

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

**March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

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

**Present:** Gabriel Acevedo, Mark Bayer, Kimberly Bilica, Rena Bizios, Lorenzo Brancaleon (for Andrey Chabanov), Youn-Min Chou, William Cooke, Gloria Crisp, Santiago Daydi-Tolson, Jim Dykes, Dorothy Flannagan, Rhonda Gonzales, Myung Ko, Donald Kurtz, Sharon Navarro, Patricia Quijada, Joel Saegert, Patricia Sanchez, Elaine Sanders, Johnelle Sparks, Drew Stephen, Jennifer Stone, Garry Sunter, Lila Truett, John Wald, Honjie Xie, Jason Yaeger (for Michael Cepek)

**Absent:** David Akopian, Samer Dessouky, Sedef Doganer, Antonio Figueroa, Richard Hartley, Rebecca Krohn, Goutham Menon, Branco Ponomariov, Mahdy Saedy, Jay Vega, Weining Zhang

**Excused:** Sara DeTurk, Michael McDonald, Michael Moyer, Clarissa Ozuna, Can Saygin, Ram Tripathi,

**Visitors:**

Norma Guerra Chair, Department of Educational Psychology

Billie Jo Rodriguez Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology

Bridget Drinka Chair, Department of English

Sue Hum Assistant Dean of Assessment, College of Liberal & Fine Arts

**I. Call to order and taking of attendance.**

Dr. Kim Bilica called the March 6th, 2012 meeting of the Graduate Council to order at 3:34 pm. She introduced two visitors supporting the proposed Applied Behavioral Analysis Graduate Certificate (Drs. Norma Guerra and Billie Jo Rodriguez) and two visitors supporting the proposed Rhetoric and Composition Graduate Certificate (Drs. Bridget Drinka and Sue Hum). Dr. Bilica moved that the Bylaws be suspended to allow our visitors to address the Graduate Council. Her motion was unanimously approved.

**II. Approval of Minutes (Kim Bilica)**

The Minutes of the February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012 were approved.

**III. Reports**

**A. Council Chair (Kim Bilica)**

Dr. Bilica is awaiting confirmations of our Nominating Committee. It will be in place prior to our Administrative & Agenda meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>,

**B. Dean of Graduate School (Dorothy Flannagan)**

Dean Dorothy Flannagan reminded the Graduate Council of the Chancellor's Framework. More information will be forthcoming after a March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the University of Texas System, but they have currently drafted Guidelines for Graduate Students. Included in the Guidelines is a requirement for a Milestone Agreement Form.

It will be required for all new entering doctoral students. For now there is no parallel requirement for entering Master's students. She showed the current draft of the Guidelines for Graduate Students and a draft template of a Milestone Agreement Form (Attachment A). Dean Flannagan noted the importance of the Degree Completion Checklist. She further explained that draft Milestone template is designed to meet the requirements of the draft Guidelines, but that individual programs can tailor the form as needed (e.g.: specific requirements for publications and / or conference presentations) as long as the requirements of the Guidelines are met. The Milestones Agreement Form will need to be given to entering doctoral students in Fall 2012 and signed by them. Annual reviews with the student will also need to be conducted. A number of Graduate Council members (including Drs. Joel Saegert, Johnelle Sparks, and Myung Ko) noted the face validity of the forms, but asked about the purpose and scope of the forms. Dean Flannagan explained that most programs are already doing this, but we are required to document this procedure with the student's signature in order to explicitly inform new doctoral students of the program's requirements. It should help with retention and graduation rates for most students, as well as providing students with warnings and consequences if the requirements are not being met. A number of Graduate Council members (including Drs. Bilica, William Cooke, John Wald, and Rhonda Gonzales) asked about how binding the consequences are given three uncertainties: 1) the time required to make a new discovery, 2) the diligence of the advisor, and 3) the student's expectations about the time required to do a dissertation. Dean Flannagan explained that there will need to be adjustments in the annual reviews with input from the student, the advisor, and the Graduate Program Committee. This dialog should help the student.

