

**Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools  
Spring 2018 Meeting  
Wednesday, February 28, 2018  
Sheraton Hotel  
623 Union Street  
Nashville, TN 37219**

**ATTENDEES:**

Karin Bartoszuk, ETSU	Philip Johnston, Belmont
Jennifer Beech, UofM	Mary Kyle, UofM
Chad Brooks, APSU	Tim Leszczak, APSU
Ernest Brothers, UTK	Don Thomason, UTHSC
Alice Camuti, TN Tech	Dixie Thompson, UTK
Isaac Donkor, UTHSC	

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**Call to Order:**

At 12:10 PM the Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools (TCGS) meeting was called to order by D. Thomason.

**Presentation:**

D. Thomason presented the Outstanding Thesis Award winner, Md. Salman Ahmed, a graduate student from East Tennessee State University. MD. Salman Ahmed provided the group with a brief overview of his research, "An Investigation into the Performance evaluation of Connected Vehicle Applications: From Real-World Experiments to Parallel Simulation Paradigm."

D. Thomason reviewed the Economic Impact Study released by the TCGS in 2017. He noted that the best time to talk to legislators is when they are home in their districts, rather than when they are in Nashville. Therefore, he encouraged the TCGS members to reach to their legislators at home using the Economic Impact Study. It was requested that the report be summarized into a two to three page document and then distributed to the legislators.

**LUNCH BREAK**

**Approval of Fall 2017 Meeting:**

C. Brooks moved (2/K. Bartoszuk) to approve the minutes from the fall 2017 meeting. the motion was carried by voice vote.

**President's Report:**

D. Thomason talked about the timing of the event on Capitol Hill, urging the group to consider moving it to March or April. He will look into the possibilities of having the event in different location of the office building to allow for institutions to bring their students.

**Treasurer's Report:**

The current balance is \$8,252.00 minus the spring 2018 meeting expenses.

**Institutional Updates:**

Updates were provided by each institution present, and presenters were asked to provide the notes via e-mail to the secretary.

**East Tennessee State University**

- No update received

**Austin Peay State University**

- No update received

**Belmont**

- No update received

**Tennessee Tech University**

- No update received

**University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

The fall 2017 graduation numbers for UTK were:

**Doctoral Degrees:**

- PhD - 113
- DNP - 2
- DVM - 1
- JD - 5

**Specialist in Education**

- EdS - 1

**Masters**

- MArch - 2
- MA - 18
- MBA - 210
- MMusic - 2
- MPH - 3
- MPPA - 9
- MS - 221
- MSN - 42
- MSW - 11

**Graduate Certificates**

- GC - 13

The Graduate School continued to move forward on several aspects of our Strategic Plan. Specific accomplishments/points of emphasis included:

*Release of the first modules of the Graduate Blueprint*

UTK is committed to better use of data to analyze, plan and invest in graduate education. Our initial phase of the data release and analysis provided Admissions and Enrollment data for use across campus. This will allow detailed examination of trends in admissions and enrollment across all departments and degrees. Modules still being built will include information on

support of graduate students (stipend levels, etc.), graduation details (e.g., time to degree), and outcomes (i.e., placement).

#### *Focus on recruitment*

UTK is committed to increasing resources targeting the recruitment of exceptional candidates. The Graduate School continued with a mini-grant program to departments for use in recruitment efforts. These grants are meant to increase not only the number of applicants, but also the diversity of the applicant pool.

We continued to expand our Recruiters Network across campus. These individuals from various departments meet at least once per semester to share ideas/strategies related to recruitment. Additionally, the department participating in the Recruiters Network are integrating the Prospect CRM to communicate with interested students.

Dr. Ernest Brothers coordinated and attended several events to assist with recruitment of graduate students. These events included:

- McNair SAEOPP Conference, Atlanta, GA
- FAMU Graduate Feeder Program, Tallahassee, FL
- SoCon Undergraduate Research Forum, Spartanburg, SC
- Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABCRMS), Phoenix, AZ
- North Carolina A&T Graduate Fair, Greensboro, NC

Dr. Ernest Brothers welcomed students from several campuses during the fall and early spring. Schools that brought undergraduates to our campus included:

- University of Montevallo
- Austin Peay University
- Allen University
- Concord University
- Lee University
- King University

#### *Undertaking a major Graduate Catalog revision*

The UTK Graduate Catalog has not undergone significant revisions in recent years. We are in the process of examining all policies for potential updating and clarification. Our goal is to ensure that all policies are in alignment with our vision of being a “dynamic, innovative, collaborative partner in shaping graduate education.”

The next phase will be to work with departments to update their degree requirements. We will eventually build an automated degree audit process, so having specific degree requirements is essential.

#### *Partnership with Office of Research and Engagement*

We are launching a partnership with the Office of Research and Engagement (ORE) to provide 20 new GRA positions on campus. In this partnership, ORE provide the tuition, the Graduate School provides the fellowship (\$10,000 per student per year), and departments provide the assistantship stipend. Each PhD student recruited through this process will be guaranteed support for 4 years. A competitive process was used to solicit and review nominations from across campus. The purpose is to recruit exceptional PhD students to

work alongside our faculty on research projects. We anticipate that this investment in increasing research capacity will yield results in grant applications, research publications, and other indicators of scholarship.

#### *Work with Graduate Student Senate*

Earlier this semester the Graduate Student Senate passed a new Constitution that gives it greater autonomy from the Student Government Association (SGA). The graduate students pressed for this because they felt that SGA did not adequately represent the needs of graduate students. We continue to work to secure adequate funds to support these efforts on behalf of graduate students.

We will hold our Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week (GPSAW) from April 2 through April 6. GPSAW has grown in scope and reach over the past few years. Some highlights for this year include: an appreciation breakfast with the Chancellor, the 3MT finals, social events (baseball game, networking mixer, etc.), professional development events (workshops on a variety of topics, opportunity for a professional photograph), and wellness events (massages, mindfulness, etc.).

#### *Contributions to professional societies*

Dr. Ernest Brothers just concluded his year as President of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools. The annual meeting was held February 22 - 24, 2018 in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Next year's meeting will be held February 14 - 16, 2019 in Knoxville, TN. We look forward to hosting this event. Dr. Dixie Thompson will conclude a 3-year term on the Board of Trustees of the American College of Sports Medicine in June 2018. This is the world's largest organization of sports medicine and sports science with more than 50,000 members and certified professionals.

#### **University of Memphis**

- Spring enrollment numbers are up
- In the process of developing new Master's and PhD programs.
- New Graduation Analyst, Dr. Jennifer Beech
- In the process of implementing Curriculog and welcome any advice on how to successfully roll out the program

#### **University of Tennessee health Science Center**

- No update received.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 1:37 PM.