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Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes

Graduate Council

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11-10-2016

## Graduate Associate Deans' Group Minutes - November 10, 2016

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# MINUTES

## Graduate Associate Deans

November 10, 2016

Frieson Black Cultural Center Multipurpose Room  
2:00 – 3:00PM

**Members Attending:** **Dixie Thompson** (Vice-Provost & Dean), **Jeffrey Fairbrother** (Education, Health, & Human Sciences), **Mary Gunther** (Nursing), **Charlie Noble** (Haslam Business), **Katherine Ambroziak** (Architecture and Design), **Todd Moore** (Arts & Sciences), **Claudia Kirk** (Veterinary Medicine), **Masood Parang** (Tickle Engineering), **John Stier** (CASNR), **Bruce Behn** (Haslam Business), **Alex Long** (Law), **Stephen Kania** (Vet Med), **Joan Rentsch** (Communication & Information)

**Ex Officio:** **Holly Mercer** (University Libraries), **Sean Hendricks** (Graduate School), **Yvonne Kilpatrick** (Graduate School)

1. **Welcome & meeting called to order** at 2 p.m. by Dixie Thompson. Today will be an abbreviated meeting to allow for Graduate Council set up, which immediately follows.
2. **Minutes of the October 13, 2016 meeting were approved** with an editorial change to the date of the next meeting, which should reflect today's date: November 10.
3. **Graduate School Updates**

**A. Graduate & Professional Student Appreciation Week –**

In the past it has been late before the date has been set, and the role that departments could play has not always been discussed and defined.

This year the date has been set for **April 3 – 7, 2017**. The purpose of that week is to draw the attention of the campus to our graduate and professional students; to highlight their work and to host supportive activities for them. In the past, the library has been a strong partner in this endeavor, as has the TN Teaching Learning Center. Other partners have included Career Services and Athletics.

We would like to encourage you to take this back to your departments and see how you might want to participate during that week in support of your graduate students. Dr. Thompson will work to get the centralized things set up early, so that you have opportunity to plan time slots for local activities. Sometimes graduate students feel isolated, so consider things that colleges can do across their units, or perhaps multiple colleges could get together to host an event.

The president of the Graduate Student Senate has noted that many graduate students would like to have more opportunities to connect with alumni. Perhaps think of events where an alum could be brought in to meet with current students and talk about opportunities and/or experiences. Along the same lines, our graduate students are really interested in opportunities to take part in visits with your board of visitors when they come in and other similar activities. We encourage you to talk with your deans and think about ways some of these activities might happen.

- B. 3 Minute Thesis (3MT):** This is an activity we have done for a couple of years, and it has been fairly successful without a lot of preparation in the past. In the summer, Dr. Thompson attended a Council of Graduate Schools meeting and the Dean from Mississippi State talked about putting together this event and the huge impact that it can make. It provides exposure for our students and programs, and it has potential for media exposure and getting donors excited about our offerings.

This is a possibility that we may want to consider to get our students in front of people and help others understand what graduate education is all about. Google “3 MT” and you will find all sorts of material related to this idea.

Dr. Thompson shared a few video clips of presentations. The guidelines are 1 slide, 3 minutes.

In years past, it has been an open call for students to come and present their work, and we could continue to do it that way, but what we might end up with is more students than we can handle. In single events, we could handle about a dozen students in a reasonable block of time.

How would we like to proceed this year? Would you like to have local competitions and send them to a campus-wide event? Perhaps four blocks of competitions that lead into one, or would each college like to do their own? There are a lot of options, but we want to hear from you as to how you would like to see it work. (It will be during the week of April 3- 7, during Grad & Professional Student Recognition.) We will need to plan on multiple competitions. Often in these types of events, the judges will pick a winner, and usually the audience participates on some level, too.

Discussed some of the various possibilities for the event: perhaps competitions by discipline, having a “best in show,” altering the dates so that they come after the Graduate School deadlines to encourage more participation (Dr. Thompson asked Dr. Galloway to check on those Spring deadlines). Also discussed methods of submission (video submission, you-tube channel uploads, etc.) and recognition of winners (perhaps during hooding). Additional discussion on appropriate venues, lead-up sessions, finals, how to navigate making sure multiple disciplines are represented, etc.

How to move forward? Let's put a working group together to brainstorm and come up with the game plan. Maybe include a couple of students can serve on it, as well. Volunteers?

- Bruce Behn
- John Stier
- Masood Parange
- Todd Moore
- Katherine Ambroziak
- Joan Rentsch
- Ernest Brothers

Dr. Thompson will ask Sarah Stone to pull the group together soon, virtually if necessary, before Thanksgiving to start talking and sharing ideas. The group will come to us at the next meeting (December 15) with their plan.

As requested, Dr. Galloway shared the defense deadline, which is April 7 and the submission of pass/fail forms, which are due by April 19.

#### **4. Sharing Information/Sources of Information for Graduate Students - Sean Hendricks**

This is something that came up from questions raised by our directors of graduate studies. They were looking at the degree programs listed on the web, and each of those programs has a link to it that takes the user to the catalog page where the requirements for that program are listed. However, when directed to the catalog, the program requirement pages are typically dead ends. In many cases, there are no links back to the department. In order to find out more information, the user has to try to determine what department they are in and then search for that page and any additional information they can find. While some departments do have a link in the text to their department/program pages, many do not.

We can add links in the text if we decide to do that. The question becomes whether or not we want to have some type of consistency with these links? (Should they be in the same place across all of the pages with similar wording and appearance?) Right now links are not necessarily up to date. Although the catalog is reviewed each year, links are not always being audited and kept current.

Dr. Thompson pointed out that we want to steer students to the catalog because it is the authoritative source about degree requirements. At the same time, having something that will show them pictures and see names can be more enticing than catalog text.

Discussed having two links - one for the catalog requirements, one for information about the department. But who is the audience? Most of the students looking at these pages are already enrolled...this route is not necessarily attracting external students. Prospective students probably will get to departments through their website. And those external students who do end up here, are probably just searching because they are trying to figure out where they want to go.

Dr. Thompson asked that when you receive your catalog proof, colleges think about what links they want to include. This doesn't need to go before the catalog committee; just send the sentence you want to Catherine Cox to add the link(s) and we'll approve it (and that can happen at any time...not just during the proof copy stage).

Dr. Fairbrother suggested having it as part of the template. Sean reiterated that consistency across all programs will help the user to locate how to navigate to the departmental landing pages. Currently we have circular links, which can be frustrating to our students.

Dr. Thompson: We want their navigation to be easy. We can continue to work on this, but encourage you to look at these links in your departments in the meantime.

5. **Graduate DARS Update:** Still looking to hire a person to start on the behind-the-scenes encoding required. In the meantime, we are working on other aspects. This morning Mary Albrecht shared the updated guidelines book. We hope to be able to distribute that soon (next week).
6. **Campus Climate:** Dr. Thompson shared how campus climate impacts all of us and certainly this has been a week that has been disruptive to our students. But it isn't just this week.

We would like to think of ways that we can help our students see UT as a safe space for them. If you have thoughts you would like to share, or opportunities you would like for her to speak with your students, she is happy to do that. If there are other events we can brainstorm about, other ways to help our graduate students see UT as that safe space, we welcome the dialogue and would be interested in helping partner on those.

We will have a town hall on November 17 organized by the Graduate Student Senate. We will get that information out to the Associate Deans, Directors of Graduate Studies, and our Deans, Directors, and Department Heads mail lists so that administrators can hear about it.

With no additional items, the meeting was adjourned.

**The next meeting is December 15 at 2 p.m.**