



**Minutes of the Graduate Council  
May 7, 2021**

**Members in Attendance:**

Ali Beskok, Alan Itkin, Adam Jasienski, Akihito Kamata, Renee McDonald, Volkan Otugen, Anthony Petrosino, James E. Quick, Dinesh Rajan, Gretchen Smith

*Ex officio members:* Suku Nair, Heather Shaw

**Members Not in Attendance:**

Jodi Cooley, Elfi Kraka, Brian Molanphy, Alexandra E. Pavlakis

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**Business:**

- **Moody School Administrative Handbook:** Prior to the meeting, the Graduate Council voted by email on four items for the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies Administrative Handbook: "Review of Registrar Forms for Ph.D. Students," "Approval of Candidacy for Ph.D. Students," "Review of Timeline Extensions for Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation for Ph.D. Students," and "Approval of Graduation and Collection of Graduation Surveys for Ph.D. Students." Dr. Quick went through the votes on these items (see slides 4-7 on the attached PowerPoint presentation). The first two items were passed 12-0 with no objections or comments.

For "Review of Timeline Extensions for Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation for Ph.D. Students," which receive 11 "yes" votes, 1 "no" vote, and 1 request for clarification, Dr. Petrosino voiced a concern that no mechanism was in place for resolution of conflicts between the Dean of the Moody School and the home school dean. Dr. Quick suggested that any conflict could be resolved by the Provost or her designate. There was discussion of this solution, but no one objected. Dr. McDonald voiced a concern that, unlike for other items in the Handbook, this one does not explicitly permit the home school dean to ask the Moody School to perform this function on their behalf. This is what is normally done now for graduate students in Dedman. Dr. Rajan asked for clarification on which students would be affected by these new policies. Dr. Quick said that, for policies like "Review of Timeline Extensions," these policies will only apply to students who matriculated after the launch of the Moody School.

For "Approval of Graduate and Collection of Graduation Surveys for Ph.D. Students," which received 11 "yes" votes and 1 "no" vote, Dr. Petrosino voiced a concern that the language as originally worded was vague, especially the statement that the Moody School "coordinates" with departments and schools as appropriate on graduation lists. Renee McDonald suggested that the

language could be changed to make it clearer that the Moody School will develop the graduation list but will work with schools and departments to ensure that it is complete and accurate.

Dr. Quick recommended that the wording of the two items that were still up for discussion be revised and that a vote be held electronically on them with three options: “yes,” “no,” “abstain.” The Council agreed and agreed that the vote should be held via Qualtrics survey rather than via email.

- **Ph.D. recruitment challenge grants:** Dr. Quick and Dr. Itkin went through the draft proposal for the Ph.D. Recruitment Challenge Grant program (slides 8-9) and emphasized two points: 1) the program is intended to get faculty actively involved in the program, and 2) the materials provided are just a starting point, meant to seed discussion. Dr. Nair raised a concern that very productive faculty members would need additional motivation to participate in this program: he suggested that they should be granted a guaranteed fellowship regardless of whether the student to whom they want to grant the fellowship is recruited through the program funded by a challenge grant or not. Dr. Quick agreed with this idea. Dr. Jasienski suggested that preparing and distributing materials at conferences could be a good recruitment device as well and Dr. Smith agreed with this. Dr. Kamata recommended that clear guidelines needs to be in place in terms of the level of funding provided to support winning proposals. He also asked about how outcomes would be measured, and Dr. Itkin reiterated Dr. Cooley’s point from a previous meeting that it would be a good idea to ask grant recipients to report on the success of their funded programs afterwards. Dr. Rajan suggested that recruitment programs could be broad enough to include master’s and Ph.D. or multiple disciplines and that, in these cases, the Moody School and the home school of the programs involved could share costs. He also recommended that the application and reporting requirements not be too onerous, in order not to discourage proposals. Dr. McDonald raised several concerns, including that, in some programs, students don’t begin working with a specific faculty member until later in the program, and that there are challenges not only in getting promising prospective students to apply but also getting them to accept the offer of admission. There was some discussion of these concerns. Dr. Beskok raised the possibility of recruiting at undergraduate conferences and competitions.
- **Graduate honor code (presentation by Prof. Suku Nair):** Dr. Nair summarized discussions in the Research and Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty Senate, which he chairs, about whether a Graduate Honor Council would be necessary and what policies would govern such a Council and the Honor Code they would be responsible for upholding (see slides 10-14). The committee concluded that, given the undergraduate focus of the current university-wide Honor Council, establishing a Graduate Honor Council would be a step forward for graduate students and their programs. After looking at models at other universities and within schools at SMU, the Committee developed a proposal for an Honor Council similar to the current university-wide Honor Council, but with key differences: the Graduate Honor Council will include graduate student representatives from all schools (except Cox and Dedman Law) and will also include faculty members from each school nominated by the Faculty Senate and a member nominated by the Moody School. Dr. McDonald suggested that “academic sabotage” be extended to include sabotage not just of fellow students, but of faculty as well, and raised the issue that students’ “academic” work that might be covered by

