SMU Moody School of Graduate & Advanced Studies

Minutes of the Graduate Council
February 25, 2022

Members in Attendance:
Ali Beskok, Jodi Cooley, Alan Itkin, Akihito Kamata, Renee McDonald, Brian Molanphy, Volkan Otugen, Anthony Petrosino, James E. Quick, Dinesh Rajan, Gretchen Smith

Ex officio members: Suku Nair, Heather Shaw (not in attendance)

Members Not in Attendance:
Adam Jasienski, Elfi Kraka, Alexandra E. Pavlakis

Business:

- **Minutes of the November 19, 2021, meeting:** Dr. Quick asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2021 Graduate Council meeting, which were circulated to the committee before the February meeting. The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

- **Fellowship awardee list:** A subcommittee of the Graduate Council met on Thursday, Feb. 17, to review nominations for Moody Graduate, Mustang, and University Ph.D. Fellowships. At that meeting, the subcommittee produced a list of nominees to be offered each fellowship as well as a waitlist for each fellowship. These lists were shared with the full Graduate Council in advance of the Council meeting. Dr. Itkin went through the subcommittee members, descriptions of the three fellowships, the review process, and the lists of fellowships awardees and those on the waitlist (see slides 5-9 on the meeting PowerPoint presentation below).

  Dr. Rajan asked how long awardees have to respond to the fellowship offer. Dr. Quick and Dr. Itkin explained that, in line with the Council of Graduate Schools April 15 resolution, we must give applicants until April 15 to accept any offer of funding. Prof. Molanphy asked if the Graduate Council could discuss the nomination review process at a future meeting, and Dr. Quick agreed that this was a good idea.

- **MFA students in the Moody School:** At their June 21, 2021, meeting, the Graduate Council approved a motion to formally include MFA students in the Moody School starting in Fall 2022. In advance of the February 2022 Graduate Council meeting, Drs. Itkin, Jasienski, Quick, and Smith, and Prof. Molanphy met to review policies that would need to be revised to realize this goal (see slide 11). Dr. Itkin went through two documents to be revised, the Moody School Administrative Handbook and the Moody School Travel Grant Guidelines (see both below). Dr. Quick explained

that they would be shared with the committee for comments and suggested revisions in advance of the March 2022 Graduate Council meeting, and that the Council would plan to vote on a final version of the revisions at that meeting.

Dr Rajan made the point that, although Moody School Travel Grants are restricted to one per year, students in their first year or two in their graduate programs may not be able to take advantage of this. On the other hand, Dr. Rajan pointed out, students towards the end of their programs may need to attend multiple conferences in one year. The grants currently are not set up to accommodate this. Dr. Quick responded that this was an important concern, but suggested that another mechanism might be found that would best meet this need. Dr. McDonald suggested that students could be offered a certain number of grants over the course of their graduate career and also asked whether additional funds had been accumulated due to the lack of travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Quick responded that tracking students' travel grants across years would create additional administrative burdens for the Moody School, but agreed that additional support for students later in their graduate careers was an important goal. He recognized that resources like travel grants are inadequate, but shared that he was optimistic that support for doctoral and other terminal degree programs was a top priority for the University and that this was recognized by the Board of Trustees.

- **Public dissertation defenses:** At the November Graduate Council meeting, the Council approved a policy to make Ph.D. dissertation defenses public and advertise them on the Moody School's website and calendar. Since then, faculty in humanities and social science disciplines have voiced concerns about this policy. Dr. Itkin reviewed the policy, the Council's vote, and the concerns raised (slides 13-17). The Council discussed these concerns with several Council members voicing support for allowing petitions for students to opt out of public defense of their dissertations. Dr. Quick spoke about the history of the Ph.D. degree and the role of public dissemination of knowledge to the academy. He said that he believed that public presentation of research was essential to work in the academy and that it has presented dangers to scholars in the natural sciences as well as in humanities and social sciences. He called for a vote on allowing for a petition to opt out of public defense of the dissertation with the stipulation that this would be the last revision made to the policy in response to the concerns raised. The Council voted 8-1 in favor of this resolution.

