TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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

Summary Notes
February 20, 2019

Members attending:

Blanca Bauer	Sarah Larsen
Richard Berry	Kathryn Matthew
Karen Butler-Purry (Chair)	Karen N. McCaleb
Lucía Durá	Saralyn McKinnon-Crowley
DoVeanna Fulton	Joseph Oppong
Andrea Golato (Vice-Chair)	Claire Peel *(pending member)*
William Harn	Cynthia Rutledge (phone)
Raymond Jackson	Jennifer Schroeder (phone)
Thomas Krueger	Mark A. Sheridan
Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy	Andrew Zinn
Barry Lambert	

Members absent: Kenneth "Ken" Hendrickson, Dean Neikirk, and Can Saygin

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

Learning Technology Advisory Committee members attending: Justin Louder, Patrick Pluscht and Vikki Freeman

Note, agenda items were moved during the meeting to accommodate guest speakers.

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

Dr. Karen Butler-Purry, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Dr. Butler-Purry welcomed the committee and invited the members, Coordinating Board staff, and audience to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item 2. Review of meeting procedures

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

Dr. Jennifer Nailos provided information on post-meeting emails that would include action items, *Summary Notes*, and reporting.

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

Dr. DoVeanna Fulton requested a correction for the October 3, 2018 meeting *Summary Notes* regarding the discussion on new proposal submissions on page 4. Dr. Nailos will make

the correction according to the archived video.

Dr. Butler-Purry entertained a motion for approving the *Summary Notes* from the October 3, 2018, meeting as amended. Dr. Rajkumar Lakshmanaswamy made the motion to accept the Summary Notes as amended; Dr. Joseph Oppong seconded the motion. The committee unanimously approved the motion.

Agenda Item 4. Update on and discussion of the Strategic Plan for Graduate Education

Dr. James Goeman provided an update on the status of the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education.* Coordinating Board staff and subcommittee members worked on strengthening citations, organizing the document, and moving the draft through the Coordinating Board internal review process. The draft in the meeting packet is a preliminary-final draft. Currently at the stage of Coordinating Board review and no major revisions are anticipated at this point. Following Coordinating Board leadership and the Commissioner's review, the draft will be released for public comment from the state's graduate education community. Staff will take the comments and suggestions into consideration and make changes as appropriate. Then the document will be submitted for Board consideration.

Dr. Nailos shared two key updates to the draft from the previous iteration. First, a recommendation for three Milestone Reports is included for institutions to develop their targets and monitor progress. Second, an appendix will be included to identify data supporting the recommended measures. The appendix helps illustrate that tracking various measures would not be a significant burden to institutions as the data already exists and is often, already being reported through the Accountability System.

Dr. Butler-Purry asked for Coordinating Board feedback regarding the Milestone Reports and the level of detailed instructions institutions might expect. Dr. Goeman stated that the consensus has been to not add a reporting burden. The *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education* and progress toward the goals is important. Institutions would establish targets and make progress using strategies they identify. The Milestone Reports would include the big picture efforts made and efforts already underway at the institutions. Dr. Goeman clarified that the Milestone Report 1: Action Plan would include the targets set by the institution as appropriate to its size, mission, and strengths.

Dr. Lucía Durá requested that increasing collaborative activities and other similar goals include impact and other measures beside numeric counts. Dr. Goeman added that the reports should be more than just numbers. Institutions can include the significant outcomes and describe or highlight the impact of activities for the institution. Dr. Durá also recommended including the number of underrepresented faculty that are tenured or promoted.

Dr. Andrea Golato stated that some institutions may already have a strategic plan for graduate programs. Incorporating the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education* might be difficult to incorporate with the institution's existing strategic plan cycle. Dr. Goeman added that institutions are encouraged to find intersections between the campus' plan and the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education.*

Dr. Karen N. McCaleb requested an update on the anticipated timeline. Dr. Goeman stated that the end result would be to take the *Strategic Plan for Graduate Education* before the Board. There is a target for the Committee on Academic and Workforce Success (CAWS) meeting in June and the Board meeting in July. Internal Coordinating Board approval processes

would occur in the spring, with a public comment period prior to CAWS.