an honor code overlaps with professional work they do as teaching assistants and research they do as part of their programs. Dr. Rajan suggested that one year of experience in graduate school, as a requirement for graduate students to serve on the Honor Council, was perhaps too high a bar, as it would exclude many master's students. Dr. Nair asked that the draft proposal be distributed to the Council for comments.

- **Virtual orientation:** Dr. Itkin explained which students are currently included in the virtual graduate student orientation run by the Moody School and asked for information from the Council on different orientations occurring in their schools and input on whether additional incoming students in their schools should be invited (slide 15). Dr. Smith suggested that additional students in Meadows, specifically M.F.A. and music students, would benefit from the orientation. Dr. Jasienski asked whether the plan was to move back to an in-person orientation in the long term, and Dr. Itkin answered that much of the material in the orientation would probably stay virtual even after regular in-person events resume.
- **Future items for discussion:** Dr. Itkin ran through a list of possible items for the Council's review and said that the Council would be able to provide input on this list and other suggestions for items for the Council's discussion (slide 16).
- Meeting adjourned.



SMU

# Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies Graduate Council Meeting

May 7, 2021, 1:30-3:00pm

Zoom Meeting

1. Moody School Administrative Handbook
2. Ph.D. recruitment challenge grants
3. Graduate honor code (presentation by Prof. Suku Nair)
4. Virtual orientation
5. Future items for discussion
6. Other items



- March Meeting Minutes: 9 Yes votes, 0 No votes
- April meeting minutes: sent by email, available in Teams, vote by email



**Review of Registrar Forms for Ph.D. Students:** Late add/drop and other Registrar forms that require a “school signature” are approved by the designee of the Dean of the student’s home school\*. Approval by the Moody School is also required for cases in which the student is a recipient of a fellowship provided by the University or the Moody School. Following approval, forms are forwarded to the Registrar for processing and to the Moody School for the purpose of maintaining records.

- “Home school” refers to the school that houses the student’s department or program.

12 Yes votes, 0 No votes



**Approval of Candidacy for Ph.D. Students:** Candidacy forms are signed by the Director of Graduate Studies or Department Chair, approved by the designee of the Dean of the student's home school, and forwarded to the Moody School, so that the Moody School can add milestones to the student's transcript. This allows accurate tracking of candidacy for data purposes, recognition at candidacy reception, and tracking of progress to degree. Tracking progress to degree allows the Moody School to alert departments/programs when students are close to limits prescribed in the catalog so a timeline extension may be considered.

12 Yes votes, 0 No votes





**Review of Timeline Extensions for Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation for Ph.D. Students:** When a student is nearing the limit set in the catalog for advancement to candidacy or graduation after advancing to candidacy, the department/program forwards a petition for an extension (generally a one-year extension) to the timeline to the Office of the School Dean and to the Moody School along with a letter of support from the DGS or Department Chair. The School Dean or their designee, and the Moody Dean or their designee must both approve extension requests. A record of the approval is maintained by both the student's home school and the Moody School.