Next Dean Flannagan discussed the Dietetics / Nutrition Program. She reminded us that Drs. Paige Smith and Zenong Yin joined our November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011 Graduate Council meeting. The program at UTHSCSA is being discontinued and progress is being made to move it to UTSA. There is now a draft Memorandum of Understanding that is expected to go forward next month for Fall 2012 implementation. While this fits under the category of an "administrative change" (a program changing its name fits under the same category), she will keep us up to date.

Finally Dean Flannagan provided an update on TOEFL scores for graduate students. Monica Rodriguez spoke with us about TOEFL scores at our April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 meeting. Dean Flannagan showed a table (Attachment B) comparing TOEFL and IELTS scores for 10 Texas Universities. At UTSA, the current paper-based TOEFL score for Doctoral admission (550) is in line with most other schools, but the Master's score (500) is lower than most. She reported that Dr. Julius Gribou (Executive Vice Provost and Senior International Officer for the Office of International Programs) had sent an email to other UTSA administrators about requesting that the UT System increase the Master's score. If approved, the Doctoral score of 550 would remain constant in the next Graduate Catalog, but the Master's score would be increased to 550. In response to a question by Dr. Honjie Xie, she expects that there may be a request to raise the internet-based TOEFL score for Master's admission to 79 (equal to our Doctoral score and consistent with most of the other Texas Universities in the table). While Dean Flannagan expects the request will be made, but she welcomes feedback from the Graduate Council. A number of Graduate Council members (including Drs. Gonzales, Gabriel Acevedo, and Patricia Sanchez) discussed the rationale for the request and individual differences between programs. Dean Flannagan noted that the Office of International Studies is the focus of problems that arise when Master's students struggle after being admitted with TOEFL

scores between 500 and 550. While no systematic study seems to have been conducted, anecdotal evidence exists for students requesting reduced loads and having difficulty teaching labs and writing articles. While some representatives reported on-going discussions of raising the requirement within their individual disciplines, it was noted that some faculty are concerned about the scores already being too high. Dean Flannagan will forward any feedback from Graduate Council members concerning the TOEFL scores.

**C. Secretary (Jim Dykes)**

Dr. Jim Dykes presented an updated list of Graduate Council representatives for Fall 2012- Spring 2013. Of the current 38 faculty representatives, 19 representatives are finishing their first year of their two-year term and will continue to represent their program next year. The Chairs of the other 19 Departments were asked to hold elections for representatives to serve from September 2012- May 2014. The same representative may be elected to serve again. The new Department of Entrepreneurship and Technology Management (housing the MS in Management of Technology program in the College of Business) was asked to hold an election for our 39<sup>th</sup> faculty representative. Five Departments have already elected their representative. Ginger Hernandez is coordinating the election of student representatives (one per College) who serve one-year terms. The results of all elections will be reported at our April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, when we will elect our Chair for the 2012 / 2013 academic year. The Faculty Senate will review our choice of Chair at its April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. We will elect our Secretary and Parliamentarian at our May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Dr. Dykes thanked Dr. Elaine Sanders (our nominating committee) and Ginger Hernandez for their outstanding work.

**D. Committee on Graduate Programs and Courses (Can Saygin)**

Dr. Bilica noted that Dr. Can Saygin (who was unable to attend the meeting) has been very busy with his committee. Two members of the committee presented graduate certificate proposals.

Dr. Sparks presented the Applied Behavioral Analysis Graduate Certificate proposal (Attachment A of the Agenda). She reported that the Department had been very responsive to the questions raised by the committee. The 15-hour certificate is designed to provide theoretical background and skills to meet the requirements of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. The certificate program is expected to help students from a large geographic area (west Texas, northern Mexico, and New Mexico) who currently have limited access. Only three Texas Universities offer this training; the closest being in Austin and Houston. Being housed in the Department of Educational Psychology, no additional FTE or funding is required. The committee recommended approval of the proposal. Drs. Guerra and Rodriguez responded to questions asked by Drs. Bilica, Acevedo, and Sanchez. None of the courses are on-line. There is a big demand in clinical and school settings for students certified by the BACB. While there is not a specific cultural component, culture is incorporated in multiple courses. The proposal was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council.

