

**GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
APRIL MEETING MINUTES
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON**

DATE: Thursday, April 5, 2018

TIME: 2:30 pm

PLACE: San Saba, University Center

PRESIDING: Peter Kroll, Chair of the Graduate Assembly

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Ali Abolmaali; Ard Anjomani; Karabi Bezboruah; Matthew Brothers; Jinny Choi; Courtney Cronley; Bradley Davis; Lauri John; David Jorgensen; Soo-Hong Kim; Peter Kroll; Prajal Mishra; Diane Mitschke; Sophia Passy; Edmund Prater; Barbara Raudonis; Panos Shiakolas; David Sparks; Mahmut Yasar; Bijan Youssefzadeh.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING: Pranesh Aswath; Duane Dimos; Raymond Jackson; Kelly Visnak.

I. Call to Order

- The meeting of the Graduate Assembly was called to order at 2:35pm by chair, Dr. Peter Kroll.

II. Introduction

1. Dr. Kroll welcomed all the members and stated that this is officially the last meeting of the GA in 2017-18.

III. Consideration of Minutes

- The minutes from February 1, 2018 Graduate Assembly were unanimously approved.

IV. Dr. Duane Dimos, Dean of Graduate School, Vice President for Research

1. Reported that some UTA students were awarded the NSF Graduate Research Fellowships (GRF), and wondered what makes for a compelling graduate research proposal?
 - i. Dr. Aswath stated that students getting NSF GRF must be in their senior year of undergraduate study. The GRFs are student driven. The proposals need to come from the student. Dr. Aswath cited the example of UC Riverside, where there is a yearlong course for all seniors to write GRF proposals. After getting the GRF, students can choose to go wherever they want, but they generally stay with the University for the mentoring.
 - ii. Dr. Kroll stated that grooming, mentoring, and personal statement of students are important.
 - iii. Dr. Brothers said faculty need to encourage the students to start working for the GRF.
2. Dr. Dimos said that his office is tracking student applications. Some colleges such as Business, Science, and Engineering are most affected with 25% reduction in applications. Suggestion is to quickly process applications through rolling applications.
 - i. Dr. Ali Abolmaali said that the yield rate could be increased, which is at 30% in Engineering. Colleges/ Departments need to admit them soon through probationary procedures at first and then once all documents are in and the application is complete, admit them.
 - ii. Dr. Dimos stated that is has become competitive.
 - iii. Prajal Mishra pointed out that retaining students is also important. Focus should be on converting the undergraduate to graduate students.
3. Dr. Dimos also reported that his office was obsessively tracking PhD graduation this year. Fellowships have been provided to incentivize students.
 - i. Dr. Jackson noted that it is getting difficult to find applicants for the awards.

- ii. Dr. Anjomani pointed out that in CAPP, incentives for faculty was discussed, and asked if there were any for faculty to mentor students over the summer. Dr. Dimos said that the onus is on faculty to encourage students to finish.

V. Report from Graduate Studies – Dr. Joe Jackson

1. No report

VI. Report of the President of the Graduate Student Senate – Prajal Mishra

1. Mishra reported that a new structure change was voted in the Student Senate. The Student Senate has 3 committees and will have representatives from each 8 Colleges. Graduate students are into inter-university collaborations, to make the UTA brand visible, and well as bring in resources.

- i. Dr. Dimos asked if there are impediments to inter-university collaborations?
- ii. Mishra asked if there were any official resources to help with such collaborations?
- iii. Dr. Aswath said that collaborations tend to happen organically, with faculty collaborations. The University is quite open to have those collaborations happen. Other options are to have organized collaborations, and a MOU, which is nothing but a way to make it happen. Students are encouraged to make these initiatives. Contact other graduate Senates and try to have Symposia, build relationships, find what kind of resources and activities they have, and work together.

VII. Committee Reports

A. *Committee on Program Creation, Edmund Prater*

- MS Learning Analytics; Certificate Learning Analytics: This is a new program in Data Learning. Very specific niche. Committee had some questions, which were addressed. Committee approved but need some language change. Proposal is to accept the Certificate under constraints of the new changes, which will be communicated soon.
 - o Certificate approved unanimously by the GA members.

B. *Committee on Program Revision, Barbara Raudonis*

1. No report

C. *Committee on Graduate Students Diane Mitschke*

1. No report

VIII. Old Business

- Revision of HOP Policy 4-200 (*Barbara Raudonis*)
 - Committee met on Feb 2018, and reviewed policy 4-200. Introduced a Preamble in the beginning of the policy statement. Dr. Raudonis asked for discussions on the Preamble and comments from the GA will be taken to the committee for more revisions. Changes to the policy document were specifically related to the new Preamble. The Committee tried to give responsibility to individual units of the College. Stated that this is a work in progress.
 - GA members asked about references to only “tenured” faculty in the Preamble. The Committee Chair stated that the tenured folks are more likely to be involved in these, discussions and the tenure-track (TT) who are successful have also been taken into account. Departments are also responsible for how they engage their new tenure track faculty.
 - Dr. Jackson stated that there are titles for part-time faculty. As it is written, it is open to any faculty of professorial rank. The responsibilities of fulltime non-tenure track (NTT) faculty will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Eg, Senior lecturers will be Professor of Instruction.

- Dr. Abolmaali said that the professorial rank is not clear. Dr. Jackson stated that being broad enables flexibility.
- Dr. Dimos said that the HOP should be about establishing policies and not procedures, and that Colleges, based on this policy, should establish the procedures.
- Dr. Ashwath considered possible consequences. Historically, program development was in the purview of the tenure track and tenured faculty. We are now changing the policies of Professor of Practice and Professor of Instruction sitting at the same table with tenured faculty and discussing programs. This could have unintended consequences.
- Dr. Jackson stated that this is a national debate as it questions – “what is tenure?” There could be a threat but there haven’t been any disruptions in any programs after having this policy in place.
- Dr. Dimos said that as departments are intending to have NTT faculty in place, we are trying to provide options to colleges and departments to have such policies to cover teaching and advising.
- Dr. Panos asked - When a tenured faculty goes through tenure track, why does the NTT faculty do not go through the same hiring process?
- Dr. Dimos stated that this depends on the responsibilities assigned by the Dean.
- Dr. Ashwath said that the number of NTT would likely be more than TT faculty soon.
- Dr. Kroll suggested more edits to the policy document based on the GA members’ comments and discussions. So, the proposal is to make the edits and discuss it in the next year.
- Dr. Prater moved to vote the document and move it to the next level
 - Discussion – if NTT at some point, outnumber the TT faculty, then they can set policy for the units; and the TT faculty can delegate decisions to the Graduate Studies.
 - Vote – 15 in favor; 3 opposed. The document was approved and moved to the next level.

IX. New Business

Election of new officers for AY 2018/19

- Dr. Kroll read out the rules of election. There were 3 nominees - Diane Mitschke, Matthew Brothers, and Edmund Prater.
- Election results:
 - Chair: Dr. Diane Mitschke
 - Chair Pro-Tem: Dr. Edmund Prater
 - Secretary: Dr. Matthew Brothers

X. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 4:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karabi Bezboruah

Secretary, Graduate Assembly

College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs

04/13/2018