10 Yes vote, 1 No vote, 1 Question

- No vote comment: Language needs to be added on how agreement is reached if Dean of College and Dean of Moody disagree.
- Question: The item on timeline extensions is worded differently from the others, in a way that requires such forms to come to the college Dean's office when they now do not. This is addressed in the other items by referring to the "dean's designee" rather than "the office of the dean" as the recipient of the documents.



### **Approval of Graduation and Collection of Graduation Surveys for Ph.D. Students:**

The Moody School is responsible for collecting Survey of Earned Doctorates information. The Moody School coordinates with departments and schools as appropriate, and with the Registrar's office on final graduation lists for Ph.D. students. Coordinating the graduate list assists the Moody School in recognizing doctoral graduates in graduation ceremonies. Collecting Survey of Earned Doctorates information allows for accurate tracking of graduation statistics and accurate, uniform responses to Survey of Earned Doctorates requests for information. As resources allow, the Moody School will be responsible for tracking and reporting on Ph.D. career outcomes.

11 Yes votes, 1 No vote

- No vote comment: Clarity needs to be added about Moody “coordinating” with the college. Moody will need to have dedicated persons to obtain this information from PhD students---not emails coming from Moody requesting information from the colleges. This will place more load on the college staff. “Coordinating” needs to be articulated better in this resolution I believe.



- Program to be developed in collaboration with the Graduate Council
- To be launched for Fall 2022 admission cycle
- Intended to support faculty and departments in actively recruiting exceptional prospective Ph.D. students
- Funded initiatives might include:
  - faculty visits to universities with strong departments in their fields to present research, share information about their program at SMU, meet potential applicants, and distribute recruitment materials
- Faculty or departments whose initiatives are funded might also be offered:
  - A guaranteed fellowship for one prospective Ph.D. student the faculty member/department recruits through the funded initiative, provided the student is approved by the department and the University for admission
  - Research funding for one prospective Ph.D. student the faculty member/department recruits through the funded initiative, for research performed outside of SMU, provided the student is approved by the department and the University for admission



## Ph.D. Recruitment Challenge Grants

| Draft Rubric for Evaluation of Ph.D. Recruiting Challenge Grants |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Category   | 1  | 3   | 5  |
| Program & Lead Faculty Member's Record of Mentoring Success      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program graduates &gt;60% of students</li> <li>Lead faculty member has a strong record of graduating Ph.D. mentees</li> <li>Proposal gives strong evidence of lead faculty member's mentoring success, including mentoring of underrepresented students</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program graduates 40-60% of students</li> <li>Lead faculty member has some record of graduating Ph.D. mentees</li> <li>Proposal gives some evidence of lead faculty member's mentoring success, including mentoring of underrepresented students</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The program graduates &lt;40% of students</li> <li>Lead faculty member does not have a record of graduating Ph.D. mentees</li> <li>Proposal does not give evidence of lead faculty member's mentoring success, and no success in mentoring underrepresented students</li> </ul>   |
| Targeting of Potential Students                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal identifies a pool of potential students with strong academic qualifications</li> <li>The pool of potential students is large (15 or more potential applicants)</li> <li>The pool of potential students is diverse, including a significant number from underrepresented groups</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal identifies a pool of potential students with somewhat strong academic qualifications</li> <li>The pool of potential students is somewhat large (10-14 potential applicants)</li> <li>The pool of potential students is somewhat diverse</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal does not provide evidence that the pool of potential students is well qualified</li> <li>The pool of potential students is small (&lt;10 potential applicants)</li> <li>There is no evidence that the pool is diverse</li> </ul>   |
| Recruitment Plan   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal includes strong opportunities to engage potential students and faculty letter writers</li> <li>The proposal clearly explains how the Ph.D. program will be convincingly pitched</li> <li>The proposal includes significant additional outreach and materials to be shared with potential students</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal includes somewhat good opportunities to engage potential students and faculty letter writers</li> <li>The proposed pitch for the Ph.D. program is somewhat well explained and seems somewhat convincing</li> <li>The proposal includes some additional outreach and materials to be shared with potential students</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal does not include strong opportunities to engage potential students and faculty letter writers</li> <li>The proposal does not include a clear explanation of a pitch, or the pitch does not seem convincing</li> <li>The proposal does not include additional outreach or materials to be shared with potential students</li> </ul> |
| Sustainability of Recruitment Pipeline                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal identifies a sustainable pool of applicants, which will continue to be available in future years</li> <li>The proposal includes a strong plan to establish good relationships with departments and faculty at other schools</li> <li>The proposal includes strong plans for maintaining these relationships in future years</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal identifies a pool of applicants which may continue to be available in future years</li> <li>The proposal includes some plans for establishing relationships with departments and faculty at other schools</li> <li>The proposal includes some description of how these relationships will be maintained</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pool of applicants may not continue to exist in future years</li> <li>The proposal does not provide plans for establishing relationships with departments and faculty at other schools</li> <li>The proposal does not describe how any relationships developed will be maintained</li> </ul>  |



