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Graduate Council Minutes - April 12, 2012

Graduate Council

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

April 12, 2012 Minutes

Members Present

David Anderson, Dave Bemis, Ben Blalock, Chris Boake, Marianne Breinig, Ralph Brockett (Chair-Elect), Luis Cano, George Dodds, Patricia Freeland, Tom George, Will Gibbons, Frank Guess, Camille Hall, Donald Hodges, Steve Kania, David Keffer, Tom Ladd, Leann Luna, Sibyl Marshall, Mohammad Mohsin for Christian Vossler, Joann Ng Hartmann for Pia Wood, Blanche O'Bannon, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Christian Parigger, Rebecca Prosser for Jane Bellamy, Cynthia Rocha, Marian Roman, Todd Skelton, Scott Wall, Candace White, Michael Zemel (Chair), Songning Zhang, Ernest Brothers, Catherine Cox, Gay Henegar, Carolyn Hodges, Yvonne Kilpatrick, Kay Reed, Greg Tipps.

The Graduate Council meeting was called to order by Michael Zemel on Thursday, April 12, 2012, at 3:03 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room, Black Cultural Center.

1. Minutes of the Preceding Meeting

The minutes of the March 1, 2012 meeting were approved by the Graduate Council.

2. Committee ReportsAcademic Policy Committee

Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair of the Academic Policy Committee, reported on the April 5, 2012 meeting. (Attachment 1)

- The Change of Program and Readmission Proposal to change the wording in the Graduate Catalog was presented to the Graduate Council and approved.
- The Request for Concurrent Master's Degree Program Proposal requiring a form submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the submission to candidacy deadline with no fee assessed was presented to the Graduate Council and approved.
- The APC Committee researching Top 25 Universities concerning policies on dissertation defenses in regards to videoconferencing. A policy on the use of technology in thesis/dissertation defenses and digital signatures is being drafted. Several council members discussed problems with developing a policy that would be too prescriptive for committee members and students.

Credentials Committee

Donald Hodges, the Chair of the Credentials Committee, reported on the March 8, 2012 meeting. (Attachment 2)

- The Council approved unanimously the nine recommendations for faculty approval to direct dissertations.

Curriculum Committee

Sibyl Marshall, Chair of the Curriculum Committee, reported on the March 29, 2012 meeting. (Attachment 3)

- The Curriculum Committee unanimously agreed to amend the Curriculum Committee Bylaws by changing the description of the process for the “Courses Not Taught in 4 or More Years Report”. More detail about the process will be included in the *Guidelines for Curriculum Submission* manual. The Graduate Council approved the change.

Appeals Committee

Marianne Breinig, Chair of the Appeals Committee, had nothing to report.

Nominations Committee

Ralph Brockett, Chair of the Nominations Committee, announced Donald Hodges as the 2012 – 2013 Chair-Elect, following the electronic voting by Graduate Council members.

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:

- Thanks to Yvonne Kilpatrick and Greg Tipps, the Graduate Admissions Office has succeeded in improving and streamlining the admission process.
- The curriculum process is being revised to implement student learner outcome objectives to make it more compliant with SACS, create a clear credit hour definition for SACS, make the graduate and undergraduate curriculum submissions similar, identify courses that are high impact on areas outside the program, and identify and eliminate errors in curriculum submissions.
- The policy on joint degrees (dual degrees) is being reviewed to make it consistent with the guidelines of SACS.
- Assistantships are continuing to be reviewed and defined: eventually this could involve reallocation.
- Graduate School and the Graduate Council would like to thank Tom George, Associate Dean in the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences, for his years of service on the Graduate Council.
- Thanks to the members and proxies who will be rotating off on July 31, 2012 for their service on Graduate Council this year.

Graduate Deans' Group

Carolyn Hodges gave a brief report for Joy DeSensi, Chair of the Graduate Deans' Group, of the March 29 meeting (Attachment 4).

- The Graduate Deans' Group discussed and shared evaluation processes of GTAs.
- Sally McMillan, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, reported on plans to review the curriculum process so that the university will be in compliance with SACS guidelines.