- **Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards:** In January nominations were collected for new awards, Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards, that recognize exemplary contributions to the teaching of SMU undergraduates by graduate student instructors and teaching assistants. A committee met to review nominations and a final selection of two awardees was made by Dr. Quick and Associate Provost Dr. Sheri Kunovich. Dr. Quick explained that one goal of the awards is to publicize the excellent work of SMU's graduate student teachers to the Board of Trustees and other influential audiences. Dr. Itkin described the awards and the nomination process and announced the two awardees: Danyal Ahsanullah in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Ph.D. Program and Anne Parfitt in the Anthropology Ph.D. Program (slide 19).

- Meeting adjourned.

Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

Graduate Council Meeting

February 25, 2022, 1-2:30pm, Zoom meeting

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Meeting Agenda

1. Minutes of the November 19, 2021, meeting
2. Fellowship awardee list
3. MFA students in the Moody School
4. Public dissertation defenses
5. Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards
6. Other items

November Meeting Minutes

Fellowship Awardee List

Fellowship Awardee List

Committee Members:

- Ali Beskok, The Brown Foundation, Inc. Professor of Engineering, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- Jodi Cooley, Professor, Department of Physics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- Akihito Kamata, Professor, Department of Education Policy and Leadership, Department of Psychology, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- Elfi Kraka, Professor and Chair, Department of Chemistry
- Brian Molanphy, Associate Professor of Art, Meadows School of the Arts
- Alexandra E. Pavlakis, Assistant Professor, Department of Education Policy and Leadership, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- Dinesh Rajan, Professor and Department Chair, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- Gretchen Smith, Associate Professor, Associate Dean for Students, and Head of Theatre Studies, Meadows School of the Arts

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Fellowship Awardee List

- **Moody Graduate Fellowships** are offered to Ph.D. applicants who show exceptional promise for academic success. They provide stipends of $30,000 for up to five years.
- **University Ph.D. Fellowships** are “topping up” awards that provide funding in addition to that offered by the department. They are intended to entice promising applicants to study at SMU by making financial offers competitive with top programs. Awards are renewable for up to a total of five years, contingent upon acceptable progress towards the degree.
- **Mustang Fellowships** provide stipends of $30,000 for up to five years for Ph.D. students who are US citizens or permanent residents and identify as diverse in their disciplines. Ph.D. program applicants were invited to submit themselves for consideration for this fellowship through a brief essay in their application.

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Fellowship Awardee List

Fellowship	Target	Initial Offer	Waitlist
Moody Graduate Fellowship	6*	7*	2
Mustang Fellowship	5	5	1
University PhD Fellowship	4	6	10

*Four Moody Graduate Fellowship offers were made to accepted applicants through the Ph.D. Recruitment Grant Program (Chemistry, Economics, Education, Physics). The total target for new Moody Graduate Fellows is **10**.

Fellowship Awardee List

Moody Fellowship Review

Nominee Last Name	Nominee First Name	Nominee Dept.
Abdi	Nasim	chemistry
Heiland	Ally	Psychology
Heath-Warr	Cheyenne	Simmons
Schlicht	Erik	Anthropology
Yalcin	Bugra	Mechanical Engineer
Hernandez	Arlene	Biological Sciences
Kranz	Robert	Religious Studies
Aleman-Correa	Esteban	Economics
Mao	Xinyue	Statistical Science

Mustang Fellowship Review

Nominee Last Name	Nominee First Name	Nominee Dept.
Johnson Edwards	Lindsey	Religious Studies
Carrillo Marquina	Maria	Art History
Palmore	David	Physics
Antonio Santiz	Juliana	chemistry
Velazquez Reynald	Edgar	History
Leon	Maricela	Education

