

**DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
AUGUST 2004**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
2003-2004**

In accordance with the Handbook of Operating Procedures of The University of Texas at Austin, the Secretary submits the following report of the activities of the Graduate Assembly during the Regular Session 2002-2003. The report summarizes pages **3078 – 3087b** of the Documents and Proceedings of the Graduate Assembly.

I. Membership of the Assembly

For the period covered by this report the faculty members were as follows:

Elected members with vote and their terms of office – serving 2003-2004

Graduate Assembly Member	Graduate Studies Committee	Term of Office
	ACADEMIC COMMITTEE	
Dean Neikirk, Chair	Electrical & Computer Engineering	2001-2005(1)
Bruce Palka	Mathematics	2003-2006(2)
Kay Avant	Nursing	2001-2004(2)
Janet Dukerich	Management	2003-2006(2)
Ken Flamm	LBJ School of Public Affairs	2001-2004(1)
Richard Markovits	Law	2003-2006(1)
Karen Rascati	Pharmacy	2003-2006(1)
Carlota Smith	Linguistics	2003-2006(1)
Andrew Riggsby*	Classics	2003-2006(1)
Robert Duke*	Music	2002-2005(1)

*Serving out the term of a member who resigned or is on leave.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Don Heider, Chair	Journalism	2002-2005(1)
Michael Oden	Architecture	2002-2005(2)
Urton Anderson	Accounting	2002-2005(1)
Irene Owens	Information Studies	2002--2005(2)
Jim Scheurich	Educational Administration	2001-2004(1)
John Allison	MSIS	2002-2005(2)
David Bogard	Mechanical Engineering	2003-2006(2)
David Herrin	Cell & Molecular	2001-2004(1)

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE

Karen Browning, Chair	Chemistry	2003-2006(1)
Katherine Arens	Germanic Studies	2003-2006(2)
Linda Golden	Marketing	2003-2006(1)
Allen Rubin	Social Work	2001-
2004(2)*		
Desmond Lawler	Civil Engineering	2003-2006(2)
Randall Parker	Special Education	2002-2005(1)
Naomi Lindstrom	Spanish & Portuguese	2003-2006(2)
Kamy Sepehrnoori	Petroleum/Geosystems Engineering	2001-2004(2)
Mona Mehdy	Molecular Biology	2003-2006(1)
Linda Ferreira-Buckley	English	2001-2004(2)

*Serving out the term of a member who resigned or is on leave.

No Committee Assignment

Peter Green, Chair of the Graduate Assembly
Cindy Carlson, Secretary of the Graduate Assembly

Elected Student members, with Vote

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Eric Vogelstein
Alissa Carter

II. Organization of the Assembly

Elected Officers (2003-2004)

Chair: Peter Green, Chemical Engineering
Chair-elect: Dean Neikirk, Electrical & Computer Engineering
Secretary: Cindy Carlson, Educational Psychology

Meeting Dates: September 24, 2003
November 19, 2003
February 4, 2004
March 31, 2004
April 28, 2004

III. Proceedings of the Graduate Assembly

Major Legislation

The Assembly passed a proposal to change the grading system to a plus/minus system with 16 members voting in favor and four abstentions. The proposal was ruled major legislation. Information on the proposal was sent out to all GSC members for their response. (D&P 3085b, 3/31/04)

The Administrative Committee reported to the Assembly that following solicitation of faculty feedback as required on the proposal to change grading to a plus/minus system, the Committee received five responses, three of which were in support. The proposal will now be presented with a letter from Graduate Dean Rodríguez to the Provost, recommending adoption of the proposal. (D&P 3087a, 4/28/04)

Minor Legislation

The Graduate Assembly unanimously approved a proposal to change the major name from Library & Information Science to Information Studies. (D&P 3079c, 9/24/03)

The Graduate Assembly unanimously approved a proposal presented by the Academic committee to revise the degree requirements for the non-treatise option DMA and to change the degree title from DMA to DMA in Performance for performance majors pursuing the DMA under the non-treatise option. (D&P 3079C, 9/24/03)

The Graduate Assembly unanimously approved the revisions of the Handbook of Operating Procedures as presented at the September meeting. (D&P 3081b, 11/19/03)

The Graduate Assembly unanimously approved the proposal to create a Doctor of Audiology (AuD) degrees program. (D&P 3083b, 2/4/04)

The Graduate Assembly unanimously approved the proposal to create an EMBA Option III program in Houston. (D&P 3087a, 4/28/04)

Report of the Dean of Graduate Studies

The report of the Dean of Graduate Studies covered four main topics:

a. Status report on affirmative action

Rodríguez reported that since the Supreme Court decision to uphold the University of Michigan's affirmative action program, the Graduate Studies Office (OGS) has much work to do regarding the revision of University policy, not only in terms of admissions, but also for graduate education fellowships and financial aid. Rodríguez reported that, to meet the new challenges and opportunities presented by the Michigan decision, she asked Darlene Grant from the School of Social Work to join OGS as Associate Dean in charge of admissions, recruitment and outreach. Thus, Grant's portfolio will combine the previously separated portfolios of graduate admissions with outreach and retention.

