

Minutes of the Graduate Council

Date of Meeting: October 16, 2019

The October 16, 2019 meeting of the Graduate Council was called to order at 1:21 p.m. in the Multipurpose Classroom and Laboratory Building (MCL), Room 505 by Dr. Gretchen Busl, Chair of the Graduate Council.

Attendance:

- **Members:** Erika Armstrong, Kevin Becker, Sneha Bharadwaj, Lee Brown, Gretchen Busl, Pei-Fen Chang, Paula Clutter, Jordon Fuchs, Barbara Gray, Diane Myers (substituting for Randa Keeley), Dundee Lackey, Hyuk-Jin Lee, Mindy Menn, Sandra Murdock, Joel Muro, Pushkala Raman, Suzanne Sears, Becky Spencer, Mandy Stewart (substituting for Annette Torres Elias), Laura Trujillo-Jenks, Ann Wheeler, Philip Yang, Gwen Weatherford, Wayne Brewer
- **Guests:** Korie Hawkins, Robert Lothringer, Linda Rubin, Sully Saucedo, Donna Scott Tilley

MINUTES APPROVED:

- One amendment to the September minutes was offered: In the report from guest speaker, Bobby Lothringer, which was written in the minutes as “Lacks Progress,” needs to be changed to “Lack of *Adequate* Progress.”
- The amended meeting minutes for September 18, 2019 were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Report from Dr. Claire Sahlin:

Dr. Sahlin shared goals that she has set for the year: 1) to encourage innovation in graduate education at TWU, 2) to foster graduate student success, 3) to maintain strong graduate student enrollment and increase enrollment where there is capacity, and 4) to support and strengthen the research culture for graduate students.

Dr. Sahlin reported on Fall 2019 enrollment:

- This fall graduate enrollment increased overall by approximately 100 students. It was up by 110 students on the master’s level and down by 11 students on the doctoral level.
- There is a total graduate enrollment of 5,142 (out of 15,839 total students in the university; approximately 32% of the student population are graduate students).
- 4,151 of the graduate students are master’s students, and 991 are doctoral students.
- Semester Credit Hour production (the number of credit hours in which graduate students are enrolled) on the graduate level declined by approximately 1400 credit hours.
- Although we have a greater number of graduate students this year, more of them are enrolled on a part-time rather than a full-time basis.
- Declines in Semester Credit Hour production generally results in a decline in funding to the university.

- As a university and Graduate School, we need to continue to be mindful of these enrollment trends and do what we can to increase enrollments where there is room for growth.
- The Admissions staff and Dr. Sahlin are happy to provide assistance and to work with you.
- Graduate Recruitment Enhancement funds are still available. Contact Dr. Sahlin if your graduate program is interested in applying for funding to support recruitment initiatives.
- Korie Hawkins is glad to meet with individual graduate programs to provide assistance and to develop strategies with you for recruiting students.
- Best practices include the following:
 - making admission decisions quickly and early,
 - following up quickly and regularly with prospective students, and
 - taking time to make personal phone calls to prospective students and those who have been admitted. These phone calls may be from professors, department chairs, graduate students, and/or staff members in order to build relationships and encourage prospective students to apply or enroll.
- Please continue to push for Spring 2020 enrollment; the current number of applications and accepted students for the upcoming spring semester is trending downward over where we were last year at this time. It is also not too early to push for fall 2020.

Dr. Sahlin made the following additional announcements:

- **October 25:** a conference at TWU, “Fostering Future Faculty,” is open to 25 GTAs throughout the university with nationally known speakers and sessions on topics related to mental health issues in the classroom, overcoming imposter syndrome, grading equitably and efficiently, and challenging student behavior. Online registration information is found on the website on the flyer.
- **November 4:** panel discussion open to all graduate students, organized by Dr. Jessica Gullion, “Making the Most of Your Faculty Mentor Relationships” in ACT 301, Dallas 8720, Houston 5305, 4:00-5:00 p.m. (topics: aligning faculty/student research, sharing expectations for the mentor role and the student role, negotiating authorship, setting and maintaining personal and professional boundaries).
- **Thesis/Dissertation Boot Camp:** registration **deadline is October 25th** for boot camp in mid-December. Please encourage dissertation and thesis students to participate.
- **3MT Competition:** being rescheduled for early spring semester. Please watch for an announcement of the specific date and encourage thesis/dissertation students to participate.
- **New Research Assistant Program for Work-Study Students:** undergraduate and graduate students who qualify for work-study funding are eligible to be a research assistant for a faculty member. 75% of the students’ pay will be provided by the federal government through Financial Aid; 25% of the students’ pay provided by the faculty member or faculty members’ department. See the flyer and contact Dr. Diana Elrod, Director of the Center for Student Research, for more information. This program is being

piloted this fall semester in Biology and will be available across the university in the spring semester.

