

**Minutes of the Graduate Council**  
**Date of Meeting: September 16, 2020**

The September 16, 2020, meeting of the Graduate Council was called to order at 1:16 p.m. via Zoom by Dr. Gretchen Busl, Chair of the Graduate Council.

**ATTENDANCE:**

- **Members:** Armstrong, Erika, Becker, Kevin, Bharadwaj, Sneha, Brewer, Wayne, Brown, Lee, Busl, Gretchen, Clutter, Paula, DelloStritto, Rita, Fehler, Brian, Fuchs, Jordan, Goh, Hui-Ting, Johnson, Ruth (ex-officio), Keele, Rebecca, Keeley, Randa, Lackey, Dundee, Lee, Hyuk-Jin, Manjunath, Sandhya, McAlister, Barbara, Menn, Mindy, Murdock, Sandra, Muro, Joel, Patterson, Mindy, Raman, Pushkala, Sahlin, Claire (ex-officio), Sellers, Suzanne, Smith, Theresa, Snider, Sharla, Torres-Elias, Annette, TrujilloJenks, Laura, Tucker, Wesley, Wheeler, Ann, Woods, Alisa, Yang, Philip, Young, Margaret
- **Guests:** Bush, Brandon, Hansen-Thomas, Holly, Hawkins, Korie, Lee, Jenna, Murphy, Lynda, Pickens, Noralyn, Saucedo, Sully, Scott, Gray, Senne, Terry

**MINUTES APPROVED:**

- The meeting minutes for April 15, 2020 were approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Report from Dr. Claire Sahlin:**

- Dr. Sahlin welcomed new and returning members. She provided an overview of the work of the Graduate Council, including responsibilities for policies, standards, and excellence of graduate education at TWU. She also summarized her responsibilities as well as those of the Associate Dean Ruth Johnson.
- Dr. Sahlin reported that Fall 2020 graduate enrollment numbers increased to a total of approximately 5,800 graduate students, which represents an increase of over 10%. Graduate students are now 35% of the total enrollment at TWU. She thanked all departments and programs as well as the Office of Admissions, including Korie Hawkins and Nikki Young, for their work in recruiting new graduate students.
- Dr. Sahlin reported that approximately 750 new graduate students participated in the virtual orientation in August. She acknowledged the work of the Office of Student Life in putting the new online orientation together in Canvas. She also reported on the online orientation for new Graduate Teaching Assistants and thanked the staff of Teaching & Learning with Technology.
- Dr. Sahlin reported that the Graduate Student Council is off to a strong start under the leadership of Shenavia Balcom, a doctoral student in Nutrition, and Vanessa Ellison, a doctoral student in Sociology.
- Dr. Sahlin reported on some of the activities that she anticipates that the Graduate Council will initiate or examine this fall, including streamlining the process of applying for graduate faculty status through Sharepoint, reviewing a proposed policy for

accelerated graduate programs, and forming an ad hoc committee on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in graduate education.

**Report from Dr. Ruth Johnson:**

- The Graduate School staff are working from both the office and home. They are available for any questions. There is always someone in the office Monday through Friday.
- OnBase training is available to anyone on Thursday, Friday, and Monday at 11 a.m. Contact me with the day when you would like to attend.
- Online training for Graduate Assistants is mandatory each fall; to date, there are approximately 180 students who have completed the GA training, 20 needing to retake it, and 30 still pending.
- TWU has adopted a new CRM, which is in the process of being developed for the university. Once the programming is complete, prospective graduate students will no longer need to apply through the Apply Texas website and will be able to apply directly through TWU's CRM.

**GUEST SPEAKERS:**

- Dr. Holly Hansen-Thomas, Vice Provost for Research and Innovation, reported on the activities and initiatives of her office.
- Jenna Lee, Interim Registrar, reported on the activities of the Registrar's Office.

**SUMMARY REPORTS FROM 2020-21 STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**Executive Committee – Dr. Gretchen Busl**

- Dr. Busl thanked the Executive Committee members for their willingness to serve again this year. Dr. Busl also welcomed the new Graduate Council members.
- Dr. Busl gave summaries of the work of two ad hoc committees that met last year.
  - Ad hoc committee on review of Graduate School policies
  - Ad hoc committee on graduate assistant compensation
- Dr. Busl informed the Graduate Council that the Membership Committee will need to vote for the chair. Dr. Kevin Becker has agreed to continue as Chair if voted upon. (After the meeting the Member Committee voted and approved Dr. Becker to serve as chair.)

**Research Committee – Dr. Sneha Bharadwaj**

- Dr. Bharadwaj provided an overview of the work of the Research Committee, which reviews applications for the following:
  - Graduate Council Award for Exceptional, Original Scholarship
  - Chancellor's Research Scholars

**Academic Standards Committee – Dr. Ann Wheeler**

- Dr. Wheeler provided an overview of the work of the Academic Standards Committee.
- The committee will be reviewing policy proposals for the following, in addition to any new requests:
  - Ad hoc graduate policies review
  - Graduate student compensation

### **Academic Programs Committee – Dr. Laura Trujillo-Jenks**

- Dr. Trujillo-Jenks provided an overview of the work of the Academic Program Committee, which includes
  - Reviewing proposed graduate programs
  - Reviewing significant changes to graduate programs
- The link to the new or revised graduate program workflow was provided during the meeting using the chat feature.

### **Membership Committee - Dr. Kevin Becker**

- Dr. Becker provided an overview of the work of the Membership Committee, which includes reviewing Graduate Faculty applications for Full and Associate status. (Expedited Associate Graduate Faculty applications for new tenure-track faculty as well as Temporary and Assistant Graduate Faculty applications go directly to the Dean of the Graduate School.)
- Dr. Becker announced that applications for Full and Associate Graduate Faculty, which are to be reviewed next month by the Graduate Council, are due on Friday, September 18, and then every month until April.
- This year the Membership Committee will be assisting the Academic Standards Committee with potentially revising the criteria for different levels of membership of graduate faculty.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- None

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Members of Standing Committees
  - The membership was reviewed, and no corrections were needed.
- B. Vote on Members of Membership Committee
  - The members of the Membership Committee were voted on and approved unanimously.
  - The nomination for the Membership Chair was voted on and approved after the scheduled meeting concluded.
- C. Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Graduate Education Ad hoc Committee
  - Dr. Claire Sahlin discussed forming a new ad hoc committee this year and provided a brief description of what the committee will be charged with doing: examining and assessing graduate school policies and graduate student experiences to identify areas where the Graduate School could enhance greater diversity and inclusion of graduate students of color, women, international students, and other minority graduate students.
  - She solicited volunteers needed for the committee and indicated that volunteers can also be faculty and graduate students from outside Graduate Council. Dr. Margaret Young supported the need for this committee. Dr. Randa Keeley, Dr.

Margaret Young, Dr. Sneha Bharadwaj, and Sandhya Manjunath volunteered to serve on the committee.

**ADJOURNMENT: 2:14 p.m.**