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Graduate Council Minutes

Graduate Council

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4-4-2013

## Graduate Council Minutes - April 4, 2013

Graduate Council

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## THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

April 4, 2013 Minutes

Present

Ambroziak, B.; Anderson, D.; Angelle, P.; Bemis, D.; Bernard, E.; Blalock, B.; Boder, E.; Brockett, R. (Chair); Broemmel, A.; Cano, L.; Cox, C.; Crook, R.; DeSensi, J.; Dodds, G.; Fisher, L.; Gao, Y.; Henegar, G.; Hinde, R. for Boake, C., Hodges, C.; Hodges, D.; Jackson, B. for Hall, C., Kania, S.; Kilpatrick, Y.; Leach, S.; Lee, J.; Luther, C.; Morrow, J.; Ohnesorg, S.; Parigger, C.; Preuss, N. for Marshall, S.; Reed, K.; Roman, M.; Skelton, T. for Sanford, A.; Spurgeon, S.; Staudt, M.; Stier, J.; Studer, J.; Thompson, D.; Walker, M. for Brewer, A.; White, C.

The Graduate Council meeting was called to order by Ralph Brockett, Chair, on Thursday, February 28, 2013, at 3:00 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

1. Minutes of the Preceding Meeting

The minutes of the February 28, 2013 meeting were approved as presented by the Graduate Council.

2. Committee Reports

Academic Policy Committee

Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair of the Academic Policy Committee (APC), reported on the March 14, 2013 meeting. (Attachment 1)

- The APC Committee developed a revision to the Defense of Dissertation Examination Policy that focused on providing direction for the Director of Graduate Studies in academic programs when remote participation is part of the thesis or dissertation defense and emergency situations. The policy change was approved by the committee and Ohnesorg presented the policy to the Graduate Council. The Council had concerns about the wording of final paragraph and sent the proposed policy back to the APC Committee for clarity. A protocol for phone calls to the Graduate School Office concerning emergency situations of defense of dissertation examination will be established.
- Ohnesorg presented information the Policy for Remote Participation in Oral Defenses. The Graduate Council approved the policy as presented.

- Martin Walker, from the Graduate Student Senate (GSS), assisted the committee with the discussion of the proposal from GSS on Graduate Student Leave Policy. The committee will schedule another meeting to work more on this policy. After the Graduate Student Leave Policy, APC and the GSS will begin work on the Graduate Student Family Medical Leave Policy.

#### Appeals Committee

Kay Reed, Committee member, reported that one appeal is still in process.

#### Credentials Committee

Stephen Kania, the Chair of the Credentials Committee, reported on the March 14, 2013 meeting. (Attachment 2)

- The Council approved unanimously the five recommendations for faculty approval to direct dissertations.
- Changes to the Credentials Committee Bylaws were approved by the Graduate Council.

#### Nominations Committee

Donald Hodges, the Chair of the Nominations Committee, thanked the members of the committee and the two candidates, Patricia Freeland and John Spurgeon. He announced the 2013 – 2014 Chair-Elect of the Graduate Council is Patricia Freeland.

### 3. New Business

There was no new business.

### 4. Administrative Reports

#### Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Carolyn Hodges, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, presented the following information:

- Throughout the current academic year, the Graduate Council has been very active at initiating new policies and revising outdated ones to serve students better and to create efficiencies. The members are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have embraced the task of reviewing curricular matters, on

their serious and consistent approach to monitoring credentials for dissertation advising, for the very deliberate, painstaking approach to handling appeals, and, of course, for the short-term but essential work of those who worked on a slate for president-elect. The committee chairs are in particular to be commended for their leadership in executing their duties. Professional Development Awards survived the period of heavy budget cuts a few years ago and, though not a recurring budget line item, the funding remains intact and we received have a number of strong proposals that were funded and subsequently served as the basis to generate larger grants and major publications.

- Our Graduate Student Senate representatives have diligently executed their roles in the governance process by participating on committees, communicating information to and from the general student body, and bringing forth proposals for the Council to address, e.g., family and medical leave for graduate students, on-campus orientation for new students, and improvements to management of the graduate student insurance benefit and health services. They have set a strong model of leadership for those who follow, and the Graduate School is committed to providing guidance for those efforts.
- The Graduate School and the Council will continue to work together to explore and reach decisions on the expectations of and guidelines for a graduate certificate, for a graduate student personal and medical leave policy, for improvements to management of thesis/dissertation defenses, and for administration of foreign language exams for doctoral students.
- Request for resources resulting from the increase in the application fee enabled the Office of Graduate Admissions to launch the ADMIT application and thereby improve tremendously the workflow in the admissions process. The Office of Graduate Admissions has also undertaken implementation of the new policy on Conditional Admission based on English Language Proficiency for international applicants, and the office is now in the process of adding two supplementary modules to further enhance efficiencies:
  - Applicant Status Portal Form: Applicants may enter the application portal to check the status of their application following submission. Status will updated automatically when new materials are uploaded into the ADMIT system.
  - Applicant Decision Portal Form: Applicants are notified of the admission decision through the application portal. Electronic letters are automatically generated, based on the decision code.
- Several other initiatives are underway: plans for the orientation for new graduate students, for overhaul of the Graduate School website, for development of a student visitation program designed by the Office of Graduate Training and Mentorship to assist programs with recruitment, and for consideration of a degree audit process.

- This year's academic planning process required all units to prepare a two-year scenario in projecting budget needs. Graduate School requests focused on:
  - On-going long-term investment related to increases in existing stipends, additional waivers, and additional resources for new stipends.
  - Immediate needs for 2013-14 to make permanent two temporary positions (main office and admissions) and to add a modest addition to operating funds.
- We hope to know more about decisions regarding the immediate needs within a few weeks; the long-term requests, which the chancellor has begun to address incrementally over the last two years, remain an on-going project.
- Hearty thanks are due to those members completing their terms and to Ralph Brockett for his service as chair. The Graduate School staff members look forward to working with the continuing members, which include Professor Brockett as immediate past chair, the incoming chair, Donald Hodges, chair-elect, Pat Freeland, and the new members, who will be elected this spring.

#### Graduate Deans' Group

Joy DeSensi, Chair of the Graduate Deans' Group, presented the report of the August 23, 2012 meeting (Attachment 3).

- Graduate School Fellowships are currently being evaluated. The recipients will be announced on the Graduate School website on April 9, 2013 no later than 5:00 p.m. An email will be sent to the recipients, their department head, and Director of Graduate Studies. They will also receive a formal letter with all the details of their fellowship.
- Director of Graduate Studies Manual is being developed and will be available by Fall 2013. The manual will be a good resource for the directors.

#### Graduate Student Senate

Todd Skelton, Member of the Graduate Student Senate, presented the report.

- Martin Walker will be the 2013 – 2014 President of the Graduate Student Senate.
- Graduate Student Travel applications are due on April 15 for Spring and early Summer travel. Since funding was increased, students may receive more than one travel award.
- Love Your Libraries 5K was held on March 2, 2013 and was a great success.

- Town Hall meeting was on March 14, 2013. Many issues were discussed including Health Insurance issues.

Graduate Council Chair

Ralph Brockett, Chair of the Graduate Council, shared the following information.

- Praises were given to the Graduate Council Committees for their great work throughout the year.
- A meeting will be set up with Jim Boyle, Administrator of the Student Health Service, to discuss the graduate student health insurance and other graduate student concerns.
- Brockett also thank the Council for the opportunity to serve as Graduate Council Chair. He also thanked Donald Hodges for serving as Graduate Council Chair-Elect, and Patricia Freeland for agreeing to serve as the 2013 – 2014 Graduate Council Chair-Elect.

5. New Items from the Floor

Donald Hodges thanked Ralph Brockett for his service as Graduate Council Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gay Henegar  
Secretary to Graduate Council

ATTACHMENT 1  
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2:15 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.  
111 STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING

Present: Stefanie Ohnesorg (Chair), Ralph Brockett, Russell Crook, Carolyn R. Hodges, Jennifer Morrow, Christian Parigger, Kay Reed, Marian Roman, Amanda Sanford, Shawn Spurgeon, Martin Walker.

The meeting was called to order by Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair, at 2:15 p.m.

**1. DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION EXAMINATION - APPROVED BY APC – TO BE EFFECTIVE FALL 2014**

In response to discussion at the Graduate Council meeting February 28 concerning, the committee considered the addition of a statement to provide direction for the Director of Graduate Studies in academic programs when emergency situations arise. The committee voted in favor of recommending the following policy change, seven votes for and one abstaining vote:

A doctoral candidate must pass an oral examination on the dissertation. The dissertation, in the form approved by the major professor, must be distributed to the committee at least two weeks before the examination. The examination must be scheduled through the Graduate School at least one week prior to the examination. Except with prior approval from the Dean of the Graduate School, the examination must be given in university-approved facilities. The examination is announced publicly and is open to all faculty members. The defense of dissertation will be administered by all members of the doctoral committee after completion of the dissertation and all course requirements. This examination must be held at least two weeks before the final date for acceptance and approval of dissertation (indicated on the Graduate Student Deadline Dates) by the Graduate School on behalf of the Graduate Council. The major professor must submit the results of the defense (Pass/Fail form with original signatures) by the deadline date.

After the defense has been scheduled, subsequent emergency situations concerning participation of committee members require that the Director of Graduate Studies from the student's academic unit consults with the Dean of the Graduate School or his/her designee to determine whether the emergency situation warrants a rescheduling of the dissertation defense. Guiding principle for resolving such ad-hoc emergency situations will be to guard the integrity of the process.

**2. REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN ORAL DEFENSES – APPROVED BY APC – TO BE EFFECTIVE FALL 2014**

NEW POLICY PROPOSED:

This proposal is designed to provide documentation of approval by the academic department when remote participation is part of the thesis or dissertation defense. The documentation is then recorded in the student's record in the Graduate School.

The committee approved this proposal unanimously for presentation to the Graduate Council.

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

### **Remote Participation in Oral Defenses**

It is expected that all members of graduate committees should be physically present at all required oral thesis or dissertation defenses. Under special circumstances, however, it is permissible for the student, and/or committee members to participate from a remote location provided the conditions listed below are met:

- Advance agreement of the student and all committee members has been obtained;
- All participants join in with two way audio and video connections; audio only connections must be approved by the major professor if the video connection is not possible. When the student is the remote participant, his or her connection must be an audio and video connection;
- Any visual aids or other materials have been distributed in advance to the remote participants;
- The committee members participate in real time during the entire, complete meeting, discussion, presentation, and evaluation;
- The student is responsible for making the scheduling arrangements, and the major professor accepts responsibility for the oversight of any logistical arrangements necessary;
- Any costs associated with remote participation are not the responsibility of the Graduate School, and must be arranged in advance; and
- The UTK requirement of a public presentation for oral defense of dissertation is still in effect.

The student is required to submit the Remote Participation at Oral Defense Notification Form together with the Scheduling of the Defense Form to the Graduate School when the student or member(s) of the committee participate remotely.

The dissertation represents the culmination of an original research project completed by the student and is submitted in electronic format to the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant in the Graduate School for examination, final approval, and acceptance. The consultant will review the material and assure that it is appropriately presented, free of technical errors in format. It must be prepared according to the most recent *Guide to the Preparation of Theses and*

*Dissertations*, available at <http://web.utk.edu/~thesis/Guide.shtml>. An electronic copy of the dissertation must be accompanied by one original approval sheet (not a photocopy). The approval sheet must have the original signatures of the members of the doctoral committee. The approval sheet reflects the final format for submission. The approval sheet certifies to The Graduate School that the committee members have examined the final copy of the dissertation and have found that its form and content are satisfactory. If the dissertation is not accepted, the student must make corrections and resubmit the material.

Rationale:

This policy is designed to assist students and departments with discussions for arrangements of oral defenses. The "Remote Participation at Oral Defense Notification Form" would be attached to the Scheduling of Defense of Dissertation Form so that it is submitted at the same time, two weeks in advance of the defense. A reminder should be inserted into the instructions for the two forms to encourage students to plan for collection of signatures on the Pass/Fail Form when part of the committee (or the student) is participating remotely.

### **3. GRADUATE STUDENT LEAVE POLICY**

Martin Walker, from the Graduate Student Senate (GSS), assisted the committee with the discussion of the proposal from GSS on Graduate Student Leave Policy. The committee will try to schedule another meeting to work more on this policy before the end of the academic year.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**Credentials Committee Report**  
**March 14, 2013, 3:45 – 5:10 p.m.**  
**111 Student Services Building**

Present: Stephen Kania (Chair), David Anderson (Electronic Voting), Chad Autry, Jane Bellamy, Ben Blalock, Amy Broemmel, Ralph Brockett, David Keffer, Donald G. Hodges, Kay Reed.

The committee voted recommending the following people for approval to direct doctoral dissertations:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Current Depart.</b>	<b>Type of Request</b>	<b>Approval</b>
Deyton, Dennis	Professor	Plant Sciences	Tenured Continuing	10 Years 8/1/2023
Hewezi, Terek	Assistant Professor	Plant Sciences	Probationary	Until Tenure
Reed, Robert	Associate Professor	Veterinary Medicine – Comparative & Experimental Medicine	Tenured Continuing	10 Years 8/1/2023
Verbree, David	Assistant Professor	Plant Sciences	Probationary	Until Tenure
Yin, Xinhua (Frank)	Assistant Professor	Plant Sciences	Probationary	Until Tenure

The committee voted unanimously to approve the bylaws with changes as presented in Attachment 1.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

**CREDENTIALS - 1**  
**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE**  
**CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL**  
**BYLAWS**

Initial Approval 10/2001

Revisions Approved by Council 03/2004, 10/2007, 08/2008, 01/2009, 01/2010, 11/2010

The Credentials Committee is responsible for procedures that will ensure careful and competent supervision of dissertation research. The goal is to ensure good scholarship, competent management of the process, high academic standards, and completion of dissertations in a timely manner. To this end, the Committee will conduct a review of the credentials of those who will be recommended to the Graduate Council for approval to direct doctoral dissertations. In making these recommendations, the Committee will follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Faculty members who have not completed their doctorates may not supervise dissertations.
2. Only programs that award doctoral degrees are eligible to request approval to direct dissertations.
3. Faculty may request approval to direct doctoral dissertations through another program. However, their home department head must endorse the request.
4. Program heads and senior faculty are expected to mentor new faculty as they master the art of working with students on their dissertations.
5. Tenure-track faculty are eligible to direct dissertations subject to program approval as indicated by a vote of the tenured faculty and a letter of support from the program head. These items should be forwarded to the Credentials Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Graduate Council.
6. Faculty appointed or promoted to the rank of associate or full professor with tenure will automatically be granted approval to direct dissertations for 10 years and may be reviewed every 10 years thereafter, for as long as approval is sought. Applications for continuing approval should be submitted to the Credentials Committee in the year prior to expiration of approval. The application should consist of a letter of support for continued approval from the program head, placing the following items in the context of performance expectations. The past 10-year record of: (a) theses and dissertations supervised ; (b) peer-reviewed publications ; (c) grants; and (d) other evidence of scholarly activity that may be relevant to the approval to direct dissertations. The primary criterion for approval will be evidence of externally reviewed and validated scholarly or creative activity.

7. Non-tenure track faculty may be considered for approval to direct dissertations for a period of 5 years with the support of the faculty and program head. Approval may be renewed an unlimited number of times. Applications for approval should be submitted to the Credentials Committee. The application should consist of the results of a vote of tenured program faculty and a letter of support from the program head placing the following items in the context of performance expectations. The past 10-year record of: (a) theses and dissertations supervised; (b) peer-reviewed publications; (c) grants; and (d) other evidence of scholarly activity that may be relevant to the approval to direct dissertations. The primary criterion for approval will be evidence of externally reviewed and validated scholarly or creative activity.

8. Faculty members who have not been granted approval for supervision may petition the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School for limited approval to supervise individual dissertations if the program head and department faculty support the request. Petitions should consist of: (a) a list of theses and dissertations supervised over the past 10 years; (b) a list of peer-reviewed publications for the past 10 years; (c) a list of grants; (d) other evidence of scholarly activity that may be relevant to the approval to direct dissertations; and (e) a letter of support for approval from the program head placing the above items in the context of performance expectations and a description of the special circumstances that would warrant limited approval.

From time to time, the committee may also consider other matters related to the process of dissertation supervision. The committee will consist of seven members from those colleges that award doctoral degrees. At least one member will be from each of the following colleges: Arts & Sciences; Business; Education, Health, and Human Sciences; and Engineering. Membership on the committee is restricted to Graduate Council members who are already approved to direct dissertations. The committee elects a chair annually. The agenda for each committee meeting will contain the requests for approval to direct dissertations as submitted by the academic program heads. Procedures and deadlines for submission of such requests are posted on the Graduate Council web page.

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**Graduate Deans' Group**  
**Thursday, March 21, 2013, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.**  
**334 Haslam Business Building**  
**Minutes**

Attending:

Chris Boake, Ralph Brockett, Ernest Brothers, Joy DeSensi (Chair), Carolyn Hodges, Stephen Kania, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Sandra Leach, Jan Lee, Catherine Luther, Stefanie Ohnesorg, John Stier, Masood Parang, Carol Parker, Annette Ranft, Kay Reed, Cynthia Rocha, David Schumann, John Stier, Dixie Lee Thompson

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi at 2:00 p.m. on February 14, 2013 in the 334 Haslam Business Building.

1. Minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group Meeting from February 14, 2013 were approved.
2. Updates – Carolyn Hodges
  - The dean provided updates on recent and upcoming activities. The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) sponsored a Town Hall meeting that was held on March 14 at the Law School. The Dean of the Graduate School, Taylor Eighmy (Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement), Jim Boyle (director of the Student Health Center), Maxine Davis (Dean of Students), and Troy Lane (UT Police Department) were available to answer questions and provide information. Students raised a number of questions about how to improve efficiency in getting new and returning students enrolled in the insurance plan at the beginning of the year. Mr. Boyle talked about ways to improve communication between the Health Services Department and the departments and programs to cut down on the lag time between appointments and the relay of information from Human Resources through IRIS to the Health Center. He offered to hold meetings with several group (program administrative assistants, deans, department heads) and encouraged students to be persistent in checking with administrative assistants about the status of their appointments. Other questions posed included the prospects for increase in student stipends, programming to enhance mentoring, and the role of the Office of Research and Engagement, and UT Institute of Agriculture's proposal to allow fracking as part of an oil and gas lease and research project.
  - Dates and location for fall orientation activities were announced. The orientation for new graduate students is a new initiative that will be held on August 13 in the Tennessee Auditorium in the University Center. Tentative planning includes morning-long session (8-noon) with a series of speakers and afternoon activities

(e.g., tours, social) headed up by the GSS. The annual orientation for new graduate teaching assistants/associates will be held on the morning of August 15, 8-noon, in the Tennessee Auditorium at the UC Center.

- The SPEAK Test will undergo changes in Fall 2013 to provide more flexibility and efficiency for those taking the test for the first time as well as for those being retested. The oral proficiency test developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) will replace the SPEAK Test, which is no longer being updated by Educational Testing Services. It is a computerized version of the oral proficiency testing interview and provides an internationally recognized certificate, valid for one year for all who pass. ACTFL will provide the rating and Dr. JoBeth Bradley, SPEAK Test coordinator, will continue to manage registration, to handle reporting, and to monitor student placement and successive testing. ACTFL charges \$65 for each test, which will be taken at the UT Language Resource Center: the Graduate School will pay for all first-time test takers. Assignment for charges for repeat testing is under review. Students will be able to repeat the test at random times, rather than being locked into firm dates. The adaptive test, which makes use of an avatar, adjusts to the interests and content responses of the students during the course of the interview.
  - Ernest Brothers, Director of the Office of Graduate Training and Mentorship, and the Program for Excellence and Equity in Research (PEER) will host a Professional Development Workshop. The workshop presenter, Dr. Laura Lunsford, Assistant Professor at the University of Arizona, will speak on the topic: *"Throw the Lifeline: Reversing Sink or Swim Attitudes & Mentoring Doctoral Students."* The workshop for faculty will be held on April 18, 2013 in Room 435, Min Kao Building, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and in Room 221, University Center, from 3:30 to 5:30 for students. Ernest Brothers also works with departments/programs to set up other mentoring workshops.
3. Ph.D. Teaching Certificate – David Schumann, Tennessee Teaching Learning Center
- David Schumann, director of the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center (TNTLC) reviewed the plans for teaching certification for doctoral students that is being developed as a joint effort between the TNTLC and the Graduate School. He asked for input from the Graduate Associate Deans about his proposal to levy a \$500 charge for each participant, which could be cost-shared by the programs and colleges and would be used to support half the salary of a full-time assistant director position in the TNTLC. He describes the components of the three-semester program and answered questions about its implementation. The graduate associate deans asked him to write up and distribute a summary of the program, with particular emphasis on the value added it provides, so that the associate deans can share it with their college deans and department heads and come back with their responses to the proposed fee.
4. Alignment of Graduate Admissions & Departmental Websites

Annual Change Period – Fall 2014 Online Admission Applications – Yvonne Kilpatrick

- Yvonne Kilpatrick presented information (Attachment # 1) from the applicant survey on the Admit Program. 6,000 students were contacted with 1,433 responses. The Graduate Admissions Office plans to have focus group discussions on how to better serve the departments, share the process in the Admit Program and will be hosting a CollegeNET agent all day on June 4 to allow feedback from departments. Some departments need to update their website with the new application information. Some concerns of departments with the new program, were adding a portfolio to the application and an issue with communication alignment.

5. Unpaid Adjunct Faculty

Report of Survey on Associate Deans – Jan Lee

- Jan Lee requested feedback regarding unpaid adjunct faculty working with graduate students. She also shared information from a Graduate Deans Survey regarding administrative responsibilities which was conducted on December 2012.

6. Other

No other business was discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:20.

The first Graduate Deans' Group meeting for 2013 - 2014 will be held in late August.  
The meeting location will be announced at a later date.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Gay Henegar  
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group