

**Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools
Fall 2014 Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 13, 2014
Tennessee Board of Regents
The University of Tennessee Health Science Center
Pharmacy Building, Rm 118, 881 Madison Ave, Memphis, TN 38163**

Attendees

Jasbir Dhaliwal, U of Memphis
Mark Stephens, Tn Tech
Alice Camuti, Tn Tech
Brian Maxson, ETSU
Pamela Knox, TBR
Isaac Donkor, UTHSC
James Kieruff, U of Memphis
Lemmie Griggs, U of Memphis
John Cox, UTHSC

Mary Kyle, U of Memphis
Donald Thomason, UTHSC
Cecilia McIntosh, ETSU
Jackie Eller, MTSU
Scott Handy, MTSU
Betty Dandridge-Johnson, THEC
Randy Walker, UT Chattanooga
Monica Jablonski, UTHSC
Felicia Washington, UTHSC

Call to Order

The TCGS Meeting was called to order by Donald Thomason, TCGS President at 8:30 a.m. Webcasting the meeting to Belmont University.

Change to Agenda

A motion was made to move afternoon business forward to accommodate travelers and impending bad weather. Motion carried.

Approval of Spring 2014 Minutes

A motion was made to approve the Minutes as presented. The motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

- *Presented by Felicia Washington, TCGS Treasurer – (See attachment.)
- *Announcement that email went out for dues. The email was late due to a change in the office-holder.
- *Current balance is \$8168.51 as of September 30th.
- *Cecilia McIntosh made a motion to approve the report. The motion carried.

Institutional Reports

ETSU

- Enrollment up slightly. About 2-3 years ago we had a 7.5% increase in graduate enrollment and we are maintaining that. A couple of new programs started this fall and we look for them to build.
 - M.S. Digital Marketing – 100% online

- Graduate Certificate in Athletic Administration (on ground or online)
 - Like others here, we have some LOI's pending
- Graduate Council, Academic Council, and President approved a "Graduate Academic Fresh Start" policy, effective immediately.
- Have implemented an electronic Graduate Faculty application system with secure login, electronic signatures, etc. Deans pitched in 50% of cost of development and I put in other. Streamlines process and everyone in approval chain can log in and check status. Presidential letters of appointment are also scanned in so everything is available via e-file.
- GRE prep classes continue to be highly popular.
- Thesis/Dissertation Boot Camp continues to fill each semester. Have students from all stages and many disciplines although majority are working professionals in EdD or nursing PhD. Nice proportion of folks finish. Our model has been presented at the national etd conference in Orlando in September and will be part of pre-conference workshop at CGS in December.
- Graduate Student Success Specialist – has been in place for 3 years now. Data show that 80% of students consulting with GSSS stay in school; many have already graduated. This is wonderful for a relatively modest investment. Provides professional development opportunity (paid internship) for MSW student.
- Illuminated – The Graduate Student Research Magazine is quite popular. Online with limited print run. Oversight is Karin Bartoszuk. Writers have been M.A. Professional Communication or M.A. English graduate students, photography and layout has been done by M.A. New Media Studio students. Fresh look, understandable stories. Where are they now? Where are they going?
- Professional Development key theme for us as always, classes, grants, awards, scholarships. Give detail if wanted. Spring award ceremony largest ever – our 50+ awards PLUS departments/programs join!
- Continue to have record participation in Appalachia Research Forum each year. Well over 200 presentations (oral, poster) in spring 2014.

MTSU

- New leadership: Dr. Jackie Eller and Dr. Scott Handy
- New degrees –
 - MS Finance likely for Fall 2015
 - MLA – under TBR/THEC review in November
 - MLS – under TBR/THEC review in January
 - Accelerated B to M (ABM) now offered and is being targeted specifically toward honors students. Currently have 7 but 3 more are forthcoming.
 - First graduates in PhD MOBI, Comp Sci and MSE this past summer and fall
- Offered two different and reportedly very successful thesis/dissertation writing workshops
 - One with CGS that was a week-long with departments donating lunches – 15 students
 - Second was a bootcamp with credit at a state park – 8 students
- Designed and now offering many ARGOS reports/access for programs to monitor applications for better recruiting and more efficient admissions

- Oct 15 is ribbon-cutting for \$145 million state-of-the-art science bldg. that will be a substantial recruiting tool for science PhD programs!

Tennessee Tech University

- Reorganization – Research and Graduate Studies separated in August 2013
 - a. Established aggressive goals to increase enrollment
 - b. Established new programs in PSM
- Marketing initiatives:
 - a. Advertising new programs on Chegg and Peterson’s web portals. When a student is researching graduate schools, Chegg and Peterson’s (gradschools.com, textbook purchases, USNews, College Prowler) will match the student profile to our program profile and pop up our profile. We receive weekly spreadsheets of students that viewed our profile.
 - b. Charter advertising. Promoting programs on internet browsers in target areas. Tracking click-through.
 - c. Implemented Hoot-suite to manage the social media feeds to facebook and twitter. Schedules the messages in advance to allow us to be consistent but not consuming all of our time.
 - d. TTU information sessions for undergraduates.
 - e. Targeting students at strategic schools before we arrive for a career fair or information session – using facebook marketing company to do this.
 - f. Increased our presence at career fairs and grad school fairs. Targeting consortium career fairs including GA, AL, TN Nashville, TN Knoxville.
- Process improvement initiatives:
 - a. CRM – implemented SUGAR to track leads and establish a contact plan. Career fair follow up with email followed by a post card.
 - b. CRM and Admissions process – out to RFP for a new system to manage the whole process.