Graduate Student Senate

Todd Skelton, President of the Graduate Student Senate, presented the following information:

- The newly elected members for the 2012 – 2013 Graduate Council are Amanda Sanford, President of the Graduate Student Senate, and Alexandra Brewer, Vice President of the Graduate Student Senate.
- Graduate Travel funds (Graduate Student Senate, Provost, and special one-time funding) need to be streamlined. Better communication is needed, as many graduate students were unaware of the additional funds available this year for traveling. All funds were not awarded. Chancellor Cheek has requested input on how to improve the system.
- Graduate students are launching a travel blog telling about their experiences on their conference trips.
- The Graduate Student Senate is researching the Top 25 Universities concerning Graduate Student Leave Policies to see if they could be implemented at UT and what the cost would be.
- On March 3, 2012 the "Love Your Library" Fun Run and 5K Race was held and \$4,100.00 was raised for the libraries.
- GSS now has a Twitter and Facebook Account.
- Todd Skelton and Will Gibbons thanked the Graduate Council for giving them the opportunity to work with us.

Graduate Council Chair

Michael Zemel, Chair, thanked the Graduate Council for the opportunity to serve as Graduate Council Chair.

5. New Items from the Floor

There were no new items from the floor.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gay Henegar
Secretary to Graduate Council

ATTACHMENT 1
ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE
APRIL 5, 2012, 2:15 PM – 3:30 PM
111 STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING

REPORT

Present: Stefanie Ohnesorg (Chair), Ralph Brockett, Yanfei Gao, Christian Parigger, Kay Reed. Also present were Gayle Roberts and Greg Tipps from the Office of Graduate Admissions.

The meeting was called to order by Stefanie Ohnesorg, Chair, at 2:15 p.m. in 111 Student Services Building.

The committee discussed agenda items as follows:

1. Change of Program-Readmission Proposal.

The proposal was approved by the committee to go forward with a recommendation for approval to the Graduate Council.

Proposed Catalog Text

Remove current catalog text for sections on Readmission and Change of Program. For reference see below.

Add the following catalog text (Revision of text from February 16, 2012 APC Report to reflect discussion at March 1, 2012 Graduate Council meeting):

Readmission

Graduate students at UTK with an interruption in enrollment must seek readmission. An interruption in enrollment is defined as follows:

- Completion of a graduate degree without graduate enrollment in semester following graduation,
- Interruption of enrollment for at least one semester (excluding summer) when last enrolled as a graduate student,
- Withdrawal from the university when last enrolled as a graduate student.

To seek readmission, students must submit a Readmission Application to the Office of Graduate Admissions. A non-refundable application fee in the amount of \$30 will be assessed upon each submission of the Readmission Application.

- Domestic students must submit their applications at least two weeks prior to the first day of class in the desired term of entry.
- International students must note that all published deadline dates for new international graduate applications also apply for applications for readmission. (See Admission of International Students section in Graduate Catalog.)

Students who have attended another institution since their last graduate enrollment at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, must also submit one official transcript from each institution showing all course work and any degrees earned at that institution.

Students will be notified about admission decisions by the Office of Graduate Admissions and will not be permitted to enroll until officially admitted by the Graduate School.

Change of Program

Graduate students at UTK with no interruption in enrollment must file a Change of Program Application if the change of program they are requesting fits one of the following scenarios:

1. A currently enrolled graduate student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is seeking a change of graduate major, concentration, or degree objective.
2. A currently enrolled graduate student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville who requests moving from non-degree to degree seeking (or vice-versa)
3. A student requesting admission to another graduate program immediately following the completion of his or her current graduate degree program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, so that there will be no interruption of enrollment (summer excluded) between finishing one graduate program at UT and entering another.
4. A student who is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has decided to not complete the doctoral program but instead requests admission to a master's degree program within the same major and concentration if the following condition applies: The change of program is requested in such a way that there will be no interruption in enrollment (summer excluded) when moving from the doctoral program into the master's degree program.

Students who seek a Change of Program need to contact the department/program to which they seek admission in order to receive information about program-specific deadline dates, program-specific supplemental materials that are required from all applicants who seek admission to that program, etc., in order to ensure that they are in full compliance with the application guidelines of that program and thus can be considered for admission.