# SRGE Committee Report (AY 20-21)

Suku Nair

# Members

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# Graduate Honor Council

- Current honor code focus on undergraduate students
- Charged to investigate an Honor Council for graduate students that would be run by graduate students and the Student Life staff
  - Honor codes from all graduate programs on campus
  - Honor code on SMU student handbook
  - Reviewed other universities
- Developed a draft constitution in line with the undergraduate honor code

# Salient Items

- Student members from all graduate schools (except Cox and Law)
  - Selected by the respective schools and forwarded to the council executive board by the graduate program directors
  - Students appointed to the Honor Council must have successfully completed at least one year at SMU
  - Remain in good academic standing, and without any Honor Code violation
  - Should undergo training through the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies
- Faculty members
  - One each from each school nominated by the faculty senate
  - One nominated by the Moody School



# Salient Items (cont'd)

- Deleted one section from Penalties Article:
  - For a period of one year no student with HV on their record shall be entitled to a scholarship based on any factor other than need.
- Need to include:
  - Any research misconduct will be handled according to SMU Policy 10.6, which under SMU policy and federal guidelines takes precedence on all research misconduct matters. This is to ensure that the GHC do not establish a competing system of adjudication on those matters

# Virtual Graduate Student Orientation

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## START HERE: COURSE INFORMATION

Welcome to SMU and Introduction  
View

Graduate Student Resources  
View

Graduate Student Resources Center  
100 pts | Score at least 70.0

Health and Safety  
View

Health and Safety  
100 pts | Score at least 70.0

Student Conduct, Student Support, and Title IX Regulations  
View

Student Conduct, Student Support, and Title IX  
100 pts | Score at least 70.0

Q&A with Current Students and Faculty

Course Information Acknowledgment  
100 pts | Submit

## International Students

International Students Overview

International Student and Scholar Services Office

Getting Cleared to Enroll and into Active Student Status

Transitioning to the U. S. Classroom

Living in Dallas, Texas

Adjusting to U.S. Culture and Navigating Culture Shock

Health and Mental Wellness for International Students

Important Reminders About U.S. Laws and Safety

Closing



- Possible Items:
  - **Annual review of Ph.D. students**
  - **Ph.D. and M.F.A. student technology fund**
  - **Ph.D. students taking classes in other schools**
  - Additional hourly work, on top of assistantships, for graduate students
  - 0-credit hour classes and full-time status
  - Doctoral hooding ceremony
  - Graduate transfer credit evaluation process and degree verification (SACSCOC 9.5)
- Please consider additional items and share them with us.
  - Appropriate items are those that relate to graduate education across SMU and especially involve Moody School interaction with other schools, programs.

