TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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

May 16, 2018 Summary Notes

Members attending:

Blanca Bauer	William Harn	Joseph Oppong
Richard Berry	Thomas Krueger	Les Riding-In
Karen Butler-Purry	Kathryn Matthew	Rial Rolfe
JoAnn Canales	Bonnie Melhart	Cynthia Rutledge
Andrea Golato	Dean Neikirk	Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley

Delegates attending:
Bill Geiger on behalf of James R. Lumpkin
Sheara Williams Jennings on behalf of Bruce Jones
Glenn Sanford on behalf of Kenneth E. Hendrickson

Members absent: DeBrenna Agbenyiga, Carolyn Kapinus, William Kritsonis, Meharvan "Sonny" Singh, and Mark Sheridan

THECB Staff attending: James Goeman, Jennifer Nailos, and Stacey Silverman.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome, introductions, and call to order

Dr. Karen Butler-Purry, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05am.

Dr. Butler-Purry welcomed the committee and invited everyone to introduce himself or herself.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration and approval of minutes from the February 27, 2018 meeting

Dr. Joseph Oppong will provide suggested edits. A motion was made and approved unanimously to accept the amended minutes.

Agenda Item 3: Consideration and election of Chair and Co-Chair

The membership reviewed the *GEAC Terms of Service* and discussed eligibility for nominations. A note was made that the titles are Chair and Vice-Chair.

Dr. Butler-Purry provided an overview of the role and responsibilities. The Chair leads the meetings with support of the Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair discuss the agenda with Coordinating Board staff to determine the meeting elements and priorities. The Chair and Vice-Chair also communicate with the Association of Texas Graduate Schools (ATGS) leadership for input and information across the state.

Dr. Jennifer Nailos advised that members should only nominate candidates who can accept the nomination, i.e. are present at the meeting, or have indicated interest in being nominated.

Consideration and election of Chair
Dr. Canales nominated Dr. Butler-Purry for the role of GEAC Chair and Dr. Oppong seconded the nomination. Dr. Butler-Purry accepted the nomination. Dr. Bonnie Melhart moved to close nominations for GEAC Chair.

A motion was made and approved unanimously to elect Dr. Butler-Purry as GEAC Chair.

Consideration and election of Vice-Chair
The membership discussed whether members whose terms end in 2019 could be eligible for nomination. Dr. James Goeman clarified that GEAC members can be re-nominated for additional terms of service, and therefore could be eligible for leadership roles.

Dr. Butler-Purry nominated Dr. Andrea Golato for the role of GEAC Vice-Chair and Dr. Les Riding-In seconded the nomination. Dr. Golato accepted the nomination.

A motion was made and approved unanimously to elect Dr. Golato as GEAC Vice-Chair.

Agenda Item 4: Update on and discussion of the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education
Sub-committee and Coordinating Board staff have been working on the outline for the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education. Would like to focus the discussion on furthering the outline and capture the elements that are important for the development of the actual Strategic Plan document.

The individuals that led the sub-committee discussions will lead their respective item in discussion. The outline is arranged in four priority areas that include goals, measures, and strategies.

Priority Area 1: Excellence in Research and Creative Activity
Dr. Canales provided an overview of the first priority area and its five goals.

Goal 1: To increase extramural funding. The sub-committee felt it was important to make funding support explicit in order to avoid an unfunded mandate. Also, felt that the funding should be institutionally relevant.

Goals 2: To increase the number of collaborations. This is a faculty-centric measure. Add language regarding interdisciplinary, interinstitutional, and/or cross-institutional efforts.

Goal 3: To increase institutional and state investment. The emphasis is on the external investment for this goal area.

Goal 4: To increase scholarly and creative output and/or productivity. Wanted this goal

to be broad enough to include all disciplines. The measures are "as appropriate but not limited to" depending on the field or discipline.

Goal 5: To increase recruitment of high-caliber faculty hired.

Dr. Melhart recommended including post-docs and other research staff in Goal 4 as a strategy and Goal 5.

Dr. Bill Geiger asked whether there is a definition of "high-caliber" from the sub-committee. Dr. Butler-Purry and Dr. Golato recommended leaving "high-caliber" vague to be defined by the institution. The institutions can apply this to their campus and the disciplines as appropriate.

Priority Area 2: High Quality of and Access to Education
Dr. Butler-Purry provided an overview of the second priority area and its four goals.

Goal 1: To increase access and opportunities for a diverse and inclusive student body and faculty. The sub-committee felt it was important to look at various student demographics and to focus on completion and completion rates. Dr. Canales inquired if there is a distinction between under-represented versus under-served, and whether there is a trend to change terminology. Discussion on locating the definitions or source. Dr. Goeman suggested that historically underserved students may also be underrepresented.

Dr. Canales suggested adding "cohesive" before "support" in 1a and 1b.

Dr. Blanca Bauer asked if as a result of the recommended strategy to develop an institutional strategic plan, would institutions be required to submit these strategic plans to the Coordinating Board? Dr. Butler-Purry stated that this was not the intent of the strategy. Dr. Goeman provided an example that in new doctoral program proposals institutions are asked if they have a plan or strategy for recruitment. Dr. Butler-Purry recommended changing the language to "include this in the institution's plan" to clarify that institutions already have a plan and could include this as an element if not already part of their plan.

Dr. Glenn Sanford suggested inclusion of first-generation students as a measure. Dr. Golato asked for clarification on the definition for first-generation to apply. Would the measure be first-generation college student or first-generation graduate student? Dr. Goeman asked for clarification on how institutions might obtain this data. Dr. Sanford stated that this is often self-reported. Dr. Butler-Purry added that in the Common Application there is information on parent's educational obtainment levels that can be used to get to this variable.

Ms. Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley recommended using the Education Research Center (ERC) as a source for data and definitions. Dr. Stacey Silverman added that the Coordinating Board does use the ERC data. There are likely many different definitions used by institutions for first-generation students.

Discussion on whether the strategies are optional and how data for the measures are collected. In some instances, the data is already collected and reported by the institutions. Dr. Nailos showed an example from the CBM reporting manual where several faculty demographics are submitted to the Coordinating Board annually.

Dr. Sanford asked if there is there a way to compare graduates in the field as compared to hiring trends over time. The strategic plan could encourage institutions to consider how they review the production of PhDs, the availability of PhDs, and the demand for PhDs in their respective fields. Dr. Butler-Purry commented that some programs and fields use the strategy of "grow your own" for faculty development and training.

Dr. Butler-Purry recommended language to refer to the institutional strategic plans and their graduate education plans when discussing these goals.

Goal 2: To seek and acquire department and/or program accreditation by field and/or discipline-specific accrediting bodies where possible and appropriate. This is a maintenance goal and is already encouraged in the proposal request forms for new programs.

Goal 3: To increase and/or maintain the quality of education (including teaching, mentoring, and advising).

Dr. Butler-Purry clarified that the sub-committee felt including teaching, mentoring, and advising were important components that contribute toward student success.

Ms. McKinnon-Crowley recommended including collaborative publications with students, including co-authorships, as measures for effective mentoring, teaching, and advising. This would be dependent on the field.

Dr. Geiger requested further discussion on what is meant by "satisfactory progress toward degree". Dr. Butler-Purry clarified that the idea is that depending on the nature of the students and the program, the departments have a sense of what to expect as students progress toward milestones. The institution and programs have norms in mind and the idea here is to state that there should be intentional monitoring of students' progress. There is some data showing that non-completion is the worst – students will have debt and no degree. The institutions and/or departments will define satisfactory progress and can consider procedures for how they work with students to encourage completion.

Goal 4: To conduct periodic and systematic reviews that contribute to the continuous improvement of graduate programs. Dr. Goeman suggested the program uses feedback from the Graduate Program Review and includes or involves upper-administration in the decision-making.

Priority Area 3: Efficiency & Innovation
Dr. Matthew provided an overview of the third priority area and its three goals.

Goal 1: To create relevant degree programs, certifications, and certificate programs to

match and anticipate market demand. Dr. Sheara Williams Jennings asked if this could include updating current programs as well. This was agreed to include current and future programs. Dr. Matthew and Dr. Canales suggested adding statement on the number of students completing degree programs.

Goal 2: To limit student debt. Dr. Golato asked for clarification on tuition waiver recommendations to include resident students and out-of-state students. Dr. Butler-Purry commented that other states support graduate students. Dr. Riding-In commented that the out-of-state tuition waivers are important to keep in the strategic plan. Dr. Goeman commented that the RAND report made general comments regarding tuition waiver policies and practices for graduate programs.

Dr. Melhart recommended including the various types of funding support offered to graduate students such as fellowships, scholarships, assistantships, etc.

Dr. Geiger inquired about whether tuition waivers are allowed. Dr. Matthew commented that tuition waivers are helpful for out-of-state students in order to reduce overall costs. Dr. Goeman added that there are distinctions between waiving all tuition-costs versus waiving the out-of-state rate. Dr. Silverman added that funding support will vary by institution. Dr. Richard Berry suggested reviewing tuition support and assistance for all students.

Dr. Williams Jennings asked if there are practices to encourage time to degree, such as advising practices. Dr. Oppong suggested some processes should be removed if they are not beneficial to students. The goal is updated to include review of processes and selecting or maintaining those that are beneficial to students.

The membership discussed loan default rates and how related measures could be collected. Dr. Golato stated that the hope is that the default rate would go down. To use this as a benchmark to monitor progress, institutions can use data that exists already. Dr. Sanford recommended looking at the levels of debt and ability to pay the debt back. Dr. Williams Jennings recommended adding a strategy about understanding their responsibility for taking out loans. Dr. Bauer shared that SACSCOC has adopted a guideline where institutions must have a plan and a practice to advise and counsel students on loans and debt. Dr. Goeman added that the *60X30TX* plan includes debt to income ratio, which might be something to consider for graduates. Dr. Matthew inquired whether this information is available for graduate students.

Goal 3: To identify and adopt administrative and/or academic processes to promote efficiency and academic quality of graduate programs. Dr. Berry recommended switching the order to put academic quality first, then efficiency. Dr. Williams Jennings asked for clarification on the duration of time to degree. Dr. Golato shared that the sub-committee discussed that there might be instances where a student has experiences or trainings that enhance their skills but might increase their time in the program. The idea is that students who take longer are also gaining knowledge or skills – not lingering in the program. The sub-committee also discussed that if a student currently has a job and is doing similar work, should they be required to take a course when they can demonstrate the ability. This might be where competency-based education could be

applicable.

Dr. Geiger asked how widespread does GEAC feel competency-based education is at the graduate level? Dr. Golato added that new degree program proposals have to show or address how competency-based education might be incorporated. Dr. Canales suggested removing "align" from the goal, and incorporating it in the strategy section.

Dr. Krueger provided a recommendation for a measure to include the ratio of student debt to anticipated student income upon graduation.

Agenda Item 7: Lunch
The Committee broke for lunch at 11:39 am. The meeting resumed at 12:10 pm.

Agenda Item 4: Update on and discussion of the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education (continued)

Priority Area 4: Develop Marketable Skills and Promote Economic Development

Dr. Golato provided an overview of the fourth priority area and its five goals. This Priority Area is driven by *60X30TX*'s Marketable Skills goal.

Dr. Oppong commented that at the doctoral-level these students are on the cutting-edge of innovation, these students are preparing for jobs that might not yet exist. Dr. Golato shared that there may be some marketable skills across all programs, and the goal does not require "all marketable skills" to be identified, but some. The student can use innovation, for example, as a marketable skill as they search for employment to show they can adapt in the workplace. The committee discussed different examples of potential marketable skills for graduate students.

Dr. Bauer asked if there will be a compilation of the marketable skills across institutions or programs? THECB staff will look into whether there is a plan for this under the *60X30TX* strategic plan activities.

Dr. Canales suggested the ATGS website could be a resource to consider for developing and sharing information on marketable skills.

Clarification that relevant careers means relevant to the degree program. Could change to placement of graduates in careers? Could look at the language in the *Characteristics of Doctoral Programs* as to how institutions are reporting employment for recent graduates. Dr. Geiger commented that there could also be consideration for students already in their careers and the graduate degree is used to advance them in their field; how would this be addressed for this measure and strategy because they are already employed? A placement/advancement goal might address this. Dr. Melhart suggested consideration for what the student or graduate considers relevant. Institutions could survey to find this information. Dr. Canales suggested "enrichment" as a term to include here because relevance of the degree program for the individual may vary. Will review

other documents for language related to careers and marketable skills.

The recommendation to increase the number and percentage of domestic students pursuing and completing STEM degrees comes directly from the RAND report recommendations. Clarification on whether STEM includes the health-professions. Dr. Goeman clarified that health-professions are not included. Dr. Silverman noted that we can look at the health-professions. Dr. Golato added that international students might have more difficulty entering the health-professions due to various requirements. Dr. Butler-Purry added that biomedical health, for example, falls under a STEM CIP code, and then would be included. Recommendation is to include a definition of STEM and what programs this includes.

"Highly qualified students" will be treated similarly to how "highly qualified faculty" is treated: the institutions can determine characteristics and measures. Dr. Butler-Purry added that this goal also is addressing improving the quality of students in the program as well.

Agenda item 5: Break-out sessions to review and update the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education

This agenda item was completed during Agenda Item 4 discussions.

Agenda Item 6: Consideration to delegate authority to the Strategic Plan Sub-Committee to complete the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education

Dr. Goeman provided an overview of the next steps for developing the Strategic Plan. Coordinating Board staff will develop the outline into a narrative and incorporate other data into the document. A draft will be prepared by July, and staff will work with the sub-committee members to address the issues, develop sections, and work on the text. Staff will be primary authors. A completed draft will route internally for leadership review and input. Then, the draft will be put out for public comment, hopefully in August, to receive feedback from the institutions. The sub-committee plans to bring the Strategic Plan to the September/October agendas for CAWS and Board consideration.

Dr. Oppong moves to delegate authority to the sub-committee to continue working on the Strategic Plan. Dr. William Harn seconded. The motion passes.

A clarification question was asked regarding the scope of the Strategic Plan. It will apply to health-related institutions as well as universities.

Agenda Item 8: Update on Coordinating Board initiatives

The date for the University and Health-Related Institution (UHRI) Liaison meeting will be July 18. Dr. Silverman asked that if any changes to the liaisons please notify staff. It will be a day long, interactive, information meeting. Sessions will include sharing the new website and accountability pages, updates and review of administrative processes, and the details of working with the Coordinating Board. Tools are resources available from the agency will be highlighted. In addition, if there are other questions or items that institutions would like

addressed, we are happy to consider in the planning for the meeting.

Dr. Goeman shared updates on Open Educational Resources (OER). Senate Bill 810 requires the Coordinating Board to conduct a study. A feasibility stakeholder meeting was held on May 2 with individuals from in and out of state come in to discuss a range of issues related to OER. The bill directs the Coordinating Board to study the feasibility of establishing a repository. There are many repositories out there, so the Coordinating Board will consider the range of options and put that information into the report.

The other part of the bill directed the Coordinating Board to develop faculty grants to develop additional OER resources. These grants would be available to faculty at public institutions. Materials developed would need to be truly open to everyone. The tentative release of the RFA is planned for summer 2018. The RFA should come out this summer. There will be about $200,000 available. Have not determined each individual award yet – considering $5-10,000 range. All the details will be included in the RFA.

Dr. Nailos shared that the website will be updated in the summer. The pages will be re-organized to be more user-friendly. If there is something you cannot locate, please contact us to help you navigate the new website. Dr. Silverman added, most importantly, the website will have a stronger search engine.

The Learning Technology Advisory Committee (LTAC) reviews proposed doctoral programs that would be offered via distance delivery modes. Six doctoral programs were reviewed and received favorable recommendations from LTAC from September to May. The next meeting for LTAC is June 1 and will be live-streamed for those who cannot make the meeting in person.

Agenda Item 9: Discussion of Committee Member expense reporting
Part of the annual report from GEAC to the Coordinating Board includes the amount of time and financial resources dedicated to the committee. Dr. Nailos will send an email with link and reminder for this information.

Agenda Item 10: Recognition of outgoing Committee Members
Dr. Goeman offered thanks and recognition to committee members who are completing their terms of service this year. Thanks to Dr. Canales, Dr. Hileman, Dr. Kapinus, Dr. Kritsonis, Dr. Lumpkin, Dr. Melhart, Ms. Nagasunder, Dr. Riding-In, and Dr. Rolfe. Thank you all for your service to the state, for your service to graduate education, and for your service to all of higher education.

Agenda Item 11: Discussion of future agenda items
The committee discussed future agenda items for the upcoming year.
- Dr. Bauer suggested the new schedule for Graduate Program Reviews (GPRs) to better align the accreditation and GPR so there is not a disconnect.
- Dr. Butler-Purry suggested further discussion on marketable skills. UEAC has discussed this at their meetings. Since 2020 is the imperative, we could include best practices and other topics related. In addition, to visit a name more aligned to graduate education.

- Dr. Geiger suggested the value of graduate education and its contribution.
- Dr. Butler-Purry suggested discussion on the recommendations put forth in the strategic plan and how to educate institutions on putting these into fruition.
- Ms. McKinnon-Crowley suggested discussion on information or efforts related to the alternative-academic career pathways, and how to better prepare students for employment outcomes.

Please email any additional ideas as they come up.

Because there are many GEAC members transitioning off the committee, a poll to determine 2018-19 meeting dates will be sent following the Board meeting in July.

There are several dates that impact graduate faculty and committee members that we will need to review and work around. These include the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools, Texas Graduate Schools, and possibly a few others. Please send conflicts to Dr. Nailos.

Agenda Item 12: Adjournment

Dr. Canales made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Opperman seconded.
The meeting adjourned at 1:07pm.