

TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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

Summary Notes
October 3, 2018

Members attending:

Blanca Bauer	Sarah Larsen
Richard Berry	Kathryn Matthew
Karen Butler-Purry (Chair)	Karen N. McCaleb
DoVeanna Fulton	Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley
Andrea Golato (Vice-Chair)	Dean Neikirk
William Harn	Joseph Oppong
Kenneth "Ken" Hendrickson	Cynthia Rutledge
Raymond Jackson	Can Saygin
Thomas Krueger	Jennifer Schroeder
Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy	Mark A. Sheridan
Barry Lambert	Andrew Zinn

Members absent: Meharvan "Sonny" Singh

Coordinating Board staff attending: James Goeman, Jennifer Nailos, Rex Peebles, Stacey Silverman, and Reinold Cornelius

Agenda Item 1. Welcome and introductions

Dr. Karen Butler-Purry, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Dr. Butler-Purry welcomed the committee and invited the members and audience to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item 2. Review of meeting procedures

Dr. Butler-Purry provided instructions for meeting procedures and using microphones. Dr. Butler-Purry also reviewed the procedures for discussion, action items, and voting.

Dr. Jennifer Nailos provided information on a post-meeting email that would include action items, summary notes, and reporting. Dr. James Goeman provided clarification that the travel and expense reporting is required for all committees and is annually shared with the Board.

Agenda Item 3. Consideration and approval of Summary Notes from the May 16, 2018, meeting

Dr. Butler-Purry entertained a motion for approving the Summary Notes from the May 16, 2018, meeting. Dr. Joseph Oppong made the motion to accept the Summary Notes as submitted; Dr. Richard Berry seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

Agenda Item 4. Update on Graduate Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) presentation to the Committee on Academic Workforce and Success (CAWS) September 27, 2018, meeting

Dr. Andrea Golato (Vice Chair) attended the CAWS meeting in September to present a summary of the GEAC activities. Dr. Golato reported on GEAC discussions of Marketable Skills, Characteristics of Doctoral Programs, and provided a summary of the drafted Strategic Plan for Graduate Education. The CAWS members did not ask any questions and the report was accepted by the Board. Materials provided to the CAWS were included in the packet for GEAC review.

Agenda Item 5. Update on and discussion of the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education

Dr. Goeman provided a history of the development of the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education (SPGE)*. Dr. Goeman mentioned that the THECB updated its statewide strategic plan, *60x30TX* in 2015. This plan has some elements that address graduate education, and many more elements that focus on undergraduate education. The Coordinating Board hired the RAND Corporation in 2017 to conduct a study to gather information about graduate education. RAND conducted interviews with institutions and programs, analyzed data from other states, and presented comparison information from similar states. *Managing the Expansion of Graduate Education in Texas* includes a number of recommendations and findings developed out of the RAND report.

The document is available here:

[Managing the Expansion of Graduate Education in Texas](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1899.html)

Karam, Rita, Charles A. Goldman, Daniel Basco, and Diana Gehlhaus Carew, *Managing the Expansion of Graduate Education in Texas*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1899.html.

GEAC discussed the RAND report and began drafting the *SPGE*. An outline was developed and GEAC designated a subcommittee to work with the Coordinating Board staff on furthering the outline and major topics to address. Coordinating Board staff shared the outline on a recursive basis with the subcommittee and GEAC. From there, the subcommittee and staff continued to hold phone conferences and discussions to flesh out sections of the plan. The most current draft of the *SPGE* was included in the meeting packet. Next steps related to the *SPGE* include seeking feedback from GEAC and Coordinating Board staff. The *SPGE* will be posted for public comment once the draft is prepared.

Dr. Nailos thanked the GEAC members, subcommittee, and Coordinating Board staff who contributed to the *SPGE* thus far. In October, staff would seek supporting information, citations, copy-editing, and information to strengthen the document. Staff requested GEAC members submit all feedback and comments by October 31, 2018. Dr. Goeman added that the feedback should focus on polishing the draft.

Dr. Golato noted that GEAC and the subcommittee tried to have the plan not be too narrow while also not being too generic. Focused on four main priority areas, within each are a number of goals and ways to measure progress. The subcommittee felt there was enough flexibility for the different institutions to incorporate the *SPGE* as appropriate.

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Dr. Can Saygin asked whether there would be reporting requirements, similar to *60x30TX*. Dr. Goeman clarified that the *SPGE* does not include reporting at that level of detail. This plan includes guidance for institutions to encourage graduate education to flourish and to look at priority areas.