Dr. Thomas Krueger requested a benchmark of the Texas population and enrollment over time be included for Figure 1.

Dr. Goeman added that committee members will be included in the communications when the document is sent out for public comment.

Agenda Item 5. Update on and discussion of Graduate Program Review

Dr. Audra Patridge presented information on the *Graduate Program Review* (GPR) reports and sample templates. Dr. Patridge requested feedback from the committee on the templates to incorporate into a guide on best practices for GPRs. The elements described in the best practices document and sample forms would not be mandatory. Dr. Goeman noted that the templates were created as a result of reviewing over 300 GPR submissions and aligning the criteria from Texas Administrative Code. The templates may be adapted or used as a reference.

Dr. Sarah Larson asked how departments and institutions should compare the programs. Dr. Patridge clarified that the GPRs should include in-state and national comparisons. Dr. Goeman added that accountability peer-groups are in-state comparisons for institutions, and programs have an idea of their national peers. Institutions and programs can determine the appropriate peers for comparison.

Dr. Goeman added that the Texas Administrative Code includes minimum guidelines for GPRs. This includes that at least one external, out-of-state reviewer from a well-regarded program should be used to review a master's program. For doctoral programs, the minimum is two external, out-of-state reviewers. Institutions may opt to use more reviewers.

Dr. Raymond Jackson asked for clarification on the scope of the GPRs as statewide or national. Dr. Goeman clarified that there is no requirement at all to use in-state reviewers; the national context is the main thrust of the GPR process.

In August 2019, the first GPR cycle will conclude. Institutions may submit through October any outstanding GPRs. Scheduling for the next ten-year cycle will take place in Fall 2019 and a new ten-year cycle begins in 2020. Coordinating Board staff will review the requested scheduling to ensure no more than 15 percent of programs are scheduled in any particular year. If institutions need to make changes they can contact Dr. Goeman with a short explanation for the requested change.

The best practices document and templates will be posted and distributed around the Fall 2019 scheduling period. Dr. Patridge asked the committee to provide any feedback or suggestions on the draft documents via email.

Agenda Item 6. Update on and discussion of *Characteristics of Doctoral Programs*

Dr. Goeman presented the history and basic information on the *Characteristics of Doctoral Programs*. The *Characteristics* is a signature work project from the committee. The general public can look at the *Characteristics* and get a basic overview of the doctoral program.

Recent question topics submitted to the Coordinating Board for clarification included:

- How to report faculty teaching load, student diversity, and tuition & fees
- When doctoral programs must begin reporting the *Characteristics*

The committee discussed suggestions for rewording how to report tuition, fees, and the true cost of the program for students. Dr. Durá noted that the anticipated costs impact the consumers from a marketing perspective. Dr. Jackson suggested including the average annual cost.

Dr. Jackson noted there is variation in reporting student and faculty publishing and collaborations. Dr. Butler-Purry added that the intent for how publications are reported was to show the unique number of publications. Dr. Jackson added that from the perspective of graduate students, they might not care about the inflation but rather how many students have been involved with publications. Dr. Goeman suggested that there can be a note included regarding reporting duplicate-entries. Dr. Golato added that it is important to reflect nuance by disciplines.

Dr. Butler-Purry added that GEAC spent multiple years to agree on the *Characteristics* and recommended soliciting feedback from programs regarding the new characteristics, definitions, data collection, and reporting before making changes. The committee will send feedback, suggestions, and recommendations to Dr. Goeman and Dr. Nailos before the next meeting.

Agenda Item 9. Discussion of semester credit hour (SCH) trends and requirements

Dr. Goeman presented results from updates to the THECB Program Inventory's listing of programs and semester credit hour (SCH) requirements. Institutions submitted updates and revisions in fall 2018; there were 444 SCH changes, 22 program phase-outs, 573 date changes, and 8 program title changes. Regular review of the Program Inventory is important to make sure the information is correct. Dr. Goeman will bring information on trends over time to the next GEAC meeting.