Currently the University is preparing two separate documents, one for undergraduate admissions and one for graduate admissions. The new graduate admissions policy is ready for review by the Provost and Walker, Director of Admissions, and then will be sent to the UT System. The document contains two parts. One part describes the decentralized nature of the admission process at the graduate level. The second part contains proposals about how to distribute fellowships and financial aid, taking affirmative action into account.

b. Status report on tuition and benefits for graduate students

Rodríguez reported that she is part of a committee, co-chaired by Provost Ekland-Olson and Haggerty, charged with determining recommendations related to the increase in tuition.

Rodríguez also reported that a committee, which she will chair, has been appointed by President Faulkner to explore the issue of benefits for graduate students.

c. Status report on the reorganization of the Office of Graduate Studies. Rodríguez reported that she has consolidated the four previous associate deanships into three. Currently, Dollard is in charge of fellowships and the faculty development program; Kahn is in charge of student services; and Grant, as previously noted, is in charge of recruitment, outreach, and admissions. Many of the services provided by the former Intellectual Entrepreneurship Program are being continued; however, the program has been renamed to reflect its current emphasis and is now called Professional Development and Community Engagement.

A final aspect of the reorganization reported by Rodríguez was the related revision of the Handbook of Operating Procedures, which outlines the duties and responsibilities of the Graduate School and the Graduate Dean.

d. Status report on the Handbook of Operating Procedures
Steinbomer outlined the revision process that proceeded as follows: 1) revision initially occurred within the Provost's office and OGS; 2) an ad hoc graduate policy advisory committee was appointed to review and revise the final draft; 3) the final draft was reviewed by the Deans' Council, who were very favorable; and now 4) review by the Assembly.
(D & P 3079-3079b, 9/24/03)

Rodríguez reported that the Board of Regents had approved a proposal to increase tuition with a sixty-day wait for final approval. Based on discussion at the Board of Regents, all indications were that the tuition increase will occur for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Regarding admissions, the Office of Graduate Studies has been working on a proposal to change the admissions policy to permit the inclusion of race as criteria. The admissions policy proposal argues that the race neutral position necessitated by the Hopwood decision did not adequately increase the diversity of the UT campus and that the inclusion of race as one of the considerations in making admissions decisions is appropriate. Rodríguez indicated that she anticipated that an admissions policy that permitted consideration of race in admissions decisions would be approved with implementation expected for fall 2005.

Rodríguez next updated the Assembly on the issue of benefits for graduate student employees. Rodríguez indicated that a committee, which includes President Faulkner and Graduate Assembly Chair Peter Green, has been meeting on a regular basis to gather information and put together a proposal. Rodríguez anticipates that the final proposal will include a "menu approach" to benefits given the variable needs of students, and she expects a proposal to be completed by the end of the fall semester.

The next item reported by Rodríguez concerned the restructuring of the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) program. The language deficiency component of ITA has been moved into the International Office where a rich array of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses will be provided to international graduate students. The pedagogical component of TA training will become part of the Center for Teaching Effectiveness, where programs will be offered for teaching improvement to all teaching assistants.

Rodríguez next announced that the winners of the graduate coordinator award for the 2003-2004 year were Judy Clack from the Department of Art and Art History and Christina Zambrano from the Department of English. (D & P 3081-3081a, 11/19/03)

Rodríguez first reported on the outcome of the committee on student health benefits. The recommendation from the committee to President Faulkner was to reinstate in full the insurance benefits for graduate students. The report of the committee was presented to the University Budget Council and the Graduate Student Assembly.

Rodríguez next updated the Assembly on the revisions to the Handbook of Operating Procedures. She reported that the revisions were currently under legal review and no problems were anticipated.

In the third item of business, Rodríguez reported that the Outstanding Alumni Award winners were Sarita Brown from Communications Studies and Steven Vogt from Astronomy. Teaching awards were given to Fred Valdez from Anthropology, Jack Swift from Physics, and Kamy Sepehrnoori from Petroleum and Geosystems Engineering.

