

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

DATE: Thursday, April 4, 2019

TIME: 2:30 pm

PLACE: San Saba, University Center

PRESIDING: Diane Mitschke, Chair of the Graduate Assembly

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Ard Anjomani; Matthew Brothers; Jinny Choi; Courtney Cronley; Bradley Davis; Soo-Hong Kim; Jon Leffingwell; Subhrangsu Mandal; Edmund Prater; Panos Shiakolas; Jared Kenworthy; Seyedali Abolmaali; Eusebius Small; David Sparks

GUESTS ATTENDING: N/A

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING: Pranesh Aswath

I. Call to Order

- The meeting of the Graduate Assembly was called to order at 2:32pm by chair, Dr. Diane Mitschke.
Introduction of members and ex officio members of GA
- Each member introduced his / herself.

II. Consideration of Minutes

- The minutes from Thursday February 7, 2019 Graduate Assembly meeting were approved with no further comments or suggestions.

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

- Dr. Dimos was not present so no report was provided from his office.

IV. Vaibhav Dhamangaonkar, President of Graduate Student Senate

- Vaibhav introduced himself as the new President of the Graduate Student Senate. He informed the Graduate Assembly that this semester (the spring semester) that the student governance is meeting as the student council. He mentioned that one of the primary concerns currently circulating in the Graduate Student Senate / Student Council is the issue about how soon the GTA and GRA offer letters are being sent to the students. He also mentioned that the next meeting for the Graduate Student Council was scheduled for April 17th and he would provide more information in the fall.

V. Old Business

A. Committee of Program Revision

a. *Proposal to alter the HOP regarding baseline representation of Schools and Colleges on the Graduate assembly* (Presented by Edmund Prater): There was an overall consensus that schools may move from 2 – 3 voting members. However, there were some questions raised that need further consideration. 1) Is moving from 2 to 3 members permanent or can this be reduced back to 2 members in the event that the student body representation and other metrics are reduced? 2) If they do drop down to 2 members from 3 is this permanent or can this also be increased back to 3 members? At the time of the meeting there were no hard answers to these questions and for thought needs to be given before changes are made to the HOP. The committee voted to approve these changes pending approval from Joe Jackson.

B. Committee of Graduate Students

a. *Policy Recommendations related to undergraduate student enrollment in graduate courses* (Presented by Matt Brothers). In February this committee was tasked to discuss the merits of allowing an undergraduate student to take graduate level courses and use those graduate courses for their

undergraduate degree plan. Matt stated that the committee proposes that undergraduate students should be allowed to take graduate courses and apply those credit hours towards their undergraduate degree. Below are some considerations that the committee recommended.

- An undergraduate student must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 to be eligible to take graduate level courses. Individual departments and programs have the ability to set additional requirements above this minimum threshold. For example, departments/programs may require a higher minimum GPA in a specific related undergraduate course or group of courses.
- The recommendation for enrollment of an undergraduate student in a graduate level course may be submitted by the student's Undergraduate Advisor. However, the final decision regarding enrollment is ultimately made by the Graduate Advisor, who must assess course and seat availability. Graduate students will be given priority over undergraduate students when the course and seat availability are limited.
- A maximum of 12 graduate semester credit hours may be applied to the undergraduate degree.
- Graduate level courses allowing undergraduate enrollment will be limited to 5000 level courses.
- In cases in which an undergraduate student has taken graduate level courses and then enters a related graduate program at UTA, required graduate level courses in which the student earned a grade of B or better should not be retaken. However, the student must meet the minimum required hours of the graduate program (hours are not waived).

There was some discussion about the merits of allowing this. Pranesh – bought up the issue of not being able to waive hours. One possible option that was discussed is to create a 4000 level version course of the graduate level class. Pranesh recommended that we table the discussion and then meet with the undergraduate assembly in Fall 19 to come with a consensus.

VI. New Business

A. *Committee on Program Creation, Dr. Bradley Davis*

a. MS of Education in Special Education: Bradley Davis presented the case for MS of education in special education. Overall he stated that the proposal was well developed and well detailed. One major strength was the design to train teachers to form individualized training programs for special needs children. Also it allows for individuals with BS degrees who are not currently teachers to get a certificate to do this teaching. There were no questions or concerns from the committee and the MS program was unanimously approved.

b. Minimum GPA Requirement for Fast-Track of Students in the Math-BME Program: This is a continuation of discussion that was had in the February GA meeting regarding a fast-track for a BS Math and a MS in Biomedical Engineering. The faculty involved from Math and Biomed Engineering appealed the previous decision. Diane started the discussion by referring back to the minutes that stated that the fast-track rule has a minimum GPA of 3.3. However, the counter argument posed by math and BME is that 3.0 is a precedent in other colleges (even though they are in violation) and therefore, why is this proposal held to a different standard as opposed to being permitted to move forward with a 3.0 minimum criteria? Another argument for the 3.0 minimum was that the historical data from other UTA fast track programs indicates that these students are doing well even with a 3.0. It was also suggested that 3.0 GPA should be ok because these undergrad students with 3.0 are known individuals and we should try to keep them whereas is they were not able to enter the program they may seek opportunities at other institutions. Furthermore, we have

a history with these students; whereas currently the university is trying very hard to recruit internationally and these individuals are not individuals that we know – so they come with more inherent risk. It was also mentioned that the program as currently proposed has a minimum GPA of 3.3 for selected courses. These courses include 15 hours of course work that are “content related” and that historically are predictive of success in the graduate program. A counter was raised by Courtney Cronley in that just because other programs are non-compliant (in allowing for a 3.0 minimum GPA) is this really a good rationale to lower the standards for this program? The recommendation is to look at the University policy of 3.3 for fast track programs in the Fall GA meeting. However, in this meeting the committee voted on providing a waiver for this fast-track program with the requested minimum 3.0 GPA. Diane called the vote to allow a waiver (even though it is against the University policy). All in favor of granting the appeal = 15 yes. 3 opposed. 0 abstentions.

- B. Election of New Chair Pro Tempore: There was a unanimous vote to elect Dr. Seyedali Abolmaali as the Chair Pro Tempore for the next AY (19-20) to replace Edmund Prater.

VII. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 3:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,
R. Matthew Brothers, PhD
Secretary, Graduate Assembly
Department of Kinesiology / College of Nursing and Health Innovation.
4/19/2019