

**Graduate Assembly Meeting
Meeting Minutes from Thursday October 8, 2020**

Thursday, October 8, 2020

2:30 pm

Virtual via Teams

Submitted by Patti Parker

PRESIDING: Seyedali Abolmaali, Chair of the Graduate Assembly

MEMBERS ATTENDING: Patti Parker, Anjomani Ardeshir, Ivonne Audirac, Matthew Brothers, Monee' Carter-Griffin, Dennis Chiessa, Candice Henking [graduate student council]; David Jorgensen, Jared Kenworthy, Cynthia Kilpatrick, Rebecca Mauldin, Cedric May, Kathryn Pole, Regina Praetorius, Panos Shiakolas, Bin Srinidhi, Kamesh Subbarao, Mahmet Yaser, Jiyeon Yoon, Jennifer Zhang, Yi Zang

GUESTS ATTENDING: Ramgopal Venkataraman, Rebecca Lewis, Sara Ridenour, Melissa Reardon, Kimberly Tate, Sameer V Pasunuva, Houg Jiang

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ATTENDING: Joe Jackson; Pranesh Aswath, Jim Grover, Amber Smallwood, Nicole Fisher

Call to Order - The meeting of the Graduate Assembly was called to order at 2:31pm by chair, Dr. Abolmaali Seyedali

I. Introductions

Welcome by the Chair

II. Members and Committees Introduced

Committee on Graduate Students—Dr. Matthew Brother

Committee on Program Revision—Dr. Jared Kenworthy

Committee on Program Creation—Dr. David Jorgensen

III. Consideration of Minutes

Minutes from April 2, 2020

Motion called to approve previous notes. Dr. Kamesh Subbarao made a motion to approve; Dr. Anjomani Ardeshir seconded the motion. The motioned was approved.

**IV. Provost Dr. Pranesh B. Aswath Provost and Vice president for Academic Affairs, Ad Interim
(Bulleted items below were not on original agenda)**

- Provost Aswath opens by thanking all for the hard work getting the fall semester off to a great start; he reports a minimal number of Co-Vid 19 cases and general graduate student satisfaction is at a good level
- International students taking overseas courses is going well
- He brings to the table the idea of stackable post bachelor's certificates—that might eventually result in a degree—should this fall to the new program creation committee
 - Discussion then followed:
 - Favorable feedback/comments from faculty from CO Business and CO Astrophysics

- Faculty bring up that still have to meet graduate program admission standards prior to being admitted for a certificate; Dr. Panos Shiakolas comments that stacked certificates should not be an avenue to bypass the rigorous admission requirements of the UTA graduate school
- Dr. Joe Jackson discussed with the committee the rules related to certificates—being 15 hours or less [to avoid having to seek approval at a system level] and then to define—by program the reason for the graduate certificate—whether or not such could be stackable
- Discussion ensued regarding whether there should be an agnostic policy for stackable certificates—this would not be something that all colleges would have to initiate
- Discussion ended with turning the information over to Dr. Jackson’s office for further refinement—then this topic will be turned over to program creation committee

**V. Dr. James Grover, Dean of Graduate School, Interim Vice President for Research
(Bulleted items below were not on original agenda)**

- Dr. Grover reflected upon the last academic year—given CoVid-19 and how we have had to change how we do things
- We had a record year of PhD graduates and a record year of research—we are well on our way to being the next Teir-1 research institution
- In the upcoming year, there will be less academic funds for dissertation fellowships
- Dr. Grover had 4 suggestions to consider:
 - Task force to look at the impact of CoVid-19 on graduate students
 - Current status
 - Impact on progress
 - Recruiting of graduate students
 - How to best support under-represented groups that are n graduate school
 - Graduate Student Survey to graduate students—much like the current one that is currently given to the undergraduate students
 - Evaluate how we can support our graduate students going forward
 - “Flexibility” to admissions due to CoVid-19—so we want to continue these?
- The committee felt that all of these suggests would fall under the purview of the graduate students committee—Dr. Grover is to forward his thoughts with bullet points to the chairman and to Dr. Brothers—chairman of the graduate students committee

There are a limited # of these available. Details are in the proposals.

VI. Candiss Henking, Graduate Student Council

Working on how to remain viable and to help all graduate students—exploring events, retention, engagement, philanthropy and volunteerism.

- Dr. Cedrick May asked if Candiss could forward the committee a copy of the Graduate Student Council charter—she agreed to get that to the chair

VII. Old Business

1. Pass/Fail Option for Students due to COVID-19

- i. 10-15 percent of undergrad courses are still using Pass / Fail option
- ii. Many students in graduate school benefitted and there seemed to be an increase in retention
- iii. Provost Aswath brought up the possibility of having a percentage of classes that students could take [outside of their major] that students could take and not be in jeopardy of lowering their GPA
 1. Dr. Rebecca Mauldin voiced interest in this option
- iv. Dr. Joe Jackson reminded the committee that there is nothing to prevent a graduate program to revisit this option—as it can be program specific—and this requires no change in graduate assembly policy

2. Admissions Provisions for Applicants due to COVID-19

- i. The fall of international students was made up by local students
- ii. All standardized tests are still waived through fall of 2021
- iii. TOEFL and IELTS—Duolingo is being accepted for international students—more helpful for admission decisions; will be used for GTAs for now

VIII. New Business

1. Stacking Certificates—see above discussion brought to the body by Provost Aswath
2. Committee on Program Revision—no new business
3. Committee on Graduate Students—no new business
4. Committee on Program Revision:
 - i. Certificate in Graduate Business Analytics—motion to approve the certificate by Dr. Rebecca Mauldin; second motion by Dr. Matt Brothers—motion unanimously approved
 - ii. From the School of Social Work—Certificate in Policy Leadership; Certificate in Organizational Leadership and a Certificate in Community Leadership—all 3 certificates have the support of the program revision committee—however, the chairman felt that the wording of the admission requirements needed to be a bit more clear.
 1. Dr. Patti Parker made a motion that all 3 certificates be approved—given the word clarification of the admission requirements section be updated and submitted to the chairmen; Dr. Abolmaali concurred. The body unanimously approved the 3 certificates with this qualification.

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 pm.

Teams Meeting:

Chat feature should be used for questions or comments during meeting.

Transcribed and respectfully submitted at 22:11 pm 10.12.2020 by Patti A Parker, PhD, RN