Dr. Goeman clarified that this plan would align with the *60x30TX* timeline through 2030.

Dr. Golato clarified that creative activity and innovation are distinguished as Priority Area #1 refers to humanities and fine arts, for example, where there are not peer-reviewed articles while Priority Area #3 is for new models of graduate education.

Dr. Butler-Purpy clarified that there are a few different terms within the *SPGE* that the committee decided would be left to the institution to determine and define within their context, for example "highly qualified students" (Goal 5). The reason for this goal is to attract great students from around the world and from within the state. There is some responsibility in undergraduate education to help prepare for graduate education. Dr. Mark Sheridan added that the idea is to get more people in the pipeline and to enhance and increase the vision of career options and graduate education. Dr. Butler-Purpy added that there is opportunity for creative 3+2, 4+1 programs, which could be a major benefit to the state.

Dr. Thomas Krueger recommended that the tables including graduate loan debt should include information regarding inflation. Dr. Dean Neikirk recommended normalizing all financial information for "constant" dollars.

Dr. Richard Berry commended the subcommittee and staff for keeping the document broad to remain applicable to large institutions and small.

Agenda Item 6. Discussion of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary program characteristics, definitions, and distinctions

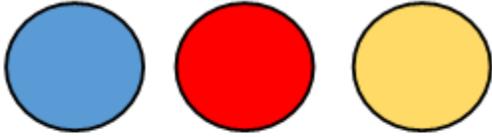
GEAC discussed how different institutions characterize the terms multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. Dr. Saygin recommended including trans-disciplinary. For interdisciplinary as a term when disciplines A & B have research occurring between. For multidisciplinary, disciplines A & B work together and elevate contributions. Dr. Butler-Purpy inquired if there are ways that research and education use these terms in context. Dr. Goeman shared an example of increased interest in interdisciplinary engineering. The interdisciplinary CIP code "30", used for teacher training, is sometimes used for a combination of two or more disciplines.

GEAC discussed whether there is, and to what extent is there, a difference between interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. Dr. Berry stated that on campus specific disciplines use these terms; for example, teacher training uses "interdisciplinary", while other programs use "multidisciplinary". Dr. Bauer stated that at health-related institutions, the term currently used is "inter-professional education" where multiple professions are coming together. Dr. DoVeanna Fulton stated that multidisciplinary is when multiple disciplines contribute to the academic program while interdisciplinary is the intersection of disciplines that produces a unique perspective.

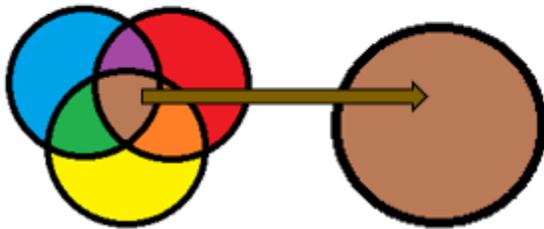
Dr. Cynthia Rutledge provided an example of physics, biology, and anatomy coming together produced Kinesiology or Motor Learning programs. Multidisciplinary is when the different

perspectives and values remain separate, while interdisciplinary is when the disciplines merge to the point of creating something new. A recommendation was to create a visualization of the relationships in Venn Diagrams (see images below).

Multidisciplinary



Interdisciplinary



Dr. Neikirk stated that once an interdisciplinary program becomes successful it becomes its own discipline. Dr. Butler-Purry stated some programs are determined as interdisciplinary if they cross colleges. Guidance on classifying programs would be helpful.

GEAC discussed implications from the Coordinating Board perspective regarding terminology. Dr. Goeman stated this information is helpful for understanding the proposals the Coordinating Board receives. This information also helps staff who would review these proposals. Dr. Golato added that one discipline could no longer solve most societal issues; people will need to learn and work across disciplines. Dr. Goeman stated that inter- and multidisciplinary degree proposals are becoming more common.

GEAC discussed themes for proposals not approved. Dr. Goeman stated that an important area to address is establishing workforce need, particularly if this is a new discipline. Dr. Stacey Silverman added that the program costs, the institution's ability to cover the costs, student demand, workforce need and demand, and job opportunities are among the areas reviewed for new program proposals. Dr. Goeman added that another area is unnecessary duplication, particularly if there are other programs in the state.

