

**Minutes of the Graduate Council
April 10, 2024**

Members in Attendance: Alan Itkin, Robin Poston, Anna Lovatt, Ali Beskok, Dinesh Rajan, Volkan Otugen, Akihito Kamata, Brian Molanphy, Kate Carté, Elfi Kraka

Members Not in Attendance: Gretchen Smith, Alexandra E. Pavlakis, Renee McDonald, Anthony Petrosino

- **Minutes of the March 27 Meeting:** The council confirmed that there were no edits made to the March minutes. Prof. Molanphy asked for the appendices on MFA funding and Dr. Itkin answered that Dr. Kiser was working on including them in the report. Dr. Itkin asked for a motion to approve the minutes and the council approved the minutes. Dr. Kraka abstained because she was not at the meeting.
- **Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure:** Dr. Itkin explained that the purpose for a Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure would be to approve additions to the catalog for graduate programs across the schools, and he used the example of the Parental Leave Policy that the council has been working to implement. Dr. Itkin presented a potential process (**Slide 5**). Dr. Itkin noted that we could also add this process to the Moody School Administrative Handbook. Dr. Poston added that we should consult the EPC and the Student Advisory Group on this matter. She also suggested that instead of using the word “policy” in the procedure, that we update the language to something else such as “additions to the catalogue” or “additional text added to the catalogue.” Dr. Poston asked that Dr. Itkin edit the policy with the above suggestions and circulate it to the council to have them vote on the approval of the procedure.
- **Provost’s Faculty Fellow Report:** Dr. Itkin reviewed the recommendations of the report with the council (**Slide 7**). He presented the next steps for the report, which include sharing the final draft with the council and the council voting online in support of the report and its recommendations. Dr. Rajan asked Dr. Poston to clarify recommendation three, which recommends providing “housing assistance in the form of supplemental funding or subsidized on-campus housing.” Dr. Poston explained that a challenge for our students is the cost of housing near campus and that we want to look into ways to make housing for our graduate students more affordable. Dr. Rajan said that the language of “supplemental funding” is too vague, as this could suggest a higher stipend for the students. Dr. Poston clarified that what she wants to consider is *subsidized* housing for graduate students, such as dorms. Prof. Molanphy asked if this is for all graduate students or just Ph.D. students. Dr. Itkin answered that in the report, Dr. Lupo explains that these findings and recommendations are just for Ph.D.’s. Regarding summer funding, Dr. Poston announced

