

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY MEETING
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
March 25, 2009

Chair Susan Heinzelman called the fourth meeting of the Graduate Assembly in the 2008-2009 academic year to order on Wednesday, March 25, 2009, at 2:20 PM in the Harry Ransom Center, Tom Lea Room, 3.206.

Faculty Members Present: Bias, Carter, Cleaver, Cline, Edgar, Evans, Gamkhar, Garcia, Golden, Heinzelman, Henry, Hess, Hull, Kachelmeier, Kinney, Lauderdale, Lindstrom, March, Mehdy, Murray, Odell, Ovando, Popova, Wilson

Faculty Members Absent: Browning, Dangel, Haunschild, Horwitz, Markovits (excused), Sprinkle, Sylvie (excused)

Student Members Present: Carpenter

Student Members Absent: Garcia, Haenschen, Kim, Luu

Ex-Officio Members Present: Rodríguez

Representatives from Office of Graduate Studies: Bancroft, Belinoski, Borden, Dalton, Ellison, Grant, Hackert, Kahn

Visitors: Aghaie, Gholz, Moore

Order of Business

I. Approval of the minutes of the February 4, 2009 meeting.

The Assembly approved the minutes of the February 4, 2009, meeting.

II. Report of the Graduate Dean (Victoria Rodríguez)

Dean Rodríguez reported on four items. The Gender Equity Report had been presented at a forum on February 4. The report is available on the website of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. The co-chairs of the Gender Equity committee have been meeting with faculty in various departments to publicize the report findings.

Secondly, she described recent activities in the Texas Legislature. The Senate passed a bill capping top 10% admissions to 60% of entering freshman classes. Passage is hopeful for a bill providing benefits to graduate students holding fellowships of \$10,000 or more.

Thirdly, Dean Rodríguez said there were no developments to report regarding the long-awaited National Research Council report evaluating universities. Marvin Hackert, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, added that the NRC has recently been deciding the timetable for release of the information.

Finally, Dean Rodríguez announced the recent Graduate School awards. The Outstanding Graduate Alumnus Award was presented to Salam Fayyad who is the Prime Minister of Palestine. The Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award was given to Darrin Shaw in Government. David Springer from the School of Social Work was honored with the Outstanding Graduate Advisor Award, and the Outstanding Graduate Coordinator Award was given to Susan Corbin from Communication Studies.

III. Report of Chair (Sue Heinzelman)

Chair Heinzelman noted that the election of the Graduate Assembly was completed, and the winners were being informed. New members will be invited to attend the April meeting.

IV. Academic Committee (Paula Murray)

Chair Murray reported on four proposals. The Academic Committee had approved two Graduate Portfolio Programs: Disability Studies and Applied Statistical Modeling. No further action was needed.

There were two proposals for dual degree programs: Global Policy Studies/Middle Eastern Studies and Global Policy Studies/Asian Studies. The degrees conferred would be Master in Global Policy Studies and Master of Arts degrees.

- The Academic Committee motioned, and the Graduate Assembly unanimously approved the Global Policy Studies/Middle Eastern Studies and the Global Policy Studies/Asian Studies dual degree programs. The approval of the programs was deemed minor legislation.

V. Administrative Committee (Alan Cline)

Chair Cline presented a resolution drafted by the Administrative Committee in support of UT Austin efforts to provide domestic partner benefits for graduate students, faculty and staff. The issues of fairness and competitiveness with peer public universities were discussed. Lisa Moore, faculty member in the English Department and longtime advocate for partner benefits, spoke of several universities which were developing or had enacted domestic partner benefits,

- The Assembly unanimously approved the domestic partners benefits resolution and directed that it be forwarded to the higher university administration. The action was deemed minor legislation.

VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Harry Cleaver)

Chair Cleaver said he had nothing to report.

VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Bradley Carpenter)

GSA President Bradley Carpenter informed the group that a new President and two new Vice Presidents were set to assume office for next year. He summarized key GSA accomplishments this year and future goals. The GSA had been involved in legislative outreach with graduate students from universities nationally and within Texas. The GSA has expanded its level of representation and aims to have a graduate student representative from each department active in the organization next year. Carpenter was hopeful that graduate student housing would remain on some part of the Brackenridge tract in the redevelopment plan funded by the Regents.

VIII. Other business

Darlene Grant, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, briefly described upcoming events at the Come to Texas gathering in early April designed to recruit underrepresented populations to UT Austin graduate school.

Chair Heinzelman asked about department reporting needed for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and noted redundancy with data already held by the central administration. Associate Dean Hackert noted that departments should supply the requested data for the time being. He noted considerable efforts were underway to centralize student data so that the central administration would handle more of the accreditation tasks in the future.

Peter Hess, Germanic Studies, noted the College of Liberal Arts efforts to reduce the number of graduate students in order to increase graduate stipends. Dean Rodríguez acknowledged that this was a College effort, that the Graduate School had not been involved.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Heinzelman adjourned the meeting at 3:05 pm.

Mona Mehdy, Secretary