Dean Rodríguez asked for the enrollment report from Darlene Grant. Grant, with assistance from Ellison, provided the Assembly with a report on graduate applications to date. An increase in applications, compared with 2003, was reported for applications from European-Americans (up about 11%), African Americans (up 17%), Hispanics (up almost 5%), Asian-Americans (up 11%) and Native Americans (up almost 7%). Texas applications were reported to be up 4.6%, and out-of-state applications are up 13%. International applications have dropped by 26% compared with the previous year. (D & P 3083-3083a, 2/4/04)

Rodríguez first reported on the proposal to consider race in admissions and fellowships decisions. As the recommended procedures are still under review by legal counsel, it is clear that race cannot be considered in admissions and fellowship decisions being made in the current year. Rodríguez reported that the status of the proposed changes to the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) is also currently under legal review.

Rodríguez indicated that she is beginning to be concerned about quality control related to the portfolio programs.

Rodríguez next reported on the recently released U.S. News and World Report rankings of graduate schools, noting the results for UT were mixed.

Rodríguez informed the Assembly of efforts of the Graduate School to automate as quickly as possible with a special emphasis being placed on Student Services. Ellison will be leading the effort.

Rodríguez called up Belinoski to provide a written legislation status report to the Assembly. (D & P 3085-3085a, 3/31/04)

Dean Rodríguez reviewed the key issues of the year, including the consideration of race in admissions, benefits for graduate students, and declining international applications. In new business, Rodríguez reported on the newly released rankings of graduate education from U.S. News & World Report. Unfortunately, overall UT appears to have slipped in rank in most categories. Colleges/Schools maintaining their rank included Engineering and the Law School.

Rodríguez introduced to the Assembly the new Graduate Student Assembly leaders: Paul Navratil (Computer Science) and Eric Malmberg (Education). She thanked the outgoing GSA members, Don Drumtra and Marian Barber, for their excellent work in the past year. Rodríguez announced that Bill Doolittle (Geography) was the recipient of the Outstanding Graduate Adviser award. (D & P 3087-3087a, 4/28/04)

Report from the Chair

Green identified awards committees for which Assembly volunteers were sought: Outstanding Graduate Coordinator, Outstanding Graduate Adviser, Outstanding Graduate Teacher, Outstanding Dissertation, and Outstanding Masters Thesis/Report. Green also informed the Assembly that he is establishing a task force, to be chaired by Palka, to examine the efficiency of the Assembly in conducting business. (D & P 3079b, 9/24/03)

Green informed the Assembly about the status of the revision of the Handbook of Operating Procedures that had been presented at the September meeting. Green reported that following the September meeting and the opportunity to more carefully review the revision of the Handbook, Assembly members were invited to provide feedback to the Chair. The primary change requested by the Assembly was the maintenance of the direct link between the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and the Graduate Dean. Revised language and a rationale were drafted. Green, Neikirk, and Rodríguez met with the Provost to urge consideration of this change; and with clarification, it was accepted and included in the revision of the Handbook.

In the September 24, 2003 Assembly meeting, the members wanted to vote on the final version. In honoring the wishes of the Assembly, Chair Green called for the vote. The motion to approve the revision of the Handbook was passed unanimously. (D & P 3081a-3081b, 11/19/03)

Green reminded the Assembly that there would be an upcoming joint meeting between the faculty senates of Texas A & M and The University of Texas to discuss three issues: diversity, budgets, and flagship status. (D & P 3083a, 2/4/04)

Green reported to the Assembly on the joint meeting of the UT and A & M Faculty Councils. Green indicated that the Presidents of both institutions talked about the challenge of balancing rising operations costs with maintaining quality education and research. A second concern of both presidents was managing student enrollment and recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to discussion of the three main topics: maintaining flagship status, recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty, and accomplishing these goals with increasingly less state financial support. (D & P 3085a, 3/31/04)

Green noted that this has been a fairly important year in the life of the Assembly, primarily related to the revisions of the Handbook of Operating Procedures. Green thanked the Assembly for their support throughout the year. Chair Green cited Dean Neikirk as incoming chair for the 2004-2005 year and announced the nominees from the nominating committee: Janet Dukerich (Chair-elect) and Don Heider (Secretary). Additional nominations were solicited from the floor, and none were received. The new officers were elected unanimously. (D & P 3087a, 4/28/04)

Standing Committee Reports

A. Academic Committee

A. Information item: portfolio proposals

Neikirk reminded the Assembly that the Academic Committee has the delegated authority to approve portfolio proposals.

Neikirk reported that the Academic Committee has recommended to the Provost approval of the proposal for a doctoral portfolio program in nanoscience and nanotechnology.

Neikirk presented a proposal to change the major name from Library and Information Science to Information Studies for the Master of Science in Information Studies offered by the School of Information.

