

**Minutes of the Graduate Council
May 8, 2024**

Members in Attendance: Kate Carté, Alan Itkin, Akihito Kamata, Elfi Kraka, Anna Lovatt, Brian Molanphy, Volkan Otugen, Alexandra E. Pavlakis, Anthony Petrosino, Robin Poston, Dinesh Rajan, Gretchen Smith

Members Not in Attendance: Ali Beskok, Renee McDonald

Graduate Student Advisory Board Members in Attendance: Christina McConville, Nicolette Edwards, Matthew O'Donohue, Maria, Bastos-Stanek, Jennifer Laffick, Cheyenne Phillips

Graduate Student Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance: Hussam Khresat, Mai Zaru

- **Presentation of Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards:** Dr. Robin Poston and Dr. Sheri Kunovich presented the Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards to the three winners: Kendall Dinniene (English), Marie Schramper (Religious Studies), and Timothy Seiter (History).
- **Graduate Student Advisory Board 2024-2025 (Slide 6):** Dr. Itkin asked the Graduate Student Advisory Board to please email him if a member needs to step off the board for the next academic year. If this is the case, Moody will also ask the member to help find a replacement candidate.
- **Graduate Student Experience Surveys (Slides 8-14):** Dr. Itkin explained that Moody does not yet have their own exit survey and he presented the question of if we should have one centralized survey or individual surveys for schools/departments, which would be more specific to the disciplines. Dr. Kunovich mentioned that her office sends a survey out in the second to last year of a student's program so that they have the time to fix any issues before the student arrives in their final year. This way, improvement can be communicated in the exit survey. Dr. Itkin noted that a process like that would be complicated at the graduate level, since we don't know when students' second to last year would be, as it is not consistent across graduate studies/individual students. Dr. Kraka suggested that we might send out a more general survey at first, and then a more specific survey as a student advances in their program. Dr. Carté asked what the purpose of the survey would be: is it to improve students' time while they are in graduate school or to reflect after they have graduated? Timothy Seiter, graduating Ph.D. student, commented that he just took 4-5 exit surveys and he felt like the number of surveys was overwhelming around defense and graduation. Therefore, he thought a centralized survey would be best. Dr. Poston stated that we don't yet have a solution, and she asked Council members to email her their thoughts and for Dr. Itkin to put this on the next agenda.

- **Results of Online Votes:** Dr. Itkin explained to the Graduate Student Advisory Board that the Graduate Council held three online votes this semester. The first was whether to support the findings and recommendations of Karen Lupo’s report, “Graduate Assistantships at SMU.” Dr Itkin announced that the Council voted in favor of endorsing the report and he reviewed the five recommendations that the report made (**slide 17**). The second item that passed was the Moody School process for amendments to the Graduate Council, and the third was the process for appeals of suspensions and terminations. Dr. Itkin reviewed the details of these procedures with the Council and student advisory board (**slides 18-20**).