A Change of Program Application must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Admissions at least two weeks prior to the first day of class of the desired term of entry. Stricter deadline dates may apply to international students, and international students therefore must consult with an international student advisor in the Center for International Education prior to

submitting a Change of Program in order to explore whether visa regulations that are specific to their status at UTK allow such a change of program, and in order to discuss in which way the desired change of program would affect their immigration status.

A non-refundable application fee in the amount of \$30 will be assessed upon each submission of the Change of Program Application.

Request for Concurrent Master's Degree Program

Currently enrolled UTK doctoral students who plan to complete the master's degree while maintaining enrollment in the doctoral program must submit a Request for Concurrent Master's Degree form to the Graduate School's graduation office at least two weeks prior to the deadline for submission of the admission to candidacy for the master's degree. No fee will be assessed for submission of this form.

(End of approved text for Graduate Catalog)

2. Videoconferencing for Dissertation Defenses

Stefanie presented information from more than five universities about policies on dissertation defenses, especially regarding using videoconferencing options. Here is a list of points that she found that were addressed in these policies:

- Default: all members must be present at defense.
- (Grad. School) approval needed for video-conferencing following a petition and/or clear policy on what is allowed and what is not
- How many can be of location // Who must be present at the place specified for the defense
- How many remote locations
- How to handle input and questions from absent member(s)
- How to conduct a vote on the diss. (pass/fail) with member(s) absent
- Equipment availability
- Who is in charge of making special arrangements
- Cost
- Loss of communication
- Location of student // proctor
- Add-ons: innovative, forward-looking (are there possible negative connotations, too?)
- Not addressed in any of these: Security issues (sensitive material) while video-conferencing

Stefanie asked the members to review these points and to determine which ones they thought should be included in a document that UTK could use. In

the next week, members should record their reactions to these points and begin to prepare for a continued discussion in the next academic year concerning this issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 2
Credentials Committee Report
March 8, 2012

Votes Recorded for: Donald Hodges (Chair), Frank Guess, Jane Bellamy, Ben Blalock, Frank Guess, Stephen Kania, David Keffer, Songning Zhang.

The committee voted to recommend that the following faculty members be granted approval to direct doctoral dissertations:

Name	Title	Current Department	Type of Request	Approval
Brown, Michelle	Assistant Professor	Sociology	Probationary	Until Tenure
Drake, John	Research Professor	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Non-Tenure Initial Request	5 Years, 8/1/2017
Lloyd, Karen	Assistant Professor	Microbiology	Probationary	Until Tenure
Louis, Bertin M.	Assistant Professor	Anthropology	Probationary	Until Tenure
Mason, James A.	Assistant Professor	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Probationary	Until Tenure
Mikucki, Jill	Assistant Professor	Microbiology	Probationary	Until Tenure
Palomino, Angelica	Assistant Professor	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Probationary	Until Tenure
Ryerson, Megan	Assistant Professor	Civil and Environmental Engineering	Probationary	Until Tenure
Sumrall, Colin	Assistant Professor (Effective 8/1/2012)	Earth and Planetary Sciences	Probationary	Until Tenure – Effective upon appointment

ATTACHMENT 3**Graduate Curriculum Committee Report
Law Library, 4th Floor, Rare Books Room
Thursday, March 29, 2012**

Members present: David Bemis, Daniel Feller, Catherine Luther, John Ma, Sibyl Marshall, Rebecca Prosser, Candace White, Kay Reed, and Catherine Cox. Voting by email: Will Gibbons, Blanche O'Bannon, Gregory Petty, Marlys Staudt, Christian Vossler

Sibyl Marshall called the meeting to order.

The only item on the Agenda is to discuss amending the Curriculum Bylaws with regard to the Courses Not Taught in 4 or More Years Report. Sibyl communicated: It takes a two-thirds vote from the Curriculum Committee members to amend the Bylaws.

The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is also discussing guidelines for the 4 or More Years Not Taught Report.

Sybil indicated she felt the Bylaws should be amended to make the language clearer. The committee voted to amend the Bylaws as proposed with slight alteration to proposal. There were 7 voting members at the meeting. All seven voted "yes" to amend the Bylaws as recommended. As it takes two-thirds vote of the committee to amend the Bylaws and only seven were present, the recommendation was sent out for an electronic vote. All votes received were "yes" to amend as recommended.