Dr. Fulton asked how prescriptive institutions should be when submitting multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary proposals; i.e. for multidisciplinary programs should the courses in the disciplines already be specified whereas for interdisciplinary programs students can choose from across the university. Dr. Goeman commented that staff reviews proposals to see if there is a clear conception of the disciplines. Dr. Silverman added that it is important that the student has a home within the institution and that the institution knows where the program is located. Departments are encouraged to work together while also having a place to identify (administratively) where to place the program.

Agenda Item 7. Discussion of capacity and expansion of graduate programs

GEAC reviewed data on the number of the graduate programs, graduate students, and program proposals submitted and approved. GEAC discussed capacity and expansion of programs. Some programs are expanding quickly and need additional faculty to maintain the load. One consideration for capacity and expansion is the amount of support and financial aid for students. Institutions could look at how support affects competition for students and graduate student debt. Resources and financial stability are affecting students' ability to complete.

Dr. McCaleb shared that for master's level programs, the institution looks at what will attract students and distinguish the program from others offered. Dr. Fulton stated that each program looks at serving different student populations, and have different curricular approaches and emphases. Dr. Golato added that fundability and resources are important factors for master's programs. Campus discussions on workforce need and earning potential for students when they graduate are helpful, i.e. *will they be able to get out of a debt in a reasonable timeframe if they graduate with student loan debt?*

Dr. Larsen noted that this discussion can connect to the earlier conversation about inter- and multidisciplinary programs. Areas that are interesting for students could start as a certificate and develop into a program; some of these become popular and rise up from undergraduate to doctoral. Dr. Fulton added that looking at workforce need and career opportunity to develop the programs, conversations are held with potential employers to develop competencies and skill sets that they might be looking for in the students.

Dr. Butler-Purry added that many institutions are making decisions on delivery mode and determining demand. Dr. Krueger noted that it is important to consider the number of students to place in an online class. Face-to-face classes are able to enroll more students than online classes, so the delivery-mode of a course becomes an important concern for capacity and faculty availability.

Dr. Saygin added that it is important to think about the lifecycle of the program from a pipeline certificate to a degree. Dr. Golato stated that new program development is part of the university strategic planning process. If the program is not part of the strategic plan, it will not move forward. It is clear what is happening on campus and money will be set aside for the program when approved/implemented.

Disciplines establish norms for levels of financial support. Student support can also vary by institution location and the local cost of living. If a proposal indicates the level of support is dissimilar to other programs, staff will inquire why it differs; this speaks to the student debt goal of *60x30TX* and to the quality of the program. Different support packages from comparable programs affects attracting students. New programs are often quite generous as a way to attract students in the initial years.

Dr. Sheridan added that there might be jobs created because of graduate education that does not yet exist. When reviewing proposals, graduate programs need to look broader than the state of Texas when conducting litmus tests. Texas will likely be a net-exporter of graduate degree-holders for some time, therefore, capacity and expansion should include national context. Dr. Goeman added that staff looks at national, state, and regional needs when reviewing program proposals.

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Dr. Butler-Purry commented that the RAND report highlighted using market research as a strategy for identifying need. Drs. Goeman and Nailos shared that the Coordinating Board has a subscription to EMSI and is looking at how useful the information is to contextualize, anticipate, and illustrate workforce needs and trends. Dr. Peebles added that it is important for institutions to help with data from professional associations and organizations that staff may not have access too. The Coordinating Board also uses BLS and Texas Workforce data.

Dr. Neikirk noted that the amount of debt and the number of graduates with debt is increasing. GEAC discussed information and data used to identify market support for graduate programs and potential earnings for graduates. Current information from data systems (i.e. BLS) are on a delay. Dr. Goeman added that Graduate Program Reviews frequently note tracking graduates as important metrics for performance.

GEAC discussed best practices for tracking graduates. Dr. Neikirk added that the UT Austin campus tracked 600,000 graduate records (since 1989) students to find where the alumni were in terms of employment. This was a hard and costly process. Now there is a database with information but the uses of the information is yet to be determined.

Dr. Goeman added that the Coordinating Board has some ability to track graduates employed in Texas with Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) records. It is reliable to find graduates in state, but once they leave the state, tracking is much more challenging.

Dr. Rutledge inquired whether institutions are considering portfolios as a mean for tracking graduates. Dr. Butler-Purry shared that students in partnership with the library use Open Researcher and Contributor Identifier (ORCID) to upload documents, share with others, and share to their record. There is a need to find a way that is not labor intensive for students to participate and share information. Dr. McCaleb stated that different colleges use different vendors or homegrown data systems; campus-wide efforts are on the horizon.