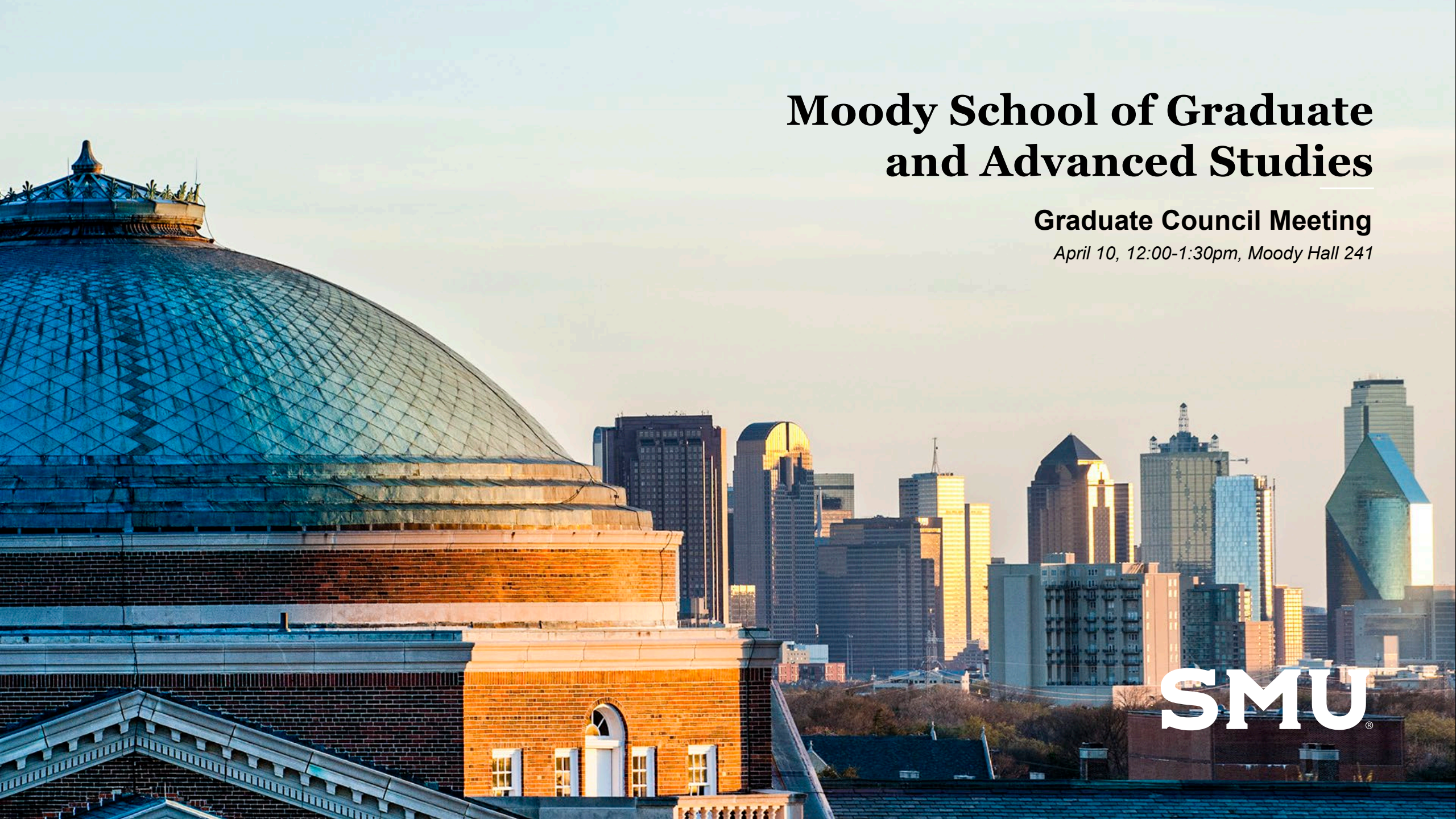
The Graduate Student Advisory Board was dismissed.

- **Minutes of the April 10 Meeting:** Dr. Itkin noted that there were questions about the 2024-2025 graduate Council and the timing of next year’s meetings. While the April 10 minutes state that the proposed meeting time is on Tuesdays, Dr. Itkin and Dr. Poston intended for next year’s meeting to be held at the same time as is currently scheduled, which is every second Wednesday of the month at noon. Dr. Itkin further reported that he contacted the deans about reappointing or appointing a representative to the Council. Prof. Molanphy stated that he believes that the timing of the meetings effect who serves on the Council, and since the current time presents a conflict for him, then he will have to step off the committee. The Council agreed that the 2024-2025 meetings should be held the second Wednesday of the month at noon, but that the timing of the meetings may be revisited when it is clear who is serving on the Council. Prof. Molanphy said that if he steps down, there may not be someone in Meadows to serve, as they do not have enough tenure track faculty. It was decided that Dr. Kiser would revise the April minutes to read “Wednesday” instead of Tuesday and Dr. Itkin asked for a vote to approve the minutes. The Council approved the April 10 minutes.
- **Parental Leave Request Form:** Dr. Itkin explained that while we adopted the parental leave procedure, the Council has not yet discussed the request form. Dr. Itkin presented some tentative items to include on the request form based on other schools he researched (**Slide 23**). Dr. Poston said that instead of asking for the name of the student’s dissertation director, we should also ask for their DGS or faculty advisor, because if a student is early in their program, then they may not yet have a dissertation director. Dr. Itkin responded that the form should just ask for the name and email of the student’s PI, so as not to involve too many people. Regarding the line item that asks if the student has passed qualifying exams, Dr. Kraka noted that there are no qualifying exams in her department, so she suggested that we update that question to ask, “are you in candidacy?” Dr. Carté asked if this form would automatically trigger a meeting with the student. She wanted to make clear that our goal is to smooth over the process for the students—not to audit them. She asked the Council to consider adding a note on the bottom of the form that states that the student’s information will be kept confidential until the student authorizes Moody to move forward with the procedure. Dr. Lovatt asserted that we do not need to ask students if their request is for birth of a child, adoption, or foster placement if the pay is all the same. The Council debated