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Fellowship Awardee List

University Ph.D. Fellowship Review		
Nominee Last Name	**Nominee First Name**	**Nominee Dept.**
Kim	Yujin	chemistry
Mao	Xinyue	Statistical Science
Taychameekiatchai	Artit	Statistical Science/Biost
Anderson	Grace	Psychology
Qin	Jiyue	Statistical Science/Biost
Snowden	Sydney	History
Aleman-Correa	Esteban	Economics
Nguyen	Thach	Electrical and Compute
Schroeder	Vera	Mathematics
Ding	Rundong	Statistical Science
Krantz	Savannah	Psychology
Leon	Maricela	Simmons
Liu	Yang	Anthropology
Mannarino	Chiara	Art History
Moskaitis	Sean	Physics
Sadek	Karol	Economics

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MFA Students in the Moody School

MFA Students in the Moody School

- At the June 21, 2021, Graduate Council meeting, the Graduate Council approved a motion to include MFA students in the Moody School starting Fall 2022 (vote: 10-0, 2 voting members absent)
- Dean Quick, Alan Itkin, and Meadows Graduate Council representatives (Adam Jasienski, Brian Molanphy, Gretchen Smith) met to work out what policy changes would be needed to accomplish this
- Policy changes are now put before the Graduate Council for your review:
  - Moody School Administrative Handbook with Edits
  - Moody School Travel Grant Guidelines with Edits

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Public Dissertation Defenses

Public Dissertation Defenses

Policy Approved by Graduate Council, 11/19/2021:

Oral examinations for the Ph.D. degree are open to the public and announced on a University calendar that is publicly available. The completed Dissertation Defense Announcement form, including the date, time, and location of the examination (or, in the case of a virtual examination, a link to register for or attend the examination online), must be submitted to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at least 14 days in advance of the scheduled defense. The examination will be announced on the Moody School events calendar as well as in the Moody School newsletter. Additional announcements are at the discretion of the student's dissertation committee, in adherence with relevant departmental policies. The format of the oral examination and the participation of the audience are also at the discretion of the dissertation committee, in adherence with relevant departmental policies. Usually, the examination will include a portion open to the public and a portion that includes only the student and the dissertation committee members.

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Public Dissertation Defenses

Public dissertation defense policy vote results:

- 11 “yes” votes
- 1 “no” votes
- 0 abstain
- Comments:
  - (“no” vote) The way this motion is worded, the dissertation committee/Department/ and College's discretion is paramount to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies oversight. I feel Moody should provide guidance and leadership on this issue and have ultimate approval. As far as the PhD degree is concerned going forward at SMU, the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies is the governing body and any motion should indicate as such IMHO.

Public Dissertation Defenses

Rice University:

Announcement of Thesis Defense

Oral examinations for the doctoral degree must be registered and publicly publicized at least 14 days in advance. Oral examination announcements must be registered with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by entering the information into the Graduate Students Thesis Defense Announcement form at https://events.rice.edu/rgs. Defenses that proceed without timely registration are unofficial and will not meet university degree requirements.

Oral Examination in Defense of Thesis

The public oral defense of a thesis is intended to be an examination of a completed body of work and should be scheduled only when the thesis is complete. Students may take the final oral examination in defense of their thesis only after the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies approves their candidacy.

In addition to announcing the planned defense as described above, at least one copy of the thesis must be available in the departmental office not less than two calendar weeks prior to the date of the oral defense. Graduate programs may allow or require the thesis to be submitted and stored in an electronic format.

The length of the oral examination and the subject matter on which the candidate is questioned are left to the judgment of the thesis committee. The defense should be scheduled by the student after consultation with the thesis advisor, who agrees that the thesis is completed and ready to be defended. All oral thesis defenses must take place on the Rice University campus with the candidate and all thesis committee members in physical attendance throughout the entire defense. In exceptional cases, appeals to this in-person requirement can be made in writing to the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies.

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Public Dissertation Defenses

Vanderbilt University:

Final Examination

The candidate must pass his or her dissertation defense by the appropriate deadline for the date the degree is to be conferred, or by March 24 for May graduation. All conferral dates and deadlines are listed on the academic calendar. The final oral examination is administered by the student's Ph.D. committee and is on the dissertation and significant related material; the student is expected to demonstrate an understanding of the larger context in which the dissertation lies. The public is invited to attend the final examination, which is announced in advance in Vanderbilt's electronic calendar.

The chair of the Ph.D. committee or the director of graduate studies of the program, after consultation with the candidate, shall notify the Graduate School in advance of the place and time of the examination and the title of the dissertation. This should be done no later than two weeks prior to the examination. The Graduate School then formally notifies the Ph.D. committee and submits the defense notice to Vanderbilt's electronic calendar. The dissertation defense results form, signed by the committee members and the director of graduate studies for the program, should be forwarded immediately to the Graduate School.

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Public Dissertation Defenses

A faculty representative of Religious Studies, with the support of faculty members in Anthropology, English, and History, has voiced concerns about this policy:

- Defenses of students whose dissertations are on controversial topics may face disruptions from members of the public who object to their findings
- It creates an additional burden for departments, committee members, and students to plan for and deal with potential disruptions
- Students do not always choose their topics by themselves, and the dissertation is required for graduation (rather than a freely chosen intellectual exercise), so it is not entirely their choice to present this controversial research
- Some other schools do not post dissertation defenses on a public calendar (UPenn, TCU, Northeastern), just advertise them to internal lists
- Most current students matriculated before this policy went into effect

Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards

Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards

- Sponsored by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and the Office of Student Academic Engagement and Success, these awards recognize exemplary contributions to the teaching of SMU undergraduates by graduate student instructors and teaching assistants. Two awards, each including a $1,000 prize, will be made annually.
- Review Committee: Alan Itkin, Adam Jasienski, Sheri Kunovich, Renee McDonald, Volkan Otugen, Tony Petrosino, Karen Thomas
- Ten nominees: Art, Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Electrical & Computer Engineering, English, Physics, Religious Studies, Statistical Science
- Awardees:
  - Danyal Ahsanullah, Electrical and Computer Engineering Ph.D. Program
  - Anne Parfitt, Anthropology Ph.D. Program
- Awardees will be announced next week.

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Other Items

SMU Moody School of Graduate & Advanced Studies

The Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

Administrative Handbook

The Moody School Administrative Handbook details the School's current administrative processes and interfaces with the other schools. *Updated December 13, 2021*

Procedures for Selecting Graduate Council members: Each of the four schools represented on the Council--Dedman, Lyle, Meadows, and Simmons-- has three representatives. Representatives are all tenured or tenure-track faculty members. Two representatives from each school are elected by a vote within the school, and one representative is appointed or elected at the discretion of the school dean. *Adopted by the Graduate Council April 23, 2020.*

Graduate Council Quorum: An attendance of not less than 50% of the voting members of the Council + one additional member is necessary to establish a quorum for a meeting of the Graduate Council. *Adopted by the Graduate Council February 13, 2020.*

Annual Assessment of Ph.D. and M.F.A. Student Progress to Degree: The Moody School requires that Ph.D. and M.F.A. programs perform an annual review of each student's progress. Due to differences across fields, individual programs determine how these reviews are performed. *Adopted by the Graduate Council April 23, 2020.*

Review and Approval of Admission to Ph.D. and M.F.A. Programs: The Moody School promptly reviews admission decision to Ph.D. and M.F.A. programs prior to issuance of letters of acceptance to ensure that applicants meet University requirements. Approval by the Moody School is to be completed within five business days of a decision by the admitting Ph.D. or M.F.A. program. However, in cases for which admission has been recommended for an applicant who do not meet University requirements, the Moody School Dean works with the dean of the school in which the applicant's program resides to determine if the applicant's academic promise merits admission. If the deans fail to agree, the Graduate Council acts as final arbiter of the admission decision. *Adopted by the Graduate Council February 13, 2020.*