It was agreed the details and process for "Courses Not Taught in 4 or More Years" should be inserted in the *Guidelines for Curriculum Submission* manual.

Members who attended the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 27, communicated that a discussion came about at that meeting to archive courses instead of dropping them. The pros and cons of archiving were discussed. With much discussion at the Graduate Curriculum Meeting, outcome was the same as with Undergraduate – for and against the idea of archiving.

Dr. Kay Reed communicated that a Curriculum Task Force Committee, headed by Dr. Sally McMillan, is looking at the curriculum process for both graduate and undergraduate. The Task Force is reviewing the process with the following objectives:

- SACS is requiring definition of a credit hour and also an indication of the processes in place to ensure that course offerings are consistent with that policy.
- Student Learner Outcome (SLO) assessment needs to be fully compliant with SACS (and with best practice).
- We need to identify courses that have a "high impact" on other departments and/or programs outside the "home department" to make sure all affected parties know about any pending changes to those courses.
- To reduce errors in curricular submissions.

This was the last Curriculum Committee meeting for this academic year. The next meeting for the 2012-13 academic year is August 23, 2012. Curriculum for that meeting is due August 9th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30p.m.

PROPOSAL TO AMEND BYLAWS - Article 1.2

The proposed change to the Bylaws reads as:

To make sure that the courses published in the Graduate Catalog accurately reflect those offered, or likely to be offered, in the near future at the University of Tennessee - Knoxville. To do this, every year the Curriculum Committee examines a list of graduate courses that have not been offered for four years or more. Departments must justify continuing to list courses even though they have not been taught for four or more years.

The Committee recommends to Graduate Council that this change be approved.

Informational Item to be inserted in the *Guidelines for Curricular Submission* manual**Procedure and Guidelines for Reviewing Courses Not Taught in Four or More Years**

The Graduate School compiles a list of all courses under consideration for removal from the Graduate Catalog due to not having been taught for four or more years. This list is provided to the dean in charge of academic or curricular affairs at each college. It is the responsibility of the deans to disseminate the list to their department heads, gather the requested information, and submit it to the Graduate School.

Colleges may retain courses on the list if adequate justification is provided. Responses to which the Committee has given strong consideration in the past include:

- The course is an “issues,” “readings,” or “topics” course that will be used by the college, department, or program in the future;
- A new faculty member has been hired who will teach the course in the near future; The course is scheduled to be taught in the next year.

Courses appearing on the list for the second or third time require detailed, concrete plans to offer the course in the near future. Courses for which no justification is provided are automatically dropped, even if they are appearing on the list for the first time.

The chair of the committee may provide an organizational framework for reviewing the courses in the most efficient and effective way possible.

ATTACHMENT 4**Graduate Deans' Group
Thursday, March 29, 2012, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Graduate School Conference Room**

Attending:

Chris Boake, Caula Beyl for John Stier, Joy DeSensi (Chair), George Dodds, Tom George, Carolyn Hodges, Jan Lee, Catherine Luther, Stefanie Ohnesorg, Masood Parang, Kay Reed, Cynthia Rocha, Rita Smith, Michael Zemel

The Graduate Deans' Group meeting was called to order by Joy DeSensi, on Thursday, March 29, 2012, at 2:00 p.m. in the Graduate School Conference Room.

1. The minutes of the Graduate Deans' Group meeting from February 9, 2012 were approved.

2. Announcements

Joy DeSensi announced the following dates and events:

- May 10, 2012 Graduate Hooding Ceremony
- March 30, 2012 Graduate School Fellowships announced on the Graduate School website by 5:00
- August 16, 2012 GTA Orientation Workshop

Carolyn Hodges discussed the 2010 tax law regarding graduate assistants. Ways of assisting these students have been reviewed by the assistantship task force. A salary supplement may be given to graduate assistants who were not in the 80% of the graduate assistants reclassified.

Carolyn Hodges explained that questions regarding travel funds awarded by the Provost's Office should be directed to Betsy Adams. If associate deans of the college sign off on the student's request, then they would receive funding. If the request is denied, a letter is sent to the department and student applicant.