whether the students should have to present proof of their birth/adoption/foster, and Dr. Pavlakis thought that they should not have to present proof, since faculty do not. Dr. Itkin suggested an item on the form that says, “Check yes if you are requesting leave for one of these three reasons: birth, adoption, foster.” The Council agreed.

- **Dissertation Fellowship and Summer Research Grant Summary:** Dr Itkin shared the results of the dissertation fellowship results and explained the difference between the Moody and Dean’s Dissertation awards. Prof Molanphy stated that he would like to see funding for MFAs in the future. Dr. Itkin noted that a criterion of the award is if the department has a track record of getting the students across the finish line. If a candidate who has been given an award does not finish, then this will affect the department receiving future awards. Dr. Itkin then reviewed the summer research grant results with the Council. Dr. Kraka asked if students can still apply if they are paid on a twelve-month cycle. Dr. Itkin answered yes, as these awards are particularly to cover research expenses.
- **Graduate Council 2024-2025:** Since this item was addressed when discussing the minutes of the April 10 meeting, it was not further discussed.

Meeting Adjourned.



Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

Graduate Council Meeting

May 8, 12:00-1:30pm, Moody Hall 241

SMU[®]

Meeting Agenda

With Members of the Graduate Student Advisory Board:

1. Presentation of Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards, with Robin Poston and Sheri Kunovich: Kendall Dinniene (English), Marie Schramper (Religious Studies), Timothy Seiter (History)
2. Graduate Student Advisory Board 2024-2025
3. Graduate Student Experience Surveys
4. Results of Online Votes:
 - a. Graduate Catalog Policy Procedure
 - b. Provost's Faculty Fellow Report
 - c. Appeals of Suspensions and Dismissals

Graduate Council Members Only:

5. Minutes of the April 10 Meeting
6. Parental Leave Request Form
7. Dissertation Fellowship and Summer Research Grant Summary
8. Graduate Council 2024-2025
9. Other Items

Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction Awards



**Congratulations to Winners
of the
Outstanding Graduate
Student Instruction
Awards!**

Graduate Student Advisory Board 2024-2025



Graduate Student Advisory Board

Graduate Student Advisory Board Members 2023-24

» Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences Representatives:

- » Christina McConville (Chemistry Ph.D. Program)
- » Nicolette Edwards (Anthropology Ph.D. Program)

» Lyle School of Engineering Representatives:

- » Hussam Khresat (Civil & Environmental Engineering Ph.D. Program)
- » Matthew O'Donohue (Applied Science Ph.D. Program)

» Meadows School of the Arts Representatives:

- » Maria Bastos-Stanek (Art History Ph.D. Program)
- » Jennifer Laffick (Art History Ph.D. Program)

» Simmons School of Education and Human Development Representatives:

- » Cheyenne Phillips (Education Ph.D. Program)
- » Mai Zaru (Education Ph.D. Program)

Graduate Student Experience Surveys



Graduate Student Experience Survey

To do or not to do?