Ph.D. Dissertation Completion Fellowships: Dissertating students in all Ph.D. programs are eligible for Moody Dissertation Fellowships and Dean's Dissertation Awards. *Adopted by the Graduate Council March 23, 2020.*

University, Mustang and Moody Fellowships: The Graduate Council reviews and awards fellowships for incoming Ph.D. students. *Adopted by the Graduate Council November 5, 2019.*

Working with ISSS to Process International Graduate Student and Postdoc Paperwork: The Moody School primarily plays an advocacy role on behalf of international graduate students and the programs that enroll them. Schools and departments work with ISSS on this process. The Assistant Dean of the Moody School may be included in communications and asked to provide support for departments and schools in working on time-sensitive issues involving international student paperwork. *Adopted by the Graduate Council March 23, 2020.*

Dissertation Formatting Guidance and Checks for Ph.D. Students: Lyle and Meadows check formatting for their student's dissertations and provide guidance to students on formatting issues. The Moody School reviews formatting for Education Ph.D. students' dissertations using the same standards currently used for Dedman Ph.D. students. The Moody School provides formatting guides that are used by all Ph.D. programs except for those in the Lyle School of Engineering. *Adopted by the Graduate Council March 23, 2020.*

Review of Registrar Forms for Ph.D. and M.F.A. Students: Late add/drop and other Registrar forms that require a "school signature" are approved by the designee of the Dean of the student's home school*. Approval by the Moody School is also required for cases in which the student is a recipient of a fellowship provided by the University or the Moody School. Following approval, forms are forwarded to the Registrar for processing and to the Moody School for the purpose of maintaining records. *Adopted by the Graduate Council May 7, 2021.*

* "Home school" refers to the school that houses the student's department or program.

Approval of Degree Milestones for Ph.D. and M.F.A. Students: Ph.D. candidacy forms are signed by the Director of Graduate Studies or Department Chair, approved by the designee of the Dean of the student's home school, and forwarded to the Moody School, so that the Moody School can add milestones to the student's transcript. Significant degree milestones for M.F.A. students are also forwarded by their program to the Moody School, so that the Moody School can enter them in the students' transcripts. This allows accurate tracking of milestones for data purposes, recognition of Ph.D. students at the Ph.D. candidacy reception, and tracking of progress to degree. Tracking progress to degree allows the Moody School to alert departments/programs when students are close to limits prescribed in the catalog so a timeline extension may be considered. *Adopted by the Graduate Council May 7, 2021.*

Review of Leave Requests for Ph.D. and M.F.A. Students: Leave requests are forwarded by the department/program to the Office of the School Dean and the Moody School for approval. The Office of the School Dean informs the Registrar to have the leave noted in the student's record. Students are asked to discuss the leave with their DGS or Department Chair. The DGS or Department Chair signs the leave request form to indicate that they have discussed the request with the student. Moody School review of these requests is necessary for accurate tracking of eligibility for Ph.D. and M.F.A. Health Insurance and other financial support provided by the Moody School that is dependent on students' time in the program. *Adopted by the Graduate Council March 23, 2020.*

Review of Timeline Extensions for Ph.D. and M.F.A. Students: When a student is nearing the limit set in the catalog for advancement to candidacy or graduation, the department or program may file a petition for an extension (generally a one-year extension) to the timeline. The petition must include a letter of support from the DGS or Department Chair. The dean of the student's home school may either designate a member of their office to review the petition or may ask the Moody School to perform this function. In the former case, the school dean or their designee and the Dean of the Moody School or their designee must both approve the extension request. In the case of disagreement between the two deans, the Provost or their designee makes the final decision regarding approval of the petition. A record of the approval is maintained by both the student's home school and the Moody School. *Adopted by the Graduate Council June 21, 2021.*