3. Evaluation Processes of GTA's – Graduate Deans

Each department needs to assure that the quality of the courses taught by GTAs is maintained. Decision regarding retention of the GTA may also be made through the evaluation process. A manual for faculty evaluation located on the Provost's website may be used as a basis in creating the program/department GTA evaluation procedure. Evaluation and observations should be written and placed in the GTA personnel file. It was suggested that information regarding the evaluation process of GTA's may be included in the Departmental Graduate Student Handbook.

Reports from the group included:

Engineering – Masood Prang shared the information he had received from his department heads. Graduate students assist professors in class, grading, etc. or teach labs. Occasionally the students are evaluated by other students. Their

applications for the positions working with freshmen are very rigorous. (Attachment 1)

Communication – Catherine Luther shared the following: The GTA writes a self-report to turn into the graduate associate dean and they give the student feedback about his/her performance. The reports are then sent to their faculty supervisor. The self-report is usually very good, as they want to improve the job they are doing. Catherine will be sharing the information and method of evaluation with the others in the Graduate Deans' Group.

Social Work – Cynthia Rocha stated the evaluation is overseen by an administrative committee. Directors of Graduate Program in Social Work had not been retaining and filing the reports after reading them. Cynthia Rocha has changed the policy, and the reports are now placed in the student's personnel file. Evaluations have been very lax, and Cynthia Rocha is trying to establish a better method of evaluating by using ideas she learns from the other colleges. The GTAs are required to attend either their in-house training on teaching or the Graduate School's Best Practices in Teaching Program.

Agriculture – Caula Beyl stated the college uses checklists in evaluating GTAs. The students who need more help are referred to the Teaching and Learning Center and/or the Best Practices in Teaching Program offered by the Graduate School.

Education – Tom George shared the information he received from his department heads. Faculty members oversee GTA's evaluations at the departmental level. They use observations and SAIS results. Awards are given at the end of the year by some departments to the GTAs that perform the best. GTAs work with faculty in the labs, as well as, lecture classes. GTAs receive feedback from three faculty on GTA student evaluation and peer teaching. GTAs can turn in a self-report to the faculty.

4. Report Curriculum Process (SACS Requirements) – Sally McMillan

In her report to the Graduate Deans' Group, Sally McMillan shared the Curriculum Review Process following points regarding the Curricular Review Process:

1. Implement Student Learner Outcome objectives to be compliant with SACS.
2. Create a better credit hour definition for SACS and course offerings consistent with the policy.
3. Identify courses that are high impact on areas outside the program.
4. Assure the processes for graduate and undergraduate curriculum submission be similar.
5. Identify and eliminate the increased number of errors in curricular submissions.

5. Other

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gay Henegar
Secretary to Graduate Deans' Group

Attachment 1
GTA Performance Evaluation

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

GTAs with primary course teaching responsibility: 0

GTAs assisting faculty: 7 currently, ranging from 5 - 14 depending on semester.

Typically higher in Fall.

Preparation:

Many of our teaching assistants serve primarily as graders, also holding office hours for occasional one-on-one tutoring or answering questions about homework. This is especially true for our international students, most of whom score 40 or 45 on the SPEAK test. In these courses, exact GTA duties are at the discretion of the course instructor, and instruction in how to accomplish those duties is given directly by the instructor.

One exception is the CBE 310 laboratory course, which uses three GTAs. These TAs have substantial direct interactions with the students and significantly impact delivery of course concepts. These GTAs likewise receive their preparative instruction primarily from the course instructor; however, we have an apprenticeship program wherein one of the three GTAs has previously served as an assistant for this course. This "senior" TA then has responsibility for coordinating the efforts of all of the GTAs and providing mentoring to the inexperienced GTAs. This approach, along with careful selection for GTAs with excellent communication skills, has substantially enhanced the quality of instruction in our laboratory course since implemented around four years ago.

Evaluation:

To date, all GTA evaluations have been performed informally by the course instructor, and communication to the GTAs has taken whatever form the instructor wishes -- usually direct face-to-face discussion but also written email communication.

