THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

September 1, 2022

Members present: Meschke, L. (Chair), Alshibli, K., Aydeniz, M., Ayo, A., Bonom, J., Cathey, A., Chaffin, K., Chappell, L., Cho, M., Crouch, C., Dickerson, A., Fathy, A., Fields, G. (Graduate Student Senate President), First, J., Gao, Y., Geidner, N., Gerhold, R., Hines, M., Lang, M., Laursen, S., Lim, J., Love, A., Mannik, J., Marshall, S., McCord, R., Misawa, M., Mohsin, M., Montgomery, K., Newkirk, K., Ownley, B., Palies, P. (UTSI), Pennell, A., Rosenbaum, B., Sachs, A., Schmidt, H., Scott, J., Summers, J., Wang, T., Zaretzki, R., Zottarelli, L.

Ex-Officio members present: Behn, B., Brothers, E., Gramling, J., Gordon, K., Kilic, O., Mercer, H., Odoi, A., Ohnesorg, S., Steele, J., Stier, J., Sullivan, M., Thompson, D., Cox, C.

1. Call to Order and Welcome (Laurie Meschke)

The Graduate Council Zoom meeting was called to order by Graduate Council Chair, Laurie Meschke on Thursday, September 1, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.

Meschke welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the year. And explained the voting process for approving the Graduate Council Minutes.

2. Minutes of the Preceding Meeting

Meschke reported, the April 28, 2022, Graduate Council Minutes were approved electronically on May 19, 2022.

3. Committee Reports

There were no committee meetings; therefore, there are no committee reports.

- **Academic Policy Committee** (Siris Laursen, chair)
- **Appeals Committee** (Phyllis Thompson, chair)
- **Curriculum Committee** (Avigail Sachs, chair)
- **Student Faculty Research Awards** (Dixie Thompson, chair)

4. Administrative Reports and Announcements:

Deans Update: (Dixie Thompson)

- Thank you to members of Graduate Council for serving this year. As an arm of the Faculty Senate, the Graduate Council serves an important role in shared governance. The Council has 4 standing committees (Curriculum, Academic Policy, Student/Faculty Research Awards, and Appeals). Agendas and meeting minutes are prepared by Graduate School staff and distributed to members. In addition to representatives from colleges, the Council has representatives from Graduate Student Senate and ex officio members from colleges and offices across campus.

- Graduate School updates:
  - Carl Collins will join the university and the Graduate School on September 19 as Associate Dean and Director of Graduate Admissions.
  - Sara Bradberry has left the university. A search will soon be announced to fill the role of Associate Dean and Director of Student Services.
  - We are continuing to fill various staff roles as we move into the fall semester.
  - Graduate/professional student enrollment as of today is 6,761 and represents approximately 2% growth over last year.
  - Summer 2022 – We awarded 560 degrees and 30 graduate certificates.
  - New Graduate Student Orientation welcomed approximately 500 new students to our campus.
  - Approximately 250 new GTAs attended the New GTA Orientation.
  - The Graduate School hosted a Community Fair, and through this event connected approximately 200 new students to offices and organizations across the university.
  - The Graduate Student Senate had a welcome social in Circle Park and hosted about 200 students at this event.

- Curriculog Update:
  - Curriculog is the new software platform we will be using to manage curricular proposals for this year. It is not ready for use just yet.
  - We have been working with colleges to build workflows and have also built the needed forms for submitting proposals.
  - We will be developing training for users, including those on the Curriculum committee.
  - We are also working on a communication plan to share information about our processes.
  - For the Sept 19 deadline – submit the materials as in years past. Associate Deans were notified of this earlier in the week. This deadline is important for any new programs that hope to launch in Fall 2023 and must undergo THEC and BOT approval.
  - Dec 19 is the final deadline to get any curricular change into the fall 2023 Graduate Catalog.

Graduate Student Senate Update (George Fields, GSS President)

- Hello everyone. I am George Fields, a 4th year Political Science doctoral student and this year I am serving as the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) President. I would like to take this time to introduce our GSS Vice President for this year, Leighton Chappell.