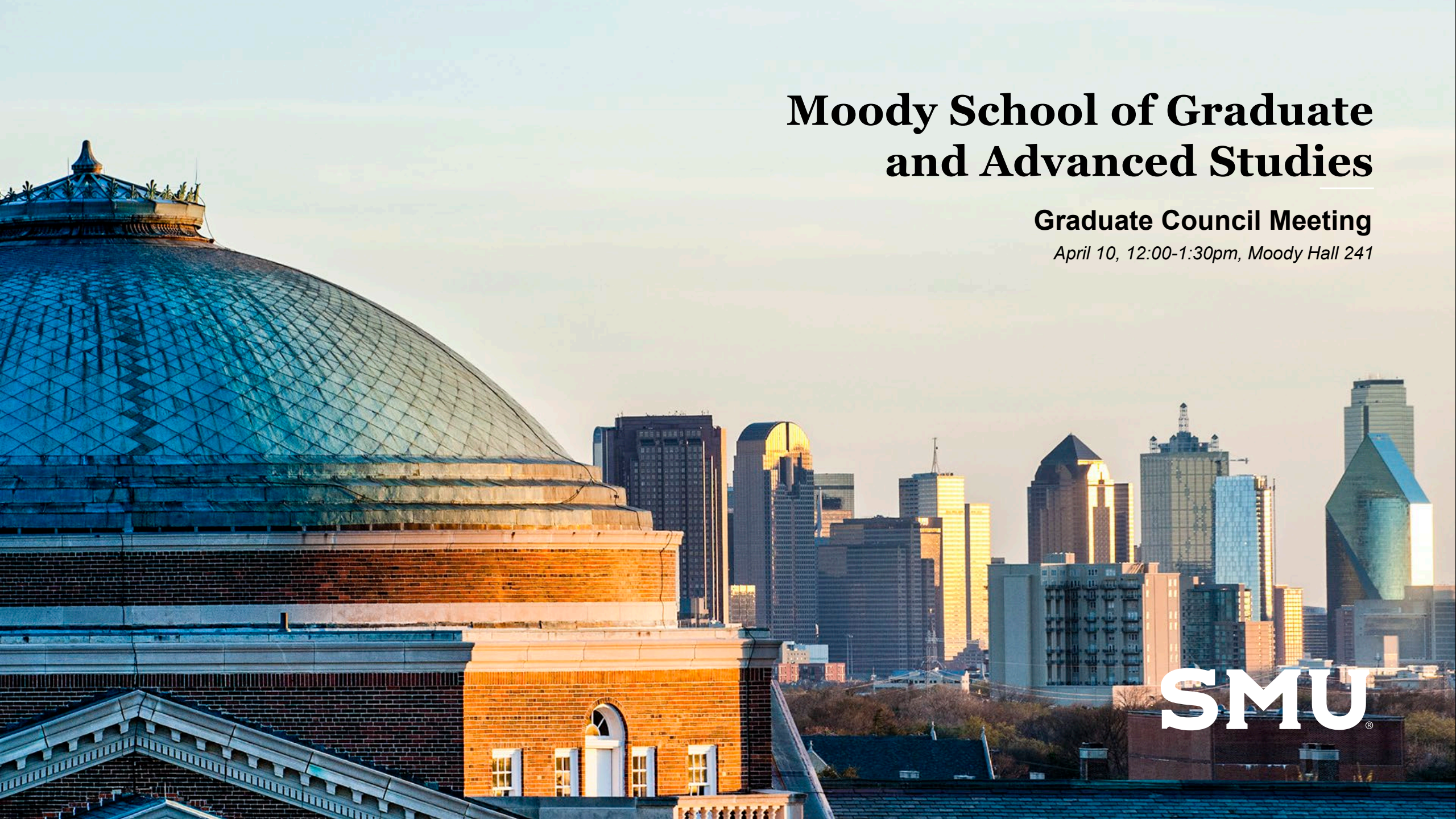
that there is about \$65,000 for support this summer and the call to apply recently went out to students. If students are conducting research that will build into their dissertations, this opportunity can fund their research expenses and will provide stipend support up to \$5,000, with the hope that students are focused on their research during this time and not having to take on supplemental employment.

- **Parental Leave Policy:** Dr. Itkin announced that the President’s Executive Council has reviewed and approved the policy moving forward. The next steps are to create a form for the application process, add the policy to the catalog and Moody School website, and to develop a communications plan to share the policy widely in advance of Fall 2024.
- **Appeals of Suspensions and Dismissals:** Dr. Poston presented the working policy (**Slide 10**) and noted that the policy will exist for situations when an appeal cannot be resolved at the department or college level—only then will the appeal come to the Graduate Appeals Committee. Dr. Poston opened the floor to questions and comments. Dr. Rajan said that we may need to refine the timelines, and we especially need to consider international students, as once they are terminated from a program, then their visas expire after a certain period and they need to be able to appeal a decision before they are forced to leave the country. Dr. Poston answered that in these cases the students may need to collaborate with the ISSS Office. In regard to this timeline, Dr. Itkin added that the definition of a “class day” needs to be clarified in the policy and Dr. Otugen said that we should consider “weekdays” instead. The council debated and Dr. Poston said that she would discuss with Claudia Hart what sort of timeline would protect the international students. After this discussion, she will edit the policy and circulate it to the council for a vote. Dr. Lovatt asked if we should require the students to have a meeting/hearing with us when they appeal and Dr. Itkin answered that a student can request a meeting for due process, but the meeting is ultimately optional. Dr. Poston agreed that we should keep the meeting optional, as the committee will not want to meet to discuss every case. Dr. Kraka questioned whether we should stop paying a student during this process and she asked Dr. Poston to explore this question further.
- **May Meeting:** Dr. Itkin announced that the May meeting is May 8, 12-1:30p.m. in Moody Hall 241. The meeting will begin with presentations of the Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards and Sheri Kunovich will be present. Members of the Graduate Student Advisory Board will also be invited, and lunch will be served.
- **Graduate Council 2024-2025:** Dr. Itkin noted that if there are open council seats next year, then we will hold elections or seek school/college deans’ appointments, depending on which seats are open. Dr. Itkin asked that council members reach out to him prior to the May meeting if they cannot serve next year. Dr. Poston asked about scheduling the reoccurring council meeting for next year and she suggested every second Wednesday of the month at noon. Dr. Poston asked the council to email her their preferences. Dr. Kamata inquired about what the rules are regarding how long someone can serve, Dr. Itkin responded that the Moody Handbook needed to be reviewed, and the council debated who should hold the elections: The individual colleges or the Moody School? Dr. Otugen

suggested that we let the schools run the election and Dr. Poston and Dr. Itkin agreed. Dr. Poston and Dr. Itkin debated when the election should be held and decided that September was best. Specifically, Dr. Poston and Dr. Itkin would like the deans to appoint their council members by September 11, 2024.

- **Fellowship Selection Update and Retrospective:** Dr. Itkin shared the fellowship selection updates and pointed out that we are now offering fellowships to students on the waitlist (**Slides 16-18**). Currently, six Moody Graduate Fellowship offers have been accepted, 5 have been declined, and 1 has not yet been answered. Only one Mustang Fellowship has been accepted. Three University Fellowships have been accepted and three were declined. Dr. Itkin hypothesized that we are probably going to come in under what was originally budgeted, and he asked if there are things we should do differently. The council debated why we are having trouble getting students to attend our programs. Dr. Kraka explained that in her experience, the policy that states that a student must already be admitted to a program to apply to a Moody fellowship held her back from putting an applicant/student forward. Prof. Molanphy would like MFA's to be able to apply to this funding. Dr. Poston answered that right now the funding is only for doctoral students.
- **Petitions to Extend Faculty Eligibility to Serve on Dissertation Committees:** Dr Itkin explained that when faculty leave SMU or retire, they are no longer eligible to serve as internal members on dissertation/thesis committees, and we often receive questions and requests to allow faculty to continue to serve. He asked the council if a new policy should be developed in this area (**slide 20**). Dr. Poston noted that she would like there to be a taskforce devoted to this question next year.

Meeting Adjourned.



Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

Graduate Council Meeting

April 10, 12:00-1:30pm, Moody Hall 241

SMU[®]

Meeting Agenda

1. Minutes of the March 27 Meeting
2. Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure
3. Provost's Faculty Fellow Report
4. Parental Leave Policy
5. Appeals of Suspensions and Dismissals
6. May Meeting
7. Graduate Council 2024-2025
8. Fellowship Selection Update and Retrospective
9. Petitions to Extend Faculty Eligibility to Serve on Dissertation Committees
10. Other Items

Minutes of the March 27 Meeting



<https://smu.box.com/s/mzgxj5kyfum226i69uaww17vwvb8j1h8>

Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure



Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure

- » We do not have a formal process to have something approved for the catalog that applies to graduate students and programs across schools
- » Possible process:
 1. Policy drafted by working group, including Graduate Council members, or by the whole Graduate Council
 2. Draft policy is discussed by Graduate Council
 3. Graduate Council votes to approve a draft of the policy, revised with their comments
 4. Approved draft is shared for comment with: Faculty Senate Graduate Education Committee, Directors of Graduate Studies, Academic Affairs Forum, others at discretion of Graduate Council members
 5. If substantive changes are recommended, a revised draft is shared with the Graduate Council for a final vote
- » We could add this process to the Moody School Administrative Handbook

Provost's Faculty Fellow Report



Provost's Faculty Fellow Report

» The draft was shared with the Council last meeting

» Recommendations:

- » Centrally establish minimum stipend levels that are regularly reevaluated and adjusted to keep up with the cost of living (COL) and inflation.
- » Increase the level of summer support for assistantships to cover existing income gaps.
- » Provide housing assistance in the form of supplemental funding or subsidized on-campus housing.
- » Explore providing subsidies to graduate students with families and dependents.
- » Explore offering supplementary support to help first-year graduate students transition into their graduate careers.

» Possible next steps:

- » Share final draft with Council
- » Council votes online in support of report and its recommendations

Parental Leave Policy



Parental Leave Policy

» The current policy and other documents are available here:
<https://smu.box.com/s/9gvvgg6uxt9x7okuryq2ha391obro4mtr>

» Current status:

- » Graduate Council approved the policy unanimously (12-0)
- » Moody School program representatives have provided additional input
- » Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Committee has provided additional input
- » Students have provided additional input
- » Revised version (minor edits) have been shared with the Graduate Council
- » President's Executive Council reviewed and approved moving forward

» Next steps:

- » Create form for application process
- » Add to catalog and Moody School website
- » Share widely that this new policy exists in advance of Fall 2024

Appeals of Suspensions and Dismissals



<https://smu.box.com/s/gapctmba83w86us609foafhkv5it76q>

May Meeting



May Meeting

- » Scheduled for May 8, 12-1:30pm, Moody Hall 241
- » We will begin with presentation of Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards
- » Sheri Kunovich, Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success, will present awards with Dean Poston
- » We will also invite the members of the Graduate Student Advisory Board for this portion of the meeting and informational items
- » Lunch will be served

