basis through this spring. Refresher trainings will be offered next fall as well. This will eventually be a fully online (non-paper) reviewing process for admissions.
- **Update on Alvarez Endowment**  
New endowment from the Alvarez Foundation is now available (nearly 4 million dollars for graduate fellowships in science and engineering).  
In addition to this endowment, there will also be a tuition pool for doctoral students beginning in the fall (4 year funding possibilities).

C. Secretary (**Dennis Davis**)

- **Elections for GC Members for 2017-2019**  
Dr. Davis announced that departments with outgoing Council members need to hold elections in March so that a full roster of members for next year can be finalized before the semester ends. Announcements to department chairs will be sent at the end of the month.

D. Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses (**Kevin Grant**)

- **A motion to suspend the bylaws so that visitors can participate in the meeting was made by Dr. Baumann, seconded by Dr. Chris Packham, and passed unanimously.**
- **Certificate in Environmental Science Proposal**  
Dr. Grant gave an overview of the proposal, justification for the program, and committee's clarifications and critiques. He reported that the committee voted to recommend approval by vote of 7-0, 1 abstain. The committee's recommendation stands as motion to approve; seconded by Dr. Lila Truett; approved unanimously.
- **Master of Science in Geoinformatics Proposal**  
Dr. Grant gave an overview of the proposal, the department's justification, and the committee's clarifications and concerns. He reported the following committee vote to approve the proposal: 6-0, 1 abstain and 1 recused. The motion to approve the proposal was seconded by Dr. Elaine Sanders; approved unanimously by the Graduate Council.

- **Certificate in E-STEM Education Proposal**  
Dr. Grant gave an overview of the proposed certificate, the justification for the certificate, and the committee's clarifications and critiques. He reported that the committee voted to recommend approval by vote of 6-1, 1 abstain. A question was asked about one of the courses in the program (grant writing and service learning). Department representatives provided clarification for the Graduate Council. Another question was raised about encouraging collaboration among the various departments who have programs related to environmental issues. There was also a question about the proposed accreditation related to the certificate. A general comment was made to revise the process of certificate development to formalize collaboration and cooperation among departments. Dr. Baumann recommended that Dr. Grant and the committee discuss these procedural issues and questions when they meet.

The committee's recommendation to approve the certificate was seconded by Dr. Sanders and was approved by a vote of 19 in favor, 0 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

- **Certificate in iSTEM Education Proposal**  
Dr. Grant gave an overview of the proposed certificate, the justification for the certificate, and the committee's clarifications and critiques. He reported that the committee voted to recommend approval (7-0, 1 abstention). Clarification was provided by department members regarding the need for the program and the student population it would serve. A question was asked about the appropriateness of the program for students who are not currently in education working as STEM teachers. Another question was asked about what distinguishes interdisciplinary STEM education from STEM education. Department representatives provided clarification.

An online vote was conducted following the meeting. The proposal was approved by a vote of 22-0.

- **Certificate in Special Education Advocacy Proposal**  
Dr. Grant gave an overview of the proposed certificate, the justification for the certificate, and the committee's clarifications and critiques. He reported that the committee voted to recommend approval (7-0, 1 abstention). A question about the job market was asked and was clarified by a member of the proposing department.

An online vote was conducted following the meeting. The proposal was approved by a vote of 22-0.

E. **Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (Kinitra Brooks)**

- No Report

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

- **Update on Bylaws Review**

Dr. Sanders gave an update on the bylaws revision process being completed by this committee. A suggestion has been made that instead of only having members and special members defined in the bylaws, we need to have three groups of members: full members, special members who are participating, and special

members who are not participating. This breaks up the special members into two categories. This potential change will require conversations about what it means to be a participating member. Dr. Sanders will distribute a draft of the revisions of the bylaws in March so that we can have discussion and vote in April on the changes.

III. Unfinished Business  
None

IV. New Business:  
None

V. Adjournment  
• Meeting adjourned at 4:54pm