- For updates. Let me communicate, we have been busy over the summer. Thankfully with the establishment of the GSS Coordinator in the Graduate School, Nick Jakel, he began working with GSS in May and through the summer to consolidate resources and get us started earlier than usual.

- During the summer, we had an interim Executive Committee in place to keep things running. At our first GSS on August 30, that committee was confirmed.

- Over the summer we looked at our representation. As a result of that representation evaluation, I am happy to report we added 11 new seats to the Graduate Student Senate.

- As I mentioned, our first meeting was August 30. This was a great organizational meeting.

- GSS will again this year support graduate and professional students with the same two awards offered last year – the Academic Support Awards and the GSS Travel Awards.
  - The Academic Support awards: we expanded this award to include graduation regalia as well as electronic device purchases and repairs.
  - The Travel Awards: we expanded the fund to help increase the number of awards to be given this year and the dollar amount awarded.

- Initiatives for this year. We are looking at a variety of ways to improve the graduate student experience. We are looking at issues related to housing, financial, and food insecurities. We want to be a source to connect graduate and professional students to resources that already exist on campus. We are looking at resources for parking and office space. We want to expand GSS awareness and outreach on campus. Leighton and I look forward to working with you this year.

L. Meschke:
Thank you, George, for the GSS report. Any questions or comments for George?

> Question: As UT does not offer graduate student housing, the housing issue is a major problem for our students. Especially, our international students that do not arrive on campus until close to the start of the semester. This is not a question for George and not a mission for Graduate Council. But, hopefully in the future UT will look to build affordable housing for our graduate students.

G. Fields: I can relate some good news. Leighton Chappell, our GSS vice-president, worked during the summer with those GSS executive team members, to create a rough draft housing guide. Our intent is to share this housing guide or housing resources with our graduate and professional students when they apply so they will have some resources available to hopefully, help find housing.

D. Thompson: At the end of last year, the Graduate Student Senate passed a resolution asking the university administration to look at the issue of graduate student housing. That resolution was received by the chancellor and vice-chancellors and there is movement ongoing to form a task force with multiple offices that will be charged to look at this important issue. The individuals who are working to secure housing are aware of the issues facing our students. There will be continued attention to this important issue in the year ahead.

Graduate Council Chair (Laurie Meschke)

I do not have a formal report today, but I want to say thank you to Stefanie Ohnesorg, our past Graduate Council chair. I am grateful for the warm handoff and the support you provided in the transitioning of this role. I also want to thank you for your willingness to take on the leadership in revising the Graduate Council Bylaws. Let me put out the call that anyone on Graduate Council that would like to work with Stefanie in reviewing the Bylaws, please let Stefanie or me know. This would be great way to get involved.

> S. Ohnesorg: Thank you, Laurie. Yes, I will be working on the Bylaws this year. This is something that we did not get to last year. But, our aim this year is to update the Bylaws.

I also extend my gratitude to Phyllis Thompson from the College of Social Work. Phyllis was elected and serves as our chair-elect this year. As chair-elect, Phyllis also serves as Chair of the Appeals Committee.

Lastly, we have two committees that need chairs. If you are on the Academic Policy Committee or the Curriculum Committee, please consider the opportunity to serve in a leadership role as chair. The leadership roles are extremely supported by the Graduate School.

That concludes my announcements. Dr. Thompson, I turn the meeting back to you for instructions on the breakout sessions.

D. Thompson: For our Council members, notice on today's agenda your name is listed with the appropriate committee you are assigned to. When this meeting ends in just a minute, we will go to our breakout sessions. Please join the meeting with which you are appointed to. During the breakout sessions, the role of the members and the purpose of the committee will be discussed. For the APC and Curriculum Committee, a chair also needs to be appointed.

For those attending that are not on a committee, the meeting is adjourned. The council members on committees, please join your appropriate committee now.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cox
Graduate Council Liaison