History

- » Until last year, Central Administration had an exit survey that covered first destination and student experience. Within that survey, schools could add their own questions. As a result, the survey was enormous. Response rates were relatively high because they withheld transcripts until it was completed.
- » To combat the issue of length and the result that many students started but did not complete the survey, they (central admin) broke the survey into two parts
 - » First destination: given to all students, undergrad and graduate, upon graduation
 - » Student Experience: given to undergrad only their Jr. year so we could possibly help them identify needs to be met their senior year

Currently No Graduate Student Experience Survey

- » Several Schools have their own exit survey for graduate students but...
- » The question is- should we have a centralized student experience survey for graduate survey?

Pros and Cons

» Pros:

- » Data for the Moody School to help support students and schools
- » Reduce survey fatigue for students so they don't have a survey from their school and Moody
- » Potentially more weight behind survey to encourage completion
- » Can embed individual school questions using survey logic

» Cons

- » Schools may want to do their own.

What kinds of questions would a survey have? (Simmons Examples)

Q394



For each area, please rate your experience with SMU's Program:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Did not receive any preparation
Environment that encouraged academic growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment that encouraged personal growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment that encouraged social growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment that encouraged career growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment where all students could be successful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment where diversity was celebrated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q41.1



To what extend were you satisfied with the following:

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/> N/A
Advisor support and mentoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial aid services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q40.1 | Directions

For the statement below, rate how prepared you feel to do this after completing the **\$(q://QID448/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices)** program, and how important this outcome is to your job:

Q40.2 | SGP1



Conduct evidence-based research that impacts personal practice, one's community and the profession

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40.3



Consume evidence-based research that impacts personal practice, one's community and the profession

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q40.4 | SGP2



Demonstrate inclusive practices and cultural awareness that promote equality within diverse communities

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40.5 | SGP3



Communicate effectively in a variety of ways to diverse audiences

Q40.5 | SGP3



Communicate effectively in a variety of ways to diverse audiences

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Q40.6 | SGP4



Collaborate with others to build partnerships for the community

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40.7 | SGP5



Apply theories and knowledge to create solutions to challenges in the field

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40.8



Develop self and others through reflective practice

	Extremely	Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Unsure - I don't know what this means
Prepared	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Results of Online Votes



Results of Online Votes

» As a member of the Graduate Council, do you support the **findings and recommendations of the report, "Graduate Assistantships at SMU"**?

» 10 yes

» 1 no

» 1 abstain

» **Comments:**

» I think this was an excellent report and shows a great deal of time and effort that went into gathering and presenting this information.

» This is a very urgent and necessary report, particularly for humanities graduate students who cannot afford to get into debt since they cannot anticipate high earnings on graduation. I hope the recommendations will be implemented in conjunction with affordable on-campus housing for graduate students.

» The report should include more equitably the consideration of the MFA because it is a scholarshipped, academic, terminal degree that qualifies our students & faculty to teach as much as the. PhD does

Recommendations of Assistantships Report

- » 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.

Results of Online Votes

» As a member of the Graduate Council, what is your vote on the proposed **Moody School process for amendments to the Graduate Catalog?**

» 11 Yes

» 1 Abstain

» No comments

Moody School Process for Amendments to Graduate Catalog

To appear in Moody School Administrative Handbook:

Academic procedures that affect graduate students across schools and colleges served by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies appear in the Moody School section of SMU's Graduate Catalog. Significant additions or amendments to these procedures are approved by the following process:

1. The proposed catalog addition or amendment is drafted by a working group, including Moody School Graduate Council members, or by the Graduate Council as a whole
2. The draft is discussed by the Graduate Council
3. The draft is revised according to the Graduate Council's recommendations, and the Graduate Council votes to approve it
4. The draft is shared for comment with the following groups:
 - a. Faculty Senate Graduate Education Committee
 - b. Directors of Graduate Studies
 - c. Academic Affairs Forum
 - d. Moody School Graduate Student Advisory Board
 - e. Others at the discretion of Graduate Council members
5. If substantive changes are recommended, based on the input of these groups, a revised draft is shared with the Graduate Council for a final vote. If no substantive changes are recommended, then the catalog amendment or addition is adopted as previously approved by the Graduate Council.

