

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2020

Graduate Council members in attendance: virtual Teams meeting – Francis Beckwith, Nicholas Benson, Maria Boccia, Erica Bruce, Debra Burleson, Timothy Burns, Gerald Cleaver, Sandi Cooper, Theodore Croy, Scott Cunningham, Meghan DiLuzio, Eva Doyle, Jan Evans, Kristi Feutz, Scott Gibson, Marian Gillard, Deirdre Fulton, Kendra Gagnon, Venessa Grandjean, Ian Gravagne, Monique Ingalls, Dave Jortner, Forest Kim, Ryan King, Dorothy Leidner, Christine Limbers, Diane Loeb, Joaquin Lugo, Timothy McKinney, Lacy McNamee, Chuck North, Dan Peppe, Van Pham, Alexander Pruss, Eric Robinson, Rob Rogers, Richard Russell, Mark Sepanski, Susan Sherman, Jaeho Shim, Stephen Silverstein, Doug Smith, Eunjee Song, Rishi Sriram, Joe Stubenrauch, Joseph Taube, Tim Thomasson, Michael Trakselis, Michael Walker, Laurie Wilson, Elizabeth Wittliff, Matt Wood

Guests and substitutes in attendance: Mark Bryant, Michael Richards, Joe Yelderman

Graduate School deans and staff in attendance: Larry Lyon, Beth Allison Barr, Steve Driese, Chris Rios, Anna Henderson, Sheila Dooley, Sandra Harman, Tosha Hendrickson, Alanna Martinez, Alana Schaeper, Laura Sepanski, Sherry Sims.

Unable to attend: Meg Cullar, Jim Ellor, Neil Fleming, Scott Gibson, Bill Hockaday, Julie Holcomb, Bob Kane, Timothy Kayworth, Stacy McCracken, Kimberly McCray, Marlene Neill, Suzanne Nesmith, James Nogalski, Linda Plank, Kevin Shuford, James Stamey, Tony Talbert.

Graduate School Dean, Larry Lyon, greeted group. Dr. Beth Allison Barr led the invocation. Dean Lyon welcomed newest GPD members and each introduced themselves.

The minutes from April 3, 2020 were presented for review – no changes noted.

International Admissions – Dr. Rios spoke of challenges with full-time summer enrollment for international students. Thanks to Mark Bryant for his help addressing that challenge. Opened to any questions/comments. He and Mark Bryant can assist with any last-minute student changes.

Q. If a student gets their visa in the middle of the term, can they come?

A. No, because they are a new student. The soonest they can come to campus is Spring Semester 2021. A continuing student having trouble coming back to campus can return to the university online.

If there is a new degree program, (Mark Bryant) can assist with facilitating approval as an official degree for international students seeking that degree. He is available via email for additional questions.

Admissions Exceptions – Dr. Rios discussed minimum thresholds for admissions. There are exceptions to those requirements which the Graduate School will accept so long as reasons are justified. SLATE allows for comments to be reviewed when considering students who fall below minimum threshold. Dean Lyon noted that graduate transfers are increasingly common with inter-collegiate athletes.

Project 8.24/Covid-19 Taskforce – Dean Lyon met with General Counsel and Provost regularly in preparation of classes starting and Covid-19. Plans were discussed with faculty. Actions will shift accordingly to address concerns and needs and to reduce risk with internships, laboratories, and in-person teaching for both graduate students and faculty. This is a time of considerable change and stress. Dean Lyon asked to be mindful and sensitive to this unique situation.

Q. Outbreak of Covid-19 cases in the dorms at other universities is concerning. We need to be attentive to what's happening at Baylor.

A. Dr. Barr lives on campus and noted that students are compliant in the dorms and is encouraged by what she's seen thus far.

Changes in Commencement Ceremonies – Dean Lyon advised that Commencement is now under direction of Marketing. Colleges and Schools are asked to have their own hooding ceremony and he requested that GPDs become an advocate for delivery of a meaningful way to celebrate the achievements of their graduation.

New Student Online Orientation & New TOR training – Dr. Barr introduced launch of Online Orientation and asked GPDs to encourage their students to watch the videos. This is an introduction to the university and to Baylor leadership, as well as providing campus resources and Covid-19 information.

Graduate Residential Academic Mentoring Program & OVPR External Funding Specialists – Dr. Barr announced the first 3 Residential Graduate Academic Mentors. They will be a great resource for students. TOR modules that students complete for online trainings will provide introduction to Baylor policies.

Q. Do teaching assistants need to take orientation?

A. No. Only a Teacher of Record is required to complete modules.

Q. Can information be released to those who are not TAs?

A. Not at this time, partly because it involves manually entering a great deal of data in order for non-TA's to access.

Q. GPDs need leadership and guidance with Ignite and its challenges paying graduate students.

A. Please address concerns to Dr. Rios or Dr. Barr. Manual processes and student classifications within Ignite pose challenges. Dr. Rios is in communication with Ignite team and anticipates systems resolution in January 2021.

Dean Lyon continued the meeting with topics related to research doctoral programs.

Academic Analytics Alumni Placement announcement – Dr. Barr is working with Academic Analytics so that information such as alumni location and job details will be gathered and reported in their portal. GPD access of the Placement Data is ongoing. Please review information and report any inaccuracies.

Q. Can details be exported from Academic Analytics?

A. Yes.

Postdoctoral Fellowship Program – original start date 2023-24. Due to Covid-19, Dr. Barr launched a modified program to encourage students to complete faster degrees and provide stop gap.

Three Year Reviews – formally Exit Reviews, will provide recruitment, enrollment, and placement data.

External Reviews – Dr. Driese reported that External PhD Assessments were completed in departments of Environmental Science, Chemistry and Biochemistry, and Information Systems. Each department provided high quality External Review teams. The next assessments scheduled for this fall will be conducted if safe to do so in person.

Associate Dean's Position (STEM) – Dr. Driese announced his upcoming retirement. Those interested in the open position should reach out to him or the Graduate School. Training a replacement is planned for Fall 2021 with a start date of Spring 2022.

Dean Lyon gave closing remarks. Meeting dismissed.

A recording of today's Grad Council meeting is available using this [link](#).