

# TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

**Graduate Education Advisory Committee  
THECB Building, 1200 E. Anderson Lane  
Board Room  
Austin, Texas**

## **Summary Notes June 6, 2019**

### Members attending:

Blanca Bauer	Sarah Larsen
Richard Berry	Kathryn Matthew
Karen Butler-Purry (Chair)	Karen N. McCaleb
Lucía Durá	Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley
DoVeanna Fulton	Dean Neikirk
Kenneth Hendrickson (phone)	Claire Peel
Raymond Jackson	Cynthia Rutledge (phone)
Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy	Jennifer Schroeder
Barry Lambert	Mark A. Sheridan

### Delegates attending:

- Ambika Mathur, delegate for Can Saygin, The University of Texas at San Antonio
- Natalie Lundsteen, delegate for Andrew Zinn, UT Southwestern
- Elizabeth Vogt, delegate for Joseph Oppong, University of North Texas

Members absent: Andrea Golato (Vice-Chair), William Harn, Thomas Krueger

Coordinating Board staff attending: James Goeman, Jennifer Nailos, Stacey Silverman, Julie Eklund, and Luis Martinez

### **Agenda Item 1. Welcome, introductions, and call to order**

Dr. Karen Butler-Purry, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Dr. Butler-Purry welcomed the committee and invited the members, Coordinating Board staff, and audience to introduce themselves.

Dr. Butler-Purry recognized outgoing committee members for their service.

- Dr. Blanca Bauer, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
- Dr. Thomas Krueger, Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- Dr. Karen McCaleb, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
- Dr. Cynthia Rutledge, McMurry University
- Dr. Can Saygin, The University of Texas at San Antonio

### **Agenda Item 2. Review of meeting procedures**

Dr. Butler-Purry provided instructions for meeting procedures and microphone use. Dr. Butler-Purry also reviewed the procedures for discussion, action items, and voting. Dr. Jennifer Nailos provided information on delegate duties and limitations while participating in the

meeting. Dr. Butler-Purry reminded committee members that post-meeting emails will include action items, *Summary Notes*, and reporting.

### **Agenda Item 3. Consideration of approval of Summary Notes from the February 9, 2019 meeting**

Dr. Jennifer Schroeder requested to amend the *Summary Notes* from February 9, 2019 to reflect her attendance via phone. Dr. Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy moved to accept the *Summary Notes* as amended; Dr. Mark Sheridan seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

### **Agenda Item 4. Update on and discussion of the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education**

Dr. James Goeman provided an update on the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education*. The document is under review and staff will make revisions in response to Coordinating Board leadership's review of the document. Following revisions, the document will be released for public comment. Following the public comment period, staff will consider comments, make any necessary revisions, and then put the document forward for Board consideration. The updated target is the fall Board meeting.

### **Agenda Item 5. Presentation of trends from the Program Inventory**

Dr. Goeman provided information from the program inventory in response to a request made at a previous GEAC meeting. It is important to keep the Program Inventory up-to-date in order to match an institution's inventory records and to align with the Federal CIP codes which are updated every ten years.

Dr. Goeman reviewed charts included in the meeting packet. New graduate programs by 2-digit CIP from fiscal year 2010 to 2019 were included in the first chart. During this time-period, the most activity for new graduate programs was in education, engineering, health professions, and business. The second chart illustrates the contrast between the number of new programs and the number of programs phased-out; this chart shows that new programs and phase-outs are pretty balanced in the inventory over time.

The third chart shows semester-credit hour (SCH) changes over time. Often, there are changes to the discipline that require SCH changes. The final chart shows SCH changes by CIP code. There are specific disciplines with high activity for example engineering, health, education, and biomedical sciences. These changes can be attributed to accreditation and licensure changes, serving the local population, response to changes in the field.

Committee members asked for explanation on high activity years in the various charts. Chart three with SCH changes shows high activity in 2019. This is in response to a Coordinating Board request for institutions to update their inventory. Chart two with new programs and phase-outs shows high activity in 2016, which may be in response to LPP. Staff will confirm the numbers in the charts and send out an updated version to the committee with any corrections notated.