Results of Online Votes

- » As a member of the Graduate Council, what is your vote on the proposed **process for appeals of suspensions and terminations?**
- » Unanimous, 12 yes
- » No comments
- » Link to proposal: <https://smu.box.com/s/7p40bdgipaaaphnb0154nze3k4w24d49>

Minutes of the April 10 Meeting



<https://smu.box.com/s/vqlqcpyr6ga755pnrwj463uyzyct2gs0>

Parental Leave Request Form



Parental Leave Request Form

Potential questions for form:

- » Name, email, program, year in program, anticipated term of program completion
- » Have you passed qualifying exams?
- » How are you currently supported? (TA, RA, Fellowship)
- » What is your current monthly assistantship pay or stipend?
- » Requesting this leave for: birth of a child, adoption, foster placement
- » Anticipated date of birth, adoption, or foster placement:
- » Is this request for an extension of an already approved leave? Y/N
- » Requested dates of leave (up to six weeks):
- » Name and email address of dissertation advisor:
- » Have you discussed your leave with your advisor and/or director of graduate studies?
- » What adjustments have been made, if any, to your academic expectations/timeline?

Dissertation Fellowship and Summer Research Grant Results



Dissertation Fellowship Results

Name	Department	Division/School	Type of Award
Shaffer Bonewell	History Ph.D.	Dedman I (Humanities)	Moody
Meghan Lowrey	Anthropology Ph.D.	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	Moody
Joshua Plank	Chemistry Ph.D.	Dedman III (Natural & Mathematical Sciences)	Moody
Cindy Hua	Applied Science Ph.D.	Lyle (Engineering)	Moody
Doran Wood	Operations Research Ph.D.	Lyle (Engineering)	Moody
Ashton Reynolds	History Ph.D.	Dedman I (Humanities)	Dean's
Meghan Beddingfield	Religious Studies Ph.D.	Dedman I (Humanities)	Dean's
Nicolette Edwards	Anthropology Ph.D.	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	Dean's
Shuo Qi	Economics Ph.D.	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	Dean's
Melissa Sitton	Psychology Ph.D.	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	Dean's
Margot Salsman	Psychology Ph.D.	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	Dean's
Lucas Kotz	Physics Ph.D.	Dedman III (Natural & Mathematical Sciences)	Dean's
Weida Zhang	Electrical Engineering Ph.D.	Lyle (Engineering)	Dean's
Ching-Yu (Eva) Tseng	Education Ph.D.	Simmons (Education & Human Development)	Dean's

Summer Research Grant Results

Last	First	Program	Division/School	Offered Amount
Alviar	Eugene	History PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$5,000.00
Narvaez	Laura	History PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$2,000.00
Orta-Puente	Kristel	History PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$4,598.91
Pelchat	Thomas	History PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$4,974.21
Neumann	Matthew	Religious Studies PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$470.00
Schramper	Marie	Religious Studies PhD	Dedman I (Humanities)	\$5,000.00
Edwards	Nicolette	Anthropology PhD	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	\$1,995.00
Hossain	MD Shakhawat	Anthropology PhD	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	\$5,000.00
Hurwitz	Rose	Anthropology PhD	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	\$5,000.00
Chang	Hsin-Wei	Economics PhD	Dedman II (Social Sciences)	\$5,000.00
Saifee	Abdullah	Mathematics PhD	Dedman III (Natural & Mathematical Sciences)	\$5,000.00
Escudero Restrepo	Sergio	Civil & Environmental Engineering PhD	Lyle (Engineering)	\$5,000.00
Asadi	Farshid	Mechanical Engineering PhD	Lyle (Engineering)	\$5,000.00
Maghsoudlou	Arvin	Art History PhD	Meadows (Arts)	\$5,000.00
Leon	Maricela	Education PhD	Simmons (Education & Human Development)	\$5,000.00
Lewallen	Charity	Education PhD	Simmons (Education & Human Development)	\$5,000.00

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
- » For 2024-2025, we will hold elections or seek school/college Dean's appointments

Other Items



Thank you for a wonderful year!