Dr. Gonzales presented the Rhetoric and Composition Certificate proposal (Attachment B of the Agenda). The 12-hour certificate will be housed in the Department of English, but will be open to graduate students across the University. Students have voiced a demand for this certificate for five years and some have left UTSA to enroll in rhetoric and composition programs in San Marcus and Kingsville. Dr. Gonzales noted the 20 page writing sample required with the application. The committee recommended

approval of the proposal. In response to a question by Dr. Xie, Dr. Hum explained that some certificates are 12-hour certificates and others are 15-hour certificates. The proposal was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council.

**E. Membership Committee (Elaine Sanders)**

Dr. Sanders presented the list of 18 applicants for Special Membership in the Graduate Faculty (Attachment C of the Agenda). The list was unanimously approved by the Graduate Council. Dr. Sanders began a discussion of the application process. She cited examples of departments not showing due diligence in completing the applications (including the curriculum vitae not matching the applicant, requesting graduate teaching when the purpose was to serve on a thesis committee, and the applicant completing the form rather than the Chair of the Department or Graduate Program Committee). The Membership Committee will meet after Spring Break and draft a memorandum with instructions on completing the forms and asking for care in doing so. Drs. Bilica, Sparks, Gonzales, Drew Stevens, and Rena Bizios engaged in a discussion of the process. The 3-year rule on renewal is in the Graduate Council Bylaws, but the process might be streamlined for renewals and for retired UTSA faculty. That would help programs with a large number of Special Members. Also Dr. Bilica will work with Ginger Hernandez to draft a set of Questions and Answers to help the Graduate Advisors of Record. One example would be defining “adjoint”. Dr. Bilica noted that the information for the Graduate Advisors of Record is based on current policy and will not change policy.

**F. Committee on Graduate Program Evaluation (Sharon Navarro)**

No report

**G. Committee on Academic Policy and Requirements (Joel Saegert)**

No report

**IV. Unfinished Business**

None

**V. New Business**

Dr. Sparks noted that she had received emails and phone calls from doctoral applicants who had received rejection letters from the Graduate School. Drs. Ko and Gonzales also reported having received more calls than usual. It would help if the Graduate Advisors of Record were given advance warning. Dr. Sanchez suggested a wording change in the letter. The rejection of a doctoral applicant based on “not a match” would be less blunt than “did not meet requirements”.

**VI. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:40.

## Attachment A

### DRAFT

#### Guidelines for Doctoral Students

##### Academic Advising

Upon entering a doctoral program, a student may choose or be assigned an advisor based on the area of interest. The advisor must be a member of the program department.

A *Milestones Agreement Form* should be provided to the student listing deadline dates for completion of major milestones. Each doctoral student must agree in writing that they understand the expectations of the program, including the time limits in place to encourage satisfactory progress and the consequences associated with failing to maintain satisfactory progress.

General requirements: The *Milestones Agreement Form* should provide a clear outline of the program plan by year. The program plan must include the following major milestones.

- When reviews with an advisor are to be conducted
- When qualifying exams should be taken
- When the dissertation proposal should be completed/Candidacy
- When dissertation committee members should be solidified
- When the dissertation should be completed/Graduation
- When the exit survey should be submitted (SED?)

Advising responsibilities include annual reviews between student and advisor to ensure continued good academic standing and satisfactory progress.