University of Memphis

- Helping our community and institution understand implications of having about 4000 graduate students which is about 20% of our total student population
- Focusing on developing the skills and competencies of the local program leaders for our 111 graduate programs, esp. about strategic enrolment management
- Revisiting and rationalizing aspects pertaining to graduate student servicing – what needs to be centralized versus what needs to be localized
- Injecting personalization into all aspects of handling prospective students in the recruitment and admission process
- Developing marketing plans for diverse graduate programs
- Replacing reduced enrolments in education with stronger enrolments in business, nursing, social work and other growth areas

UTC

- Our new library will finally open in January, after a one year delay.

- Our chancellor is leading the development of a new strategic plan for the next 5 years. The community-wide participation process is being well received.
- Overall headcount enrollment for fall semester was flat; graduate student enrollment was up slightly.
- We are in the development stages for new master's degrees in social work and interior design, with implementation in fall 2016.

UTHSC

- Matriculated the largest class in recent history.
- To reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the Ph.D. program in Health Outcomes and Policy Research, and to bring together similar research interests across the five other colleges (Dentistry, Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy), formed an Institute for Health Outcomes and Policy to serve as the home for the Ph.D. program and the discipline.
- In a similar vein, recognized the need for faculty appointments within the College of Graduate Health Sciences Departments for faculty who do not easily fit within a discipline unique to one of the other colleges. To accommodate these appointments, created two departments within the College: Interprofessional Education and Graduate Education.
- SACS accreditation. Preliminary site visit identified potential rough spots. Scheduled for a full site visit in the second week of February. Also warned that the blackout period for substantive changes may extend to December 2015 or beyond.
- Monetary fellowship incentives to encourage students to seek extramural funding are having the desired effect. These are in addition to the post-award stipend incentive.
- The project proposal to increase career opportunity exposure for doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows was not funded by NIH. Nevertheless, it is a necessary component of the graduate studies, so will be self-funded. Outlined in more detail later in the meeting.

Questions about Academic Fresh Start Mentioned by ETSU and TBR

After the conclusion of the institutional, TBR, and THEC reports, there was a brief discussion about the Academic Fresh Start Policy. Questions pertained to the number of participants and various policy specifics.

TCGS Business

*Election of Officers

The following officers were elected and approved unanimously:

Brian Maxson – Secretary

*Graduate Education Week update and dates

The discussion revolved around fixing a date for Graduate Education Week and the related Day on the Plaza event. Dates were proposed and rejected: March 2-6th too closely corresponded with the meeting of SCGS. A later meeting begins to coincide with spring break at different member institutions. The best option settled upon by the group was the week of February 23-27 (despite the acknowledged risks of bad winter weather), with Day on the Plaza held that Wednesday, February 25 (one week earlier than originally planned).

Related discussions were held about editing and publishing the governor's proclamation that announces this event. The suggestion was made to publish the proclamation in area newspapers, with different opinions suggested about taking out ad space or simply writing a press release. Several changes were suggested to edit the proclamation's content, with the conclusion that the TCGS would post the proclamation on Google Docs in the expectation that member schools would provide suggestions, edits, and feedback.

***Adjustment of Thesis Award deadline**

The chair of the thesis award committee will remain Karin Bartoszek from ETSU. A new committee to assist the chair was elected, consisting of Jasbir Dhaliwal (Memphis), Randy Walker (UT-Chattanooga), and Scott Handy (MTSU). A deadline for nominees was set for early December. The members present agreed that nominees for the award should have finished their thesis but not yet graduated, and that the dean of each nominating institution needed to sign off to ensure only one sanctioned nominee came from each member institution.

***Meeting Site for Spring 2015 TCGS Meeting**

The coincidence of the meeting of TCGS with the originally proposed March 3 meeting date meant a change to the spring meeting date. Members agreed to move things up one week, thus enabling the meeting to coincide with Graduate Education Week. Representatives from TBR and THEC agreed to discuss which of their institutions would host the meeting in Nashville in the spring. A specific date for the meeting was not discussed.

***Other as brought up by the constituency**

There was a brief discussion about the TCGS website. The website is currently housed at MTSU, which creates difficulties in terms of visibility and ease of updating it. The TCGS president suggested that the organization move the website to a third party, such as GoDaddy. Those present agreed to the suggestion and Don will investigate.

Alice from TN Tech stated that she would be sending information from SEGAP (Southeast Graduate Admissions Group) to Don and that Don would distribute it to the members.

Presentation – Dr. Jasbir Dhaliwal (Interim Dean, University of Memphis Graduate School): Challenges of the Shifting Graduate Student Demographic in Tennessee

The presentation is located here: <http://www.tcgsnet.org/media/TCGS%20Dhaliwal%20Fall%202014.ppt>

Presentation – Drs. Monica Jablonski (Associate Dean, UTHSC CGHS) and Isaac Donkor (Associate Dean, UTHSC CGHS): Initiative to Expose Graduate Students to Career Options (OCEAN Project)

The presentation is located here: <http://www.tcgsnet.org/media/OCEAN%20presentation.pptx>

***Questions/discussion:**

After the second presentation there was discussion about the OCEAN initiative. Members inquired about the possibility for students to earn coursework from the professional development

offerings; faculty support of the program; management of the offerings; the funding model currently and in the future; engagement with the community; and the possibility of expanding the program into a statewide collaborative initiative.

TCGS Business Continued

After the presentation, there was a final discussion about a brochure produced by TCGS some years ago. Jasbir Dhaliwal of Memphis brought the brochure to the group's attention and inquired about its origins. After a brief historical discussion, the group agreed that it might be beneficial to distribute the brochure, redesign it, update it as necessary, and republish it in its revised form, in hard and/or electronic copy.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 for Lunch.

The secretary would like to respectfully thank his graduate assistant, Jenna Trent, for her assistance in turning handwritten notes into the format viewed here.