Agenda Item 10. Update on Coordinating Board program inventory display of semester credit hours (SCH)

Dr. Goeman presented an update on the display of semester credit hours (SCH) for doctoral programs in the Program Inventory. Coordinating Board staff met with ISS to discuss updates to the display. To incorporate the suggested revisions, the system would need a serious overhaul to make updates to have a dual display to show different SCH requirements. The current allowable ranges of SCH are listed at the bottom of the webpage. If SCH are not displayed for a program it could be (a) THECB did not receive the SCH information, or (b) the SCH are outside the range and the system cannot accept it to display.

Agenda Item 12. Discussion of clinical placements for nursing programs

The committee discussed how graduate students identify clinical placements for nursing programs. At many institutions, students are responsible for finding their own clinical placements in the graduate nursing programs. There are listings of placement locations previously approved by faculty that students can draw from.

If the nursing program is associated with a medical college or a health science center, the placements may be located within the center. For schools that do not have a medical college or health science center, it may be more difficult for students to find a placement. If the instruction is online, students are more likely to be responsible for identifying their placements due to distance from the institution. When programs are online, there is potential for a national

student body. This expands the range and locations of clinical sites needed.

Placement choices also depend on how far a student is willing or able to drive. Even with face-to-face programs, if the number of students exceeds the traditional number of placements available, additional locations would need to be identified, reviewed, and approved. Many programs have students that are already working and are in the environment already before seeking clinical placement positions.

If this is a new partnership or site, faculty have due diligence to review the site, the preceptor, to evaluate the students while in the placement, and collect feedback afterwards. Institutions establish MOUs for the locations and students. Preceptors and clinical sites must be evaluated and meet specific standards for accreditation. There is a lot of time put into making sure a site is acceptable.

Financial support is also a concern. Sometimes preceptors are paid which may influence participation. For students, nursing preceptors are now starting to expect payment to mirror other heath-related programs.

Some professional organizations help students find placements for a fee. A suggestion was to form or support a statewide collaboration that multiple programs could use to identify and coordinate clinical placement sites. This would be helpful for rural and online programs.

Dr. Goeman noted that the THECB is interested in clinical placements for nursing programs because nursing is a growing field. There are approximately 140 programs leading to nursing licensure and with the growth of programs there is a need for placements of students. Considerations for the future of nursing programs include how these placements are forming, what institutions are doing to develop these placements, and where are institutions struggling.

Dr. Claire Peel inquired whether institutions or programs are using simulation hours in lieu of clinical hours. There is a percentage of the instructional time that can be conducted in a simulation lab.

This is not Texas specific issue, but a national challenge. Dr. Stacey Silverman added Texas has a history of helping solve national problems. Institutions do a great job when they work together to find statewide solutions. Information on clinical placements for nursing programs is helpful for identifying strategies and solutions. Students need to know what their program requirements entail, including the hidden cost of finding a preceptor.

Dr. Butler-Purry added that another consideration is what the role of the program should be in identifying the placements.

Agenda Item 8. Lunch

Dr. Krueger motioned to break for lunch; Dr. Oppong seconded; The motion was unanimously approved. The committee resumed at 12:37 p.m.

Agenda Item 14. Update on and discussion of doctoral proposal submission review process

Dr. Goeman presented an overview of the process for institutions submitting new degree program proposals to the Coordinating Board. Proposals that are presented at Board meetings take at least six to nine months to review and process. Planning notifications to the Coordinating Board are required for all proposals that would be considered by the Board at one of the quarterly Board meetings. The Board has established requirements in Rules for planning

notifications when institutions are proposing programs that would require for example big investments and extensive resources and facilities to implement.

Dr. Goeman added that just because a program was withdrawn or not approved in a specific year doesn't mean it was never approved; institutions may revise and resubmit the proposal at a future date.