Agenda Item 9. Discussion of student support characteristics and considerations

GEAC discussed how institutions calculate the best or appropriate levels of student support. Many institutions conduct a comparison of peer institutions to set a foundation. Dr. Golato stated the inability to offer a tuition waiver is the number one reason for losing potential students. Dr. Saygin added that the support amount and timing of communication to students varies. Dr. Oppong referenced the [Graduate Assistant Stipend Survey from Oklahoma State University](#); this is a financial study with funding ranges by discipline, based on a survey from multiple institutions. Other considerations made by Texas graduate schools for student support include fringe benefits, stipends, HR appointment (hourly or other), cost of living, taxes, whether the student would be employed full-time, and scholarships. GEAC discussed supporting master's level students through scholarships, particularly for programs that are high cost.

Agenda Item 8. Lunch

Dr. Berry motioned to break for lunch; Dr. Fulton seconded; The motion was unanimously approved. GEAC resumed at 12:20 p.m.

Agenda Item 9. Continued.

GEAC continued discussion of student support characteristics and considerations. Dr. Bauer stated that available lab positions determine the amount of grants and funding. Support from the institution depends on the department and level of grant support available. Available funding support also governs the number of students accepted into the program.

Dr. Opong added that the institution provides a tuition supplement for G.A.s, T.A.s, etc. typically for 6 or 9 SCHs. Dr. Jackson stated that the campus has a similar model where doctoral students are supported for their first 3 years and then grant support is expected for STEM programs (other funding is sought for non-STEM programs because of the different availability of funding). Funding support is often directed to doctoral programs because most master's programs are professional and time-limited (i.e. 2-year programs).

GEAC discussed the different forms of tuition, including statutory and designated. Institutions can waive designated tuition, which for many programs is up to 80 percent of the doctoral tuition bill.

GEAC discussed student travel, conference participation, and research support. Examples from UT Arlington include support from the departments, graduate office, and a graduate student organization. UT Arlington's graduate school tries to match department funding, whenever possible. UT Arlington also offers dissertation enhancement funding that includes travel funding for enhancing skill set and knowledge. This fund is about 4 years old and completion rates for recipients are near 100 percent.

UNT has support from the registrar, finance, President's office, and other offices that comes to the graduate school. Students receive up to \$500, and must have a match from the department to demonstrate that the activity or conference is important. Students must have a degree plan on file and attend workshops to receive funding. There are plans to include steps for non-degree seeking students to receive funding. UNT also offers \$500-\$1,000 in grant to support graduate student research. Texas Tech University (Texas Tech) has scholarships for tuition. Graduate students receive up to \$500 to travel and present at professional conferences.

Texas State University (Texas State) has a competitive fund for up to \$5,000 for doctoral and up to \$2,000 for master's students for research-related expenses. This funding is for data collection or supplies necessary for research. The institution is tracking completion rates to see if this funding support makes a difference. Texas Tech offers similar support, especially for humanities, social sciences, and arts fields; the institution has leveraged funding from other support groups and local foundations to offer students \$2,000 to \$5,000 to support their research. The institution tracks outcomes including publications, etc. All students receiving funding participate in three career development sessions and write an external fellowship application.

GEAC discussed support for specific student populations. Examples from Sam Houston State University are ASPIRE, that includes financial support and a structured mentor program, and ROAD to PHD, which sponsors 10 students currently. SHSU is finding that these students report different experiences than previous graduate students and are building community.

Texas A&M University offers a fellowship program that focuses on diversity. Nominators discuss

what each nominee brings to the university, for example gender, research interest, ethnicity, etc. There are different levels of support for masters' and doctoral students and the department is required to offer a 25 percent assistantship. Texas Tech offers a similar program, which includes a mentor group and travel allowance. The Texas Tech graduate school facilitates the program with funding from endowments.

GEAC discussed national competition for graduate students. Health insurance can be as an issue for supporting master's students. In some instances, students have to purchase their own health insurance, which is particularly affecting international students.

Dr. Butler-Purry suggested that when the cost of tuition rises, it increases the burden on faculty bringing in the grants. If tuition goes up and PhDs become as expensive as post-doctoral researchers (post-docs), the faculty might use post-docs more. Dr. Oponng noted that determining the lack of a tuition waiver as a problem requires comparing data on competitive offers and the student's decision to enroll elsewhere. Several concurred that the programs reach out for feedback and anecdotally the answer is the student "got a better offer". Incentivizing faculty to write grants that include student support in the proposal may be a strategy.