### **Agenda Item 6. Presentation of best practices for graduate programs identifying Marketable Skills**

Dr. Claire Peel provided an overview on how the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) addressed identifying *Marketable Skills* for graduate students. UNTHSC aligned its *Characteristics of the Provider of the Future* with *Marketable Skills* for

graduate students. The campus set a goal to come up with five or six *Marketable Skills* and looked at how to condense ideas. Employers were involved in the conversations and provided information on their expectations for employees and the skills students should acquire before entering the workplace. UNTHSC is also discussing the concept on badging and micro-credentialing.

Dr. Nailos presented materials submitted by Dr. Thomas Krueger, Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Materials included MBA *Marketable Skills* and Objectives, mapping across the MBA program, and course syllabi.

Dr. Mark Sheridan asked how institutions balance the emphasis of soft skills and discipline-specific skills in their identification of *Marketable Skills* exercises. Dr. Goeman noted that on page 23 of the meeting packet, Texas A&M-Kingsville sample materials show that programs are part of a global context of education.

Dr. DoVeanna Fulton asked Dr. Peel to discuss the process that institution used to come up with the *Marketable Skills* across programs. Dr. Peel shared that Academic and Faculty Affairs worked with Student Affairs and present collectively to the Deans in the Schools and Colleges. Students must be competent in their discipline and develop broader skills.

Dr. Lakshmanaswamy noted that the two examples possess similar *Marketable Skills*, for example communication, but address the skill differently. Dr. Ambika Mathur shared that at a previous institution, “transferrable skills” were developed for doctoral students and programs. These transferable skills were created for students across the institution and medical school to serve as elements within a core curriculum for graduate students; elective courses allowed graduate programs to add additional skill sets for students. Additionally, the institution borrowed from industry credential descriptions and badges that could be used on social media, resumes, etc., so employers could see the skills that student acquired.

Dr. Lucía Durá added that The University of Texas at El Paso is incorporating an Individualized Development Plan (IDP) plan for graduate students. It is important for students to be able to articulate what the skills mean to them and how the skills can transfer into other contexts. Dr. Goeman added that the examples are trying to get at areas that are difficult to get at, such as emotional empathy (as measured by the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQI)).

## **Agenda Item 7. Presentation of institutional approaches to demonstrate the value and contribution of graduate education**

Dr. Mark Sheridan presented how Texas Tech University approaches demonstrating the value and contribution of graduate education through different strategies. First, building cross-campus relationships with graduate education, leadership, research, and other key stakeholders is important for expressing the value of graduate education. Highlighting the value-added programs such as student support, fellowships, academic support, the writing center, and funding helps increase awareness. Engagement with external constituencies including advisory councils, business leaders, and local industries is another mechanism for promoting the contributions of graduate education through community activities and showcases.

Dr. Richard Berry provided an overview on how Stephen F. Austin State University approaches demonstrating the value and contribution of graduate education. The campus maintains formal and informal connections with alumni, local stakeholders, community, businesses, and regional collaborations. Often, recruitment of new graduate students is the primary reason for communicating the value of graduate education; this responsibility is a particular challenge during a strong economy. The responsibility is decentralized across campus

and embedded in each college or department; this can be an advantage because these individuals are most knowledgeable in their content area or domain.

Dr. Durá asked the committee to provide suggestions on maintaining communications with alumni. Dr. Sheridan shared that there is a database of alumni the institution has built. An effort is to start with in-state alumni and then to find pockets across the U.S. where graduate alumni are concentrated. In addition, recruiting new students is a way to engage alumni by inviting them to participate in their local area. Dr. Berry added that maintaining alumni contact information and connections is successfully done by the discipline or program. Dr. Butler-Purry added that at Texas A&M University the campus found that university branding around graduate education was needed for recruiting. Resources were invested in this effort, and in turn, graduate alumni connections are building and contact information is being collected and stored.

The members discussed how graduate students are incorporated in commencement ceremonies. An advantage is to show all levels of degrees at the ceremonies, however, for many campuses the logistics of these ceremonies are complicated. Some institutions are separating the commencements into smaller groupings of undergraduate, master's, and doctoral-levels, while other institutions incorporate all levels, by college or school.