Approval of Graduation and Collection of Graduation Surveys: The Moody School is responsible for collecting Survey of Earned Doctorates information. The Moody School develops graduation lists for Ph.D. programs, works with schools and departments to ensure that lists are complete and accurate, and shares lists with the Registrar's Office. Developing graduation lists assists the Moody School in recognizing doctoral graduates in graduation ceremonies. Collecting Survey of Earned Doctorates information allows for accurate tracking of graduation statistics and accurate, uniform responses to Survey of Earned Doctorates requests for information. As resources allow, the Moody School will be responsible for tracking and reporting on Ph.D. and M.F.A. career outcomes. *Adopted by the Graduate Council June 21, 2021.*

Publication of Dissertation Defenses and MFA Thesis Exhibitions: Oral examinations for the Ph.D. degree are open to the public and announced on a University calendar that is publicly available. The completed Dissertation Defense Announcement form, including the date, time, and location of the examination (or, in the case of a virtual examination, a link to register for or attend the examination online), must be submitted to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at least 14 days in advance of the scheduled defense. The examination will be announced on the Moody School events calendar as well as in the Moody School newsletter. Additional announcements are at the discretion of the student's dissertation committee, in adherence with relevant departmental policies. The format of the oral examination and the participation of the audience are also at the discretion of the dissertation committee, in adherence with relevant departmental policies. Usually, the examination will include a portion open to the public and a portion that includes only the student and the dissertation committee members. The Moody School also publicizes Art M.F.A. thesis exhibitions on the Moody School events calendar and in the Moody School newsletter. *Adopted by the Graduate Council November 19, 2021.*

Composition of Ph.D. Dissertation Committees: The Moody School requires the following for Ph.D. dissertation committees: If a student has only one dissertation or supervisory committee chair, that person must be a full-time tenured or tenure-track SMU faculty member. In addition, if a student's committee has co-chairs (in accordance with program and school policies), at least one of the co-chairs must be a full-time tenured or tenure-track SMU faculty member. *Adopted by the Graduate Council November 19, 2021.*

Composition of M.F.A. Final Review Committees: The Moody School requires the following for M.F.A. final review committees: If a student has only one committee chair, that person must be a full-time SMU faculty member. In addition, if a student's committee has co-chairs (in accordance with program and school policies), at least one of the co-chairs must be a full-time SMU faculty member.

Graduate Student Travel Grant

Guidelines

1. The maximum amount of a grant is $750.
2. **Travel grants cannot be awarded retroactively;** proposals must be submitted before travel.
3. Only **one** grant per student per academic year is awarded or funded. Please prioritize your proposals accordingly.
4. Requests with matching funds from other sources have a higher priority.
5. This grant will **only** fund conference travel to present an **accepted** paper, poster, creative project or performance (applications without documentation of acceptance are ineligible for this grant). The paper, poster, creative project, or performance must formally recognize SMU as the venue at which the work was produced.
6. Applications are accepted year-round, and must be submitted at least **10 business days prior to travel (or 10 business days prior to virtual event).**
7. The proposals should be sponsored by the department chair and the graduate advisor. Department chair and graduate advisor are requested not to sponsor students who could be supported from other sources such as sponsored research grants and contracts.
8. **Before applying for this grant,** notify your department administrator. The department will give you instructions regarding any pre-travel requirements. Procedures vary by school. If you are receiving funding from your department, they may use different procedures for reimbursement than the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. Please be sure you know your department's requirements before your departure.

Procedure

Using the application form, please attach the following items to your submission in a **PDF only**. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.** Questions can be emailed to travelgrants@smu.edu.

*Combine the following documents as a **PDF** for your application:*

1. A proposal describing the activity and **how this grant will help** in your program - **limited to one page**.
2. A short vita **- limited to one page.**
3. Completed Travel Grant Form

4. Your abstract submission (accepted by the conference) with proof of acceptance (or other proof of participation in a virtual event).

Application must be submitted at least 10 business days prior to travel (or 10 business days prior to virtual event).