This semester, we are implementing a student survey of GTA performance to be completed at the end of the term. This survey will allow us to supplement GTA evaluations with a formal, objective component and will aid efforts to identify underperforming individuals, as well as provide important data that can be used in nominating exceptional individuals for awards.

Civil and Environmental Engineering

The Civil Engineering Department has approximately 6 students per year that are involved in teaching lab courses. We do not use GTAs in lecture courses, with the exception of one course during the summer. We have another 15 or so students involved in grading and other means of assisting with instruction. To prepare students to teach labs a faculty member normally reviews the labs with them. In some classes we try to overlap a new GTA with a longer established GTA to provide peer training. We also use graduate school resources. Faculty members also observe them teaching and provided informal feedback to them. Students that are involved in stand alone labs receive SAIS evaluations. Faculty members responsible for the lab are primarily responsible for the quality of instruction and providing the necessary feedback to the GTAs to improve their teaching performance.

Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

The UT/EECS Department employs a large number of GTAs to support courses in computer science (CS) and electrical and computer engineering (ECE), with approximately 40 having $\frac{1}{4}$ time GTA appointments and 30 having $\frac{1}{2}$ time GTA appointments. For these classes, the GTAs provide support with grading, monitoring laboratories, and providing individual help to students (e.g., for homework, projects, and labs). The GTAs do not have primary responsibility to teach different sections of our courses. Instead, the GTAs assist faculty in the teaching of EECS courses as discussed above. (This semester there is one exception: Scott Hansen, a domestic graduate student, is teaching ECE 316.)

The management of EECS GTAs is the responsibility of the graduate coordination committee that supports the UT/EECS graduate coordinator (currently Hairong Qi). Selection of which applicants receive GTA positions is a function of this committee. The assignment of GTAs to specific courses is performed by Gregory D. Peterson. GTAs are evaluated using several tools. First of all, each semester the faculty provide feedback on each of the GTAs assigned to assist with their courses. The ACM and IEEE student sections recognize outstanding GTAs with awards, and the feedback from these student organizations is considered. The EECS department performs an annual performance review of graduate students. This review is also used as feedback for GTAs. This includes evaluation of the progress of the GTA students in their studies, including current and cumulative GPA, status with passing PhD qualifying exams, progress in coursework, publication of research results, and potential for timely completion of their degree program. GTAs required to take the SPEAK test have these scores considered in evaluating their suitability for student interactions. When there is cause for concern, GTAs are typically counseled about how to improve their performance, with their respective advisor also kept in the loop. All incoming students are given a briefing on departmental expectations, including GTA duties. GTAs are also encouraged to attend graduate school seminars and meetings about their studies and courses and seminars on teaching (e.g., OIT Blackboard training).

Engineering Fundamentals

In Engineering Fundamentals, we have 14 GTAs. None have primary teaching responsibility for a course; they only assist the faculty in teaching. They do run lab and recitation sessions. We have a one-day training session in Fall before classes start. About two hours of this training is conducted by the Tennessee Teaching and Learning Center. We also meet for about 1.5 hours on a weekly basis to review the past weeks sessions and go over the upcoming sessions. We use our own teaching evaluation form each semester to get feedback from the students on the GTAs. The results of this evaluation are given to each of the GTAs along with suggestions on how to improve their teaching. The faculty also regularly visit the labs and recitations to observe the GTAs. Feedback is provided during the semester as needed. An overall evaluation is conducted before offering a GTA a position for the next year. In several cases, we have not retained GTAs.

Engineering Honors

In the honors program, there are currently two GTA's. The GTA's do not have primary teaching responsibility, rather they assist Dr. Parsons and Dr. Pionke in running the recitation portion of the class. This includes running labs and problem sessions as well

as helping during project testing, working help sessions (about 2-4 hours a week) and grading homework papers. Dr. Parsons and Dr. Pionke formally meet with the GTA's twice a week for about an hour to an hour-and-half for each meeting to discuss lesson plans, learning objectives, etc. Dr. Parsons and/or Dr. Pionke (most of the time both) will always make an appearance in each of the recitation sessions to observe the GTA's performance as well as to assess the progress of the students and assess the effectiveness of the given activity. We provide feedback to the GTA's in either one-on-one discussions or in our twice-weekly meetings. We do not use the university GTA training sessions but we meet with the GTAs at the beginning of each semester during the registration period and discuss expectations for the semester.