### **Agenda Item 8. Presentation of institutional approaches to identify and support diverse career pathways for graduate students**

Dr. Natalie Lundsteen presented how UT Southwestern approaches identifying and supporting career pathways for graduate students. The institution created a specific position to support students' career pathways. Responsibilities include identifying and providing transferable skills training that will prepare students in their careers, supporting student professional organizations, and building alumni connections. Examples of resources for the field include ImaginePhD, BEST, IDPs, Graduate Career Consortium, and Versatile PhD.

Dr. Sheridan presented how Texas Tech University approaches identifying and supporting career pathways for graduate students. The approach is to expand the vision of options for students and to shift faculty culture. The institution is using alumni and advisory councils to hold discussions with students on career pathways and opportunities. Faculty work closely with students to chart their course; they might use tools such as IDP or AAAS to facilitate these planning conversations. Tracking student career paths with exit and alumni surveys is another approach to building connections and presenting pathways to students.

The members discussed various mechanisms where students learn about and engage with future career opportunities and employers. Internships are helpful during the academic experience. Career services can help support graduate students with communications, position postings, mock interviews, trainings, and workshops.

### **Agenda Item 9. Lunch**

Dr. Berry motioned to break for lunch; Dr. Lakshmanaswamy seconded; The motion was unanimously approved. The committee resumed at 12:22 p.m.

### **Agenda Item 10. Discussion of online graduate program data**

Dr. Nailos presented information from the Texas Higher Education Accountability data on online graduate programs. From 2014 to 2018, the number of graduate semester credit hours taken online increased 40 percent and semester credit hours taken face-to-face decreased 12

percent at Texas public universities. Online master's-level semester credit hours increased the most over this period.

The members requested additional information on policies related to international student enrollment in online graduate programs.

### **Agenda Item 11. Update on Texas Higher Education Accountability data related to graduate programs**

Dr. Julie Eklund, Assistant Commissioner, Strategic Planning and Funding, and Mr. Luis Martinez, Program Director, Strategic Planning and Funding presented on graduate program data resources and tools including the [Texas Higher Education Accountability](#) data system, [Texas CREWS](#), [Texas Higher Education Data](#), and [Texas CIP Codes](#). GEAC members practiced running data inquiries and downloading data files.

### **Agenda Item 12. Update on and discussion of Learning Technology Advisory Committee activities**

Drs. Butler-Purry, McCaleb, Goeman, and Nailos provided an update on the May 31, 2019 Learning Technology Advisory Committee (LTAC) meeting discussion with GEAC members. LTAC reviews new doctoral program proposals that would be offered as distance education programs (online, off-site, hybrid, etc.). LTAC considers the *Principles of Good Practice* when reviewing proposals; their focus is on the distance education delivery, student support services, interactions with faculty, and faculty training for the delivery-mode. LTAC also discussed multi-location delivery of doctoral programs and the importance of coordination between locations to provide a consistent experience for students.

One area the two committees could work together on is recommendations for Graduate Program Review guidelines when reviewing distance education programs. Staff will coordinate representatives from LTAC and GEAC to further discuss and prepare recommendations.

### **Agenda Item 13. Update on Coordinating Board activities**

On October 28-30, 2019, the Coordinating Board will host Liaison meetings. There will be overlapping meetings for community and technical colleges, universities, and health-related institutions. More information on the meeting schedule and details will be sent closer to the date.

Dr. Goeman provided an update on legislation that has passed. A list of bills is included in the meeting packet materials. Dr. Goeman reminded members to look at the funding patterns for institution-specific detail.

### **Agenda Item 14. Discussion of future agenda items**

The committee discussed topic ideas for 2019-20 meetings. Suggested topics include graduate student debt and career pathway outcomes. Dr. Nailos will send an email over the summer to solicit additional topic suggestions and will include a poll for scheduling 2019-20 meeting dates in this communication.

### **Agenda Item 15. Adjournment**

Dr. Dean Neikirk made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Sheridan seconded; The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m.