Graduate Council 2024-2025



Graduate Council 2024-2025

- » We appreciate everyone's participation and commitment and the progress we have all made together towards advancing graduate education at SMU
- » Last year, we asked current Council members to continue to serve for 2023-2024
- » If there are open Council seats, we will hold elections or seek school/college Dean's appointments, depending on which seats are open
- » A first step is to determine which Council members will not be available to continue to serve in 2024-2025

Fellowship Selection Update and Retrospective



Moody Graduate and Mustang Fellowships

Moody Graduate Nominees

Name	Department	Results	Offered Amount	Accepted Offer?	Confirmed Amount
Bruns, Derek	Religious Studies	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Campos Cordero, Jose Roberto	History	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	N	0
Garrett, Noah Reece	Chemistry	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	N	0
Harbort, Mia	Anthropology	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	N	\$0
Heberle, Daniel	Art History	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Hu, Jiexiang	Electrical and Computer Engin	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Isuru Mahesh Bandara, Ambagahawele Rai	Civil and Environmental Engin	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Kayejo, Victor Gbenga	Biological Sciences	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	N	0
Lanning, Conor Anthony	Anthropology	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000		
Mondal, Rabi	Economics	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	N	\$0
Shulman (Hayes Shulman), Allison Hayes (Religious Studies	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Woods (Guo), Emma Guo-Shufen	Art History	Moody Graduate Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Total					\$ 186,000

Mustang Nominees

Name	Department	Results	Offered Amount	Accepted Offer?	Confirmed Amount
Barr, Noelle Yongwei	Art History	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000	N	\$0
Chan, Rachel	Psychology	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000	Y	\$31,000
Gonzalez (Gonzalez), Tania Arely	Mathematics	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000		
Mahawanniarachchi, Sayumi	Biological Sciences	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000	N	\$0
McCormack (Schur), Laura Schur	Education PhD Program	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000		
Ramirez, Jessica Jazmin	Anthropology	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000		
Hart, Trevor Rylan	Physics	Mustang Fellowship	\$31,000		
Total					\$31,000

University PhD Fellowships

Name	Department	Results	Offered Amount	Accepted Offer?	Confirmed Amount
Armstrong, Caroline Hayward	Psychology	University PhD Fellowship	\$6,000	N	\$0
Brown, Zane	History	University PhD Fellowship	\$8,000		
Hulme, Anne O	Statistics and Data Science	University PhD Fellowship	\$5,000		
Ihejirika, Tochukwu Arthea (Nola)	Biological Sciences	University PhD Fellowship	\$5,000	N	\$0
Price, Brynn	Education PhD Program	University PhD Fellowship	\$6,000	Y	\$6,000
Uzim, Elochukwu Ernest	Anthropology	University PhD Fellowship	\$8,000	N	\$0
Abdulkarim, Rahmah	Mathematics	University PhD Fellowship	\$6,000		
Brahmi, Mohammed Zine Eddine	Electrical and Computer Engin	University PhD Fellowship	\$7,000	Y	\$7,000
Li, Muhe (Steve)	Mathematics	University PhD Fellowship	\$6,000	Y	\$6,000
Pulido, Miguel Santiago	Economics	University PhD Fellowship	\$6,000		
Valentine, Samuel A (Sam)	Physics	University PhD Fellowship	\$3,400		
Total					\$19,000

Fellowship Selection Update

» Are there things we should do differently next year?

» Possibilities:

» Turn University PhD Fellowships into full ride, rather than topping up awards

» Return to giving Moody Graduate Fellowships as part of PhD Recruitment Grants

» Have a policy for departments that want to add a top up to the Moody Graduate/Mustang Fellowships

» Other thoughts, comments?

Petitions to Extend Faculty Eligibility to Serve on Dissertation Committees



Extended Faculty Service on Dissertation Committees

- » When faculty leave SMU or retire, they are no longer eligible to serve as internal members on dissertation/thesis committees
- » We often get questions and requests to allow faculty to continue to serve, but our policies do not allow this
- » Do we want to have a policy in this area?
- » E.g.:
 - » A faculty member who leaves SMU may petition the Dean of the Moody School to continue to serve as an internal member of a dissertation or thesis committee for up to one year. Additional one-year extensions of eligibility to serve on a student's dissertation or thesis committee may be requested as well.

Other Items



Thank you!