Agenda Item 10. Discussion of microcredential characteristics, definitions, and considerations

GEAC discussed microcredential characteristics and considerations. Credit requirements vary by discipline. Some institutions offer certificate programs within the degree program to add distinction. In healthcare, students pursue inter-professional certifications. Industry drives stand-alone certificates, such as paralegal. There are federal rules regarding stand-alone certificates and financial aid that also influence behavior.

GEAC discussed credentialing non-degree seeking students. Non-degree seeking students could focus on a discipline's content or workforce goals. A microcredential may formalize and highlight content mastery from particular courses and outcomes. Students might use microcredentials to convey their skills to an employer. Institutions could offer the certificate online to attract students and use this approach as a mechanism to admit students (this is happening across the country).

GEAC discussed further questions for the field including: *what is the value of the degree and what are admissions standards for degree and non-degree students; whether non-degree seeking students can "stack" these certificates and/or courses and then request the degree; are there rules about using the same course in more than one credential; can credentials from multiple institutions be combined; and are there variations by professional and research-oriented programs.*

Agenda Item 14. Update on Coordinating Board activities

Dr. Reinold Cornelius provided an update on the Low Producing Programs (LPP) process. In 2013, a statute change updated the LPP process. Information on the process is included in the presentation slides, and is located on the [LPP webpage](http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/LPP) www.theccb.state.tx.us/LPP. The LPP Report includes the programs that were LPP for three years in a row. The institution's system makes a decision to close, consolidate, or keep the program, and will post their information on the Legislative Appropriation Request (LAR). Dr. Silverman clarified that only the system office

reports on the LAR, unless the institution is not part of a system.

Dr. Cornelius clarified that if an institution closes or consolidates a program the Coordinating Board removes it from the spreadsheet and strikes it on the report. Institutions may consolidate programs under one CIP with different tracks. Institutions do not report tracks to the Coordinating Board. The institution documents its justification to keep a program.

Agenda Item 11. Discussion of online graduate education

Dr. Nailos provided a summary of online graduate programs in the meeting materials. GEAC requested additional information on online graduate programs be prepared: number of students enrolled, number of graduates, delivery-mode, discipline, level, CIP, unique values, faculty type, workload, capacity, and a comparison (number and percentage) with all graduate programs.

GEAC discussed programs offered 100 percent online might affect international student visa eligibility. On some campuses, the online offerings are filling faster, even with face-to-face available. Many programs have moved instruction online due to location of the institution; however, some programs will keep face-to-face requirements to maintain eligibility for international students.

GEAC discussed disciplinary processes for online programs, including processes for academic dishonesty. Determining dishonesty, and whether to remove a person from a program, is a time and labor-intensive challenge. If a disciplinary process requires a hearing, there may be logistical challenges for remote students. Some faculty use video meetings to handle misconduct concerns rather than email. Updating assignments for each course delivery helps reduce plagiarism and cheating.

Agenda Item 12. Update on Learning Technology Advisory Committee (LTAC) and GEAC future meeting

Dr. Nailos provided an update that the GEAC and LTAC Chairs will meet first to discuss issues and topics of interest. The two committees will then discuss items and topics of interest. Details for a joint meeting are forthcoming.

Agenda Item 13. Discussion of future agenda items

Dr. Goeman requested institutions provide feedback on the display of SCH requirements for doctoral programs. Doctoral programs may have different entrance requirements for students with bachelors versus master's degrees; however, the current display can only show one option. Dr. Opong asked if the Coordinating Board could adjust the infrastructure to accommodate the different SCH requirements.

Dr. Butler-Purry shared tentative topics for the upcoming meetings include:

- Graduate Program Reviews
- *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education*
- Semester Credit Hour requirements
- Clinical Placements for Nursing
- Marketable Skills
- Outcomes for graduate education
- Alternative-Academic Career Pathways

FINAL. Approved 2/20/2019.

Dr. Saygin suggested discussion on the faculty senate and graduate council structures, experiences, challenges, processes. Dr. Butler-Purry suggested that the Association of Texas Graduate Schools would be the vehicle for this type of discussion. The 2019 meeting will be at the University of North Texas in September.

Dr. Bauer suggested further discussion on graduate program review, the *Characteristics of Doctoral* programs, and protocol for supporting joint programs and/or multi-institutional programs.

Agenda Item 15. Adjournment

Dr. Oppong made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Krueger seconded; The committee unanimously approved the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.