Agenda Item 11. Discussion of online graduate program data

Dr. Nailos presented information from the Program Inventory on online graduate programs. The Program Inventory is dynamic and updated on a continuous basis. As of February 2019, 19 percent of graduate programs were offered in at least one online mode (100 percent online, fully online, or hybrid/blended). Most online programs at the graduate-level are master's degree programs.

Dr. Andrew Lofters clarified that distance education policy currently allows for up to four courses in a doctoral program to be offered online before notification must be given to the Coordinating Board. Distance education is determined by the percentage of the program offered via distance (i.e. online). Once a program reaches 51 percent online, distance education policies would apply.

Agenda Item 13. Update on and discussion of Learning Technology Advisory Committee activities

Dr. Justin Louder, Learning Technology Advisory Committee (LTAC) Chair, Mr. Patrick Pluscht, Co-Chair, and Dr. Vikki Freeman, member, presented the purpose and activities of the committee. Current activities include discussion of the 50-mile notification rule, communicating with Higher Education Regional Councils (HERCs) and Chief Academic Officers (CAO)/Chief Information Officers (CIO), new program proposal reviews, and NC-SARA policies for distance education.

LTAC reviews distance programs including electronic-to-group, face-to-face off campus, as well as, hybrid, fully, and 100 percent online program proposals. LTAC does not look at the curriculum but looks the types and delivery of student support services, available library resources, technologies utilized to teach and encourage interaction between faculty and students, faculty experience and training in the online environment and pedagogy, student authentication protocol (how does the institution make sure the participants are actually those enrolled in the course). LTAC also reviews the overall institutional support for the proposed program.

If a program moves to over 50 percent distance or online, LTAC would look at the program. Online doctoral programs may offer up to four courses online. Often, programs transition courses online over time and evolve into an online program.

Dr. Louder stated that evaluation of assessments and student authentication practices require institutions to have policies in place to identify the learner engaging with the course materials. ADA policies and processes should also be in place that address content accessibility, captioning, OCR, and federal requirements.

LTAC members can assist with directing individuals to resources and reference materials in the field. The THECB has a Distance Education Resource page that includes forms and policy information for institutions. The *Principles of Good Practice* is a guiding document for institutions to use for evaluating their programs. The *Principles* are currently under review by

LTAC for updates.

Dr. Louder shared that current discussion topics in LTAC meetings are inclusive access and Open Educational Resources (OER). LTAC is exploring how these materials are used by institutions to promote access for students.

Agenda Item 15. Update on Coordinating Board activities

Dr. Reinold Cornelius presented an update on the National Research University Fund (NRUF) eligibility criteria. Currently, three of the eight Emerging Research Institutions receive NRUF funding. There are several criteria for eligibility to receive NRUF funding. The timeline for eligibility review is quick because of all the elements required to be included. Information is on the website regarding how institutions can work with the Coordinating Board to coordinate the timing of the review of doctoral degree programs. Changes to the NRUF eligibility requirements established in Rules would require negotiated rule-making.

Dr. Nailos share information on the Minority Health Research and Education Grant Program deadlines in spring 2019.

Dr. Nailos notified committee members that their terms of membership are listed on the GEAC roster. Members with a "19" listed by their name would conclude their membership this year, if not re-nominated by their institutions and conferred by the Board. A call for nominations will be distributed in the spring for all Coordinating Board advisory committees, including GEAC. If any current GEAC members would like to return for an additional term, they will need to be re-nominated to be considered.

Agenda Item 16. Discussion of future agenda items

Dr. Butler-Purry opened discussion for future agenda items. Proposed topics for the June meeting include: how institutions are identifying Marketable Skills for graduate programs, state-level outcomes data, discussion on non-academic career pathways.

Other suggested topics include: graduate student mental health and discussion with an entity similar to GEAC from another state to learn about their experiences.

Agenda Item 17. Adjournment

Dr. Oppong made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Barry Lambert seconded; The committee unanimously approved the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:03 p.m.