Neikirk also presented a proposal to (1) revise the degree requirements for the non-treatise option DMA and (2) change the degree title from DMA to DMA in Performance for performance majors pursuing the DMA under the non-treatise option. (D & P 3079c, 9/24/03)

Chair Neikirk presented a proposal to create a Doctor of Audiology (AuD) degree program and a proposal for a dual program between UT Medical Branch in Galveston and UT Austin. Both proposals were approved unanimously. (D & P 3083a-3083b, 2/4/04)

Chair Neikirk reported that a proposal to create a master's and doctoral Portfolio in Peace and Conflict Studies was withdrawn.

Neikirk reported on the review of three Option II and III programs in Business:

1. Option II MBA Program
2. Texas Evening MBA Program (Option II)
3. Executive MBA Program in Mexico City (Option III)

Neikirk reported that the Academic Committee has favorably reviewed three reports from Business and recommends their support to the Assembly. The reports indicate that a number of the recommendations from the Committee have been implemented. (D & P 3085a-3085b, 3/31/04)

Chair Neikirk presented a proposal to create an EMBA Option III program in Houston. The proposal to create an EMBA Option III program in Houston was unanimously approved. (D & P 3087a, 4/28/04)

B. Administrative Committee

Heider reported that the Administrative Committee is still gathering information and thinking about a proposal to change the grading system for the Graduate School from A, B, C, D to a plus/minus system. The Committee hopes to have a proposal for the November meeting of the Assembly. (D & P 3079c, 9/24/03)

Heider reported that the Administrative Committee expects to bring to the Assembly in the future a proposal that to change grading system to a plus/minus system for graduate students. (D & P 3081b, 11/19/03)

Heider introduced a proposal to change the grading system from a straight A/B system at the graduate level to a system that permitted plus/minus grades as well. It was clarified that the proposal would only permit plus/minus grading at the graduate level and that the system would be voluntary; i.e., a faculty member could choose to give only A/B grades. Green proposed that the vote be delayed until the next meeting to permit careful consideration of the proposal. The motion to delay a vote was passed. (D & P 3083b, 2/4/04)

Heider led a discussion of the proposed change in the grading system to a plus/minus system. Belinoski reminded the Assembly that such a proposal would most likely be ruled by the Secretary to be major legislation. A vote was called and the proposal passed with sixteen in favor and four abstentions.

Heider also reported the Administrative Committee has been requested to examine whether graduate students may in the future go through the add/drop procedure in a manner similar to the process for undergraduate students. The Committee will be examining this issue in the future. (D & P 3085b, 3/31/04)

Heider reported that following solicitation of faculty feedback. Three of the five responses to the major legislation were in support. Dean Rodríguez will next draft a letter to the Provost recommending adoption of the proposal. (D & P 3087a, 4/28/04)

C. Admissions and Enrollment Committee

Chair Browning had no report. Dean Rodríguez indicated that a trend analysis of weekly data indicates a significant drop in international applications, an increase in applications from African-American students, and an increase in applications from Texas residents. (D & P 3085, 3/31/04)

Other Reports

Graduate Student Assembly

Barber reported that GSA had a very successful barbecue to welcome new and returning graduate students at the beginning of the academic year.

A second initiative by GSA is institutionalizing the representation of graduate students on university committees. GSA has also been actively working on two of the initiatives discussed by Rodríguez: the

Tuition Committee and Student Benefits Committee. Barber reported that GSA is very concerned about the coverage available to graduate students who are not holders of TA, AI, or RA appointments yet who often have families. Barber reported that an additional goal of GSA is increasing the number of graduate councils that participate in the Senate.

Drumtra elaborated to the Assembly that the Tuition Committee has had eight meetings to date to review the complexities of the budget and tuition issue. Drumtra promised that the goals and objectives of the GSA for the 2003-2004 year will be presented to the Assembly at the next meeting. (D & P 3079d, 9/24/03)

Drumtra introduced and elaborated on the 2003-2004 objectives of the GSA. Objectives were proposed related to three broad areas: a) student participation in government; b) student access to scholarly information and privacy options; and c) improve student financial expectations and access to financial information.

Barber noted that GSA hosted a forum to address graduate student concerns. Although attendance was disappointing, Barber noted that students were not particularly upset about the tuition increase. (D & P 3081b, 11/19/03)

Barber reported that across the UT system a service day was being proposed similar to the UT Volunteer program. (D & P 3083c, 2/4/04)

Barber invited the Assembly to attend a reception for Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week where awards will be given to the outstanding teaching assistant, assistant instructor, graduate research assistant, and graduate assistant. She also extended an invitation to participate in the United to Serve or UT Serve Day that will be happening throughout the UT System on April 17, 2004. (D & P 3085b, 3/31/04)

Drumtra provided a report on the accomplishment of the 2003-2004 objectives of the Graduate Student Assembly and thanked the Assembly, as well as Dean Rodríguez, for their support. (D & P 3087b, 4/28/04)

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