Industrial and Information Engineering

The Industrial and Information Engineering Department currently has 9 GTAs. The responsibilities of the GTAs are determined by the department head and faculty member assigned to them. We have 1 GTA that primarily teaches IE course 202 (Work Measurement Introduction to Manufacturing Procedure) with assistance from faculty member Dr. Rupy Sawhney. There are two GTAs who assist in teaching courses with faculty members Dr. Xiaoyan Zhu and Dr. Rupy Sawhney. Both GTAs assist faculty members by proctoring tests, submitting final grades, and substituting in class during the faculty's absence.

The GTA whose primary responsibility is teaching receives teaching evaluations through SAIS student evaluations. The results of the evaluations are shared with the GTA along with his assigned faculty member, Dr. Rupy Sawhney. Any suggestions of improvements are communicated through scheduled meetings. The two GTAs who assist faculty members are evaluated by their assigned faculty member. These evaluations are communicated to the GTAs through scheduled meetings. The faculty members provide the GTA positive or negative feedback on their performance. Any issues that arise which are not resolved with the GTA are submitted to the department head for further discussions.

The remaining GTAs are assigned to various departmental labs, updating the department website and updating the department's Facebook account. With oversight from the faculty member assigned to the IE lab, the GTA's responsibilities include: maintaining and improving the overall functionality of the lab, maintaining the lab's budget and providing lab access to other students. Further, one GTA is assigned to updating the website's content on a periodic basis. This includes updating department news, events and any approved changes approved on by the department. Another GTA is assigned to updating and maintaining the department's Facebook account. These individuals works closely with the recruitment committee, the student interest committee and faculty to inform IE's current student body and alumni on department news, events and changes in the department through the Facebook account.

Materials Science and Engineering

In the Materials Science and Engineering Department in the 2011-2012 academic year, there were 7 GTA's who acted as laboratory teaching assistants and 9 GTA's who assisted faculty as graders. Evaluation of the performance of the laboratory teaching assistants was performed via the university's Student Assessment of Instruction System. GTA's who acted as graders were not evaluated. Participation of the GTA's in any teaching skill preparation classes was not required by the department.

Mechanical, Aerospace, and Biomedical Engineering

The Mechanical, Aerospace and Biomedical Engineering Department has 31 GTAs. During this academic year only one GTA had a significant/primary teaching responsibility in a single course. This GTA, who is a doctoral candidate, was supervised by a professor who was listed as the course instructor. The professor and students evaluated the GTAs performance.

Four GTAs lead a two hour laboratory as a component of a three hour course. The GTAs are trained by GTAs who have taught the laboratory previously as well as the faculty member in charge of the common lecture portion of the course. These positions are limited to US citizens with good communication skills who have had this course as undergraduate students at UTK. Their performance is evaluated by the faculty member in charge of the course each semester.

The remaining GTAs assist professors in the teaching of courses primarily through homework grading and laboratory setup. Their performance is evaluated by the professor to whom they are assigned that semester.

In all cases above, inadequate/poor performance is addressed by the faculty member in charge of the GTA that semester. More often than not, a problem is addressed during the semester when it is observed rather than at the end of the semester.

Nuclear Engineering

The usual policy of this department is that no GTAs will have primary teaching responsibility; however, with the inopportune timing of Dr.Liao's departure, we were forced to have Seyed Nicknam teach NE 585. In this unusual case, Dr. Upadhyaya is the instructor of record and meets with Seyed periodically to provide assistance and review his performance.

GTAs are primarily used to assist faculty in grading but also are used in our laboratory classes to assist the students in setting up and operating the laboratory exercises. In all cases, the responsible instructor has responsibility for preparing the student for their assignment and monitoring their performance. This usually includes periodic meetings and laboratory preparation meetings. Since our GTAs are not used for teaching, we have not used graduate school services.

In the future, we feel it is important to allow experienced graduate students the opportunity to teach courses if they plan on entering the faculty profession. I am not aware of the graduate school professional development activities for students wanting to enter education, but feel a program should be developed that includes teaching workshops, research proposal development seminars, and faculty search preparation.