- **Graduate Student Council:** seeking additional student representatives. Refer interested students to Cheryl Erickson, President.
- **Student Regent:** applications for TWU student regent will be accepted online from November 11 through December 13. The position is open to graduate students (as well as undergraduate students). Please encourage graduate students to apply. More information is found on the TWU website.

Report from Dr. Ruth Johnson:

Dr. Johnson is in the process of putting together a list of resources for graduate students and reaching out to departments and programs to see what support services they offer to graduate students. Dr. Johnson would like to create and publicize a list of resources that can help graduate students to the same extent as undergraduate students. She is attending a seminar on coordinating support for graduate students in Atlanta on November 11 and 12. She will report ideas and suggestions she receives at the next meeting of the Graduate Council.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Dr. Linda Rubin, University Ombudsperson:

Dr. Linda Rubin described her role as university ombudsperson—to serve as a helpful resource for all faculty members on the Denton, Dallas, and Houston campuses. She assists faculty members with whatever problems or concerns they may have, while adhering to four basic principles: confidentiality, neutrality, independence, and informality.

Dr. Donna Scott Tilley, Vice Provost for Research:

Dr. Donna Scott Tilley presented strategic plan updates and initiatives for enhancing the culture of research at TWU, including goals for increasing funded grants as well as the quality and visibility of research. She also presented information about the guiding core values, collaborators, and recently added research resources for faculty and students. Dr. Tilley also described some examples of recent research successes.

SUMMARY REPORTS FROM 2019-20 STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Executive Committee – Dr. Gretchen Busl

- The Graduate Council is still in need for a master's student representative. Please send any nominations to Dr. Busl.

Research Committee – Dr. Sneha Bharadwaj

- There is no report at this time from the Research Committee.
- On behalf of the Graduate Council, Dr. Sneha Bharadwaj attended the Research Advisory Council meeting, which discussed how to increase meaningful engagement of TWU research resources.

Academic Standards Committee – Dr. Ann Wheeler

- The committee is meeting on Wednesday, October 23 to review the university’s policy of a minimum of 90 hours for doctoral programs. The committee is also planning to review the criteria for full and associate graduate faculty membership as well as discuss whether or not there should be a policy specifying the maximum number of credit hours per semester in which a graduate student may enroll.

Academic Programs Committee – Dr. Laura Trujillo-Jenks

- There is no report at this time from the Academic Programs Committee, which will have many new or revised degrees to review before next month.

Membership Committee - Dr. Kevin Becker

- The motion carried to vote in members listed below. The faculty members will be recommended to Provost Carolyn Kapinus, and the Provost’s Office will send out letters of approval.

**Graduate Council Recommendations for Full and Associate Graduate Faculty Status
October 2019**

Name	Component	Recommendation
Anderson, Mary E.	Chemistry and Biochemistry	Full
Dutton, Catherine	Family Sciences	Full
Fredrickson, Rebecca	Teacher Education	Full
Griffiths, Megan	Visual Arts	Full
Halverson, Colleen C.	Nursing	Associate
Herbstrith, Julie C.	Psychology	Full
Johnson, Olinda P.	Nursing	Associate
Lee, Hyuk-Jin	Library and Information Studies	Full
Lin, Suh-Jen	Physical Therapy	Full
McMahan, Sarah K.	Teacher Education	Full
Merritt, Linda	Nursing	Associate
Morris, Michael	Psychology	Full
Oquin, Charli Lois	Nursing	Associate
Runnels, Ratonia C.	Sociology and Social Work	Associate
Snider, Sharla	Family Sciences/ Early Childhood Education	Full
Sourdout, Ludovic A.	Teacher Education	Full
Torres Elias, Annette	Reading	Full
Washmon, Gary	Visual Arts	Full
Woo, Jennifer	Nursing	Associate

OLD BUSINESS:

- Please volunteer or ask others in your departments to volunteer if they would like to serve on a committee to study and make recommendations related to compensation for graduate assistants. Names should be sent to Dr. Gretchen Busl.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The Graduate Council needs to create another committee to review the graduate education policies found on the Graduate School website. The committee should create a timeline for reviewing the policies and begin reviewing the policies this year. Volunteers may submit their names to Dr. Busl.
- Danita will be out of the office for an indefinite time due to family emergency. Contact Dr. Ruth Johnson or others in the Graduate School, if you need assistance or have any questions.

ADJOURNMENT: 2:03 p.m.