- In early stages
  - Suggestions on choosing courses
  - Review of the program plan to determine if modifications are necessary
  - Clarification of the timetable for completing any remaining course requirements and examinations
- In later stages
  - Dissertation checklist
  - Assistance on assembling a dissertation committee

##### Degree Completion Checklist

1. Maintain active student status by registering for courses every fall and spring semester
2. Submit your *Milestones Agreement Form* to your advisor before the end of your first semester. If modified during your program, submit revised forms before your next semester's registration.
3. Schedule and complete required qualifying exams
4. Select the Chair and members for your dissertation committee
5. Prepare and present your dissertation proposal
6. Apply for Advancement to Candidacy
7. Enroll in required dissertation hours and complete your report
8. Complete your oral examination
9. Submit required documentation to the Graduate school for completion and graduation.

## Milestones Agreement Form

### Program Name

This form is provided for the purpose of informing students about the academic milestones that they will be expected to reach in order to earn their Ph.D. (or Ed.D.) degree as well as when they are expected to complete these milestones. Students are expected to reach each milestone within the specified time period in order to make satisfactory progress through the program. Students who are not making satisfactory progress may lose funding, be placed on academic probation, or be dismissed from the program.

#### Academic Advising

Upon entering the XXX program, all students will be assigned an advisor. The advisor will be a member of the program department. *Program specific information about how advisors are assigned or may be changed should be added here.*

Academic advising includes the following elements that are designed to ensure that students remain in good academic standing and make satisfactory progress through the program:

- Annual (or more frequent if program desires to make more frequent reviews a requirement) reviews between student and advisor. The results of this review will be included in the program's annual doctoral progress report.
- Suggestions on course selection
- Review of Degree Plan to determine if modifications are necessary
- Clarification of the timetable for completing any remaining course requirements, examinations, and other requirements
- Assistance in understanding the requirements for successful completion of dissertation
- Assistance on assembling a dissertation committee

*Other program-specific elements may be included here*

#### Requirements for all Students in the XXX Program

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Expected Time of Achievement</u>
Review of Student's Progress with (advisor, Doctoral studies committee—program Specific method should be noted here)	Annually (or every semester, as determined by program)
Successful completion of qualifying exam	Program-specific expectation
Coursework Successfully Completed	"
Dissertation Committee Appointed and Approved	"

Dissertation Proposal Completed and Approved “

Dissertation Completed and Approved By Committee “

Dissertation Accepted by Graduate School “

Exit Interview Completed and Submitted To SED “

*Other program-specific requirements may be included here.*

**Degree Completion Checklist for Students**

- Maintain active student status by registering for courses every fall and spring semester (*may also include summer depending on program-specific requirements*)
- Submit your signed *Milestones Agreement Form* to your advisor before the end of your first semester
- Complete all required organized coursework
- Schedule and successfully complete required qualifying exams
- Select the Chair and members of your dissertation committee
- Prepare and successfully present your dissertation proposal
- Apply for Advancement to Candidacy
- Enroll in required dissertation hours and complete your dissertation
- Successfully complete your defense of your dissertation
- Submit required documentation to the Graduate School for completion and graduation

I have read this form and have had the opportunity to discuss the information contained in it with my advisor. I understand the academic milestones that I am expected to reach in order to successfully complete the XXX program, as well as the expected timeline for completing these milestones.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Attachment B

	<b>TOEFL (Internet Based)</b>	<b>TOEFL (Paper Based)</b>	<b>IELTS</b>
<b>University of Texas at San Antonio</b>			
English Language Assessment Program (ELAP)	100	600	7
Master's Admission Qualification	61	500	6.5
Doctoral Admission Qualification	79	550	6.5
University of Texas at Austin	79	550	6.5
Texas A&M University	80	550	6
University of Texas at Dallas	80	550	6.5
University of Texas at El Paso	61	500	N/A
University of Texas at Permian Basin	79	550	6.5
University of Texas at Arlington	79	550	6.5
University of Texas at Brownsville	61	500	N/A
University of Houston	79	550	6.5
University of North Texas	79	550	6.5