DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
April 27, 2011
Agenda

The fifth meeting of the Graduate Assembly for the 2010-2011 academic year will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2011, at 2:15 PM in the Harry Ransom Center, Tom Lea Room, 3.206.

Order of Business

I. Approval of the minutes of the February 2, 2011 meeting
II. Report of the Graduate Dean (Victoria Rodríguez)
III. Report of Chair (Elmira Popova)
   A. Introduction of new members for 2011-2014
   B. Election of chair-elect for 2011-2012
IV. Academic Committee (Shernaz Garcia)
   A. Proposal to create a dual degree program in Business Administration and Energy and Earth Resources (MBA/MA). (Approval recommended) D&P 3163a
   B. Proposal to create a PhD degree program in African and African Diaspora Studies. (Approval recommended) D&P 3163b
   C. Review of the Option III programs in Electrical and Computer Engineering:
      1. Integrated Circuits and Systems and
      2. Software Engineering (report only)
V. Administrative Committee (Brian Evans)
VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Ted Odell)
VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Manuel Gonzalez)
VIII. Adjournment
Dual Master's Degree Program
Master of Business Administration
and
Master of Arts in Energy and Earth Resources

The McCombs School of Business and the Jackson School of Geosciences propose a dual degree program leading to the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and the Master of Arts (MA) in Energy and Earth Resources (EER).

The dual degree program responds to an increased need in both the public and private sectors for specialists with an advanced understanding of the science, engineering, management and international policy aspects of energy, mineral and water resources. The program is structured so that students can earn both degrees simultaneously in approximately three academic years. Students in both current programs have expressed an interest in gaining a broader understanding of the field of energy and this dual-degree provides the flexibility to focus on any aspect of energy with a solid grounding in the economics.

Admission

Students must meet the separate admission criteria of both the McCombs School and the Jackson School in order to be considered for admission to the Dual Degree program. Applicants must indicate interest in the Dual Degree program, in writing, to both admissions offices. During their first year, students enrolled in either component program may apply for admission to the Dual Program by meeting the normal admissions deadline and criteria for the degree program that they wish to add.

Requirements for the Dual Degree

Students are required to complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of work in Energy and Earth Resources, including a 6-hour thesis based on original research, and 47 credit hours in the MBA program. The core requirements for both degrees must be completed for both programs. Students may fulfill the McCombs internship in any summer during the three year period. The EER thesis will be co-supervised by a faculty member from the Energy and Earth Resources Program Graduate Studies Committee and one McCombs Graduate School Committee member.

A complete copy of the proposal is available in the Office of Graduate Studies. Contact Tom Belinoski, Assistant Dean, at belinoski@mail.utexas.edu or 232-3607, for more information.
Proposal for Doctor of Philosophy in African and African Diaspora Studies

The African and African Diaspora Studies Department (AADS) in the College of Liberal Arts proposes a graduate program in African and African Diaspora Studies leading to the Ph.D. degree.

Program Need: The University of Texas at Austin is home to the only Black Studies department in the state of Texas. Currently, no university in the south or southwest United States offers a doctoral degree in this field. In 2006 Northwestern University established a Black Studies doctoral program due to high student demand, and in the 2010-2011 academic year Brown University followed suit. In comparable programs at Harvard, Yale, and the University of California, Berkeley, only about 5 students are admitted out of 80 to 135 applicants per admissions cycle. Nationally, only 9 academic departments or centers/institutes offer a doctoral degree in Black Studies. UT’s AADS Department has more affiliated faculty members than any of these departments and is one of the only departments with multiple affiliated faculty members in the Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

Since the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year, which marked the start of the new African and African Diaspora Studies Department, there have been nineteen walk-ins and thirty-six phone calls or emails requesting information about graduate study through the new department. Ten students at The University of Texas at Austin have completed the graduate portfolio program in African and African American Studies at the doctoral level across five departments in the last four years. In the Spring 2011 semester alone, the African and African Diaspora Studies Department increased its number of undergraduate majors by 28 percent from 42 to 54. All of these factors indicate that there is a strong demand for a doctoral degree program in Black Studies and that The University of Texas at Austin will have an exceptionally qualified and large pool of applicants to select from for such a program. Moreover, this high demand and the increasing number of Black Studies departments and graduate programs throughout the United States show promising employment prospects for interdisciplinary trained scholars in the field.

Program Content: Students will be required to complete a minimum of 60 hours for the doctoral degree. Coursework completed towards the master’s degree in AADS at UT (33 hours) may count toward the PhD hour requirement. Students entering the doctoral program with a relevant master’s degree from another university may transfer up to 6 hours of coursework. All students will be required to complete 6 hours of coursework in each of the following fields: Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. All students will be required to take a foundational seminar (Introduction to African and African Diaspora Studies) that covers the canonical literature in the field and a methods course (Black Studies: Theory and Methods) in which they will learn common interdisciplinary research methods and theoretical approaches used in the field.

The AADS Department will offer five thematic concentrations: Race and Political Economy; History and Theory of Black Studies; Race and Urban Life: Economics, Health, and Education; Migration and Diaspora; and Black Expressive Culture. Although students are expected to develop a geographic concentration, the diasporic emphasis of the curriculum encourages students to adopt a transnational approach to Black Studies. The curriculum is designed to allow students to complete the program in 5 years, with two semesters dedicated to dissertation research and two semesters dedicated to dissertation writing.

Admissions Requirement: The AADS Department will recruit and admit outstanding students. The AADS Department’s Admissions Committee will make admissions decisions. Students must meet UT-Austin’s requirements for admission to the Graduate School. Additionally, applicants are expected to be proficient in at least one African Diasporic language other than English, except for applicants interested in studying the United States. The committee will consider an applicant’s academic transcript(s), her or his score on the Graduate Record Examinations General Test, three letters of recommendation from professors or employers who can speak to the applicant’s scholarly potential, an essay addressing the applicant’s background and interest in African and African Diaspora Studies, and an academic writing sample. The committee will adopt a holistic admissions approach and consider the totality of the student’s application.

A complete copy of the proposal is available in the Office of Graduate Studies. Contact Tom Belinoski, Assistant Dean, at belinoski@austin.utexas.edu, or 232-3607 for additional information.