

**Graduate Education Ad Hoc Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

Friday, February 23, 2007, 10:00am – 11:30am, Room 301

(Note: These minutes were approved by the Graduate Education Ad Hoc Committee at the committee's April 19 committee meeting.)

Recorders: Esther Lucey, Patsy Mountz, Kay Gleghorn

Attendees: Alfredo Benavides, Katie Button, Joe Claudet, Steve Crooks, Roseanna Davidson, Heriberto Godina, Fred Hartmeister, Bret Hendricks, Carole Janisch, Peggy Johnson, Carol Layton, Sylvia Mendez-Morse, Juan Munoz, Peggie Price, Roy Rodