

DOCUMENTS AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRADUATE ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
April 25, 2007

Chair Randall Parker called the fifth and final meeting of the Graduate Assembly for the 2006-2007 academic year to order on Wednesday, April 25, 2007, at 2:22 PM. The Assembly met in the Tom Lea Room of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center (3.206).

Faculty Members Present: Auerbach, Cline, Dean-Jones, Doty, Golden, Haunschild, Heinzelman, Henry, Hull, Kachelmeier, Markovits, Neikirk, Ovando, Parker, Sprinkle, Strong, Wilson

Faculty Members Absent: Browning (excused), Kinney, Loukas, McDougall, Mehdy, Murray (excused), Peters, Popova (excused), Rubin, Slawek, Smith, Stout (excused), Wiedemann (excused)

Student Members Present: Forestell

Student Members Absent: Cassidy, Guo, Mehrotra, Moody, Rust

Ex-Officio Members Present: Rodríguez

Representatives from the Office of Graduate Studies: Bancroft, Belinoski, Dalton, Hackert, Kahn, Mattos

Visitors: Brian Gatten, Ted Odell, Tom Edgar

Order of Business

I. Approval of the minutes of the March 28, 2007, meeting

The Assembly approved the minutes of the March 28, 2007, Graduate Assembly meeting.

II. Report of the Graduate Dean (Victoria Rodríguez)

Dean Rodríguez began her report by thanking Assembly Chair Randy Parker for his service, especially in more fully integrating the work of the Assembly with that of the Faculty Council. Rodríguez welcomed incoming chair Polly Strong. The Dean also thanked Amy Forestell, outgoing president of the Graduate Student Assembly, for representing the interests of students so effectively, and then welcomed Forestell's successor, Brian Gatten. The Assembly enthusiastically joined in the Dean's sentiments.

Rodríguez expressed her satisfaction with the summary report of the legislation that the Assembly had passed this academic year, recognizing the contribution that assistant dean Tom Belinoski makes to the strength of proposals brought to the Assembly, to the adherence to appropriate policies and procedures, and to the

integration of passed proposals with the Graduate School's existing policies, publications, and expectations. One member of the Assembly spoke about some of the ongoing differences between the Assembly and the Faculty Council, especially the Assembly's focus and robust model of committee work.

Associate Dean Terry Kahn continued Rodríguez's report by discussing the fourteen-semester rule. The Graduate School will formally announce its determination that, if particular students are likely to need exceptions to the fourteen-semester limit on appointment as TAs, AIs, and the like, the students' committees will need to document the students' progress toward their degrees. In the fourteenth semester of appointment, (1) the students must document their progress toward their degrees through presentations to their committees; (2) the students must formally ask their committees for exceptions to the fourteen-semester rule; and (3) if the committees are satisfied enough with the students' progress, the committees, through the programs' graduate advisors, must petition the Graduate School for such exceptions. The only criterion for exceptions to the fourteen-semester rule to be considered by the committees and the Graduate School is students' satisfactory progress toward their degrees. Demands for teaching and/or research support are not adequate criteria.

III. Report of Chair (Randall Parker)

While the Chair Randy Parker had mentioned a few items during the report by the graduate dean, he began his formal report by explaining the process of nominating and identifying the chair-elect for next year's Graduate Assembly. The three-person nominating committee (Parker, Academic Committee Chair Pauline Strong, and Assembly Secretary Philip Doty) identified a candidate who, if elected, would serve as chair of the Assembly's academic committee in 2007-2008 and then assume the chair of the Graduate Assembly in 2008-2009. The nominee was Susan Heinzelman. With no nominations from the floor, the Assembly unanimously elected Heinzelman as chair of the academic committee and chair-elect of the Assembly for the next academic year. Heinzelman accepted the position, expressing her high opinion of the work of the academic committee.

IV. Academic Committee (Pauline Strong)

Chair Strong noted that the academic committee had reviewed and taken action on nine (9) of the items listed in the status report on legislation passed by the Graduate Assembly this year.

The committee accepted the self-review of the Option 3 program in software engineering, noting the high quality of the program.

The academic committee recommended a proposal to create a dual master's degree program granting the MA in Women's and Gender Studies and the MS in Information Studies. Sue Heinzelman and Philip Doty, representatives of the two academic units and members of the Graduate Assembly, explained the proposal and its rationale.

- The proposal to create a dual master's degree program in Women's and Gender Studies and Information Studies was passed unanimously and classified as minor legislation.

V. Administrative Committee (David Hull)

Chair Hull had no report.

VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Karen Browning)

The committee had no report.

VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Amy Forestell)

Amy Forestell, president of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), welcomed new GSA president, Brian Gatten, to the meeting and noted the success of the immediately past Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week. Chair Parker expressed his personal thanks to her for her service.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Parker adjourned the meeting at 3:20 PM, The meeting was followed by an informal reception for the Assembly and its guests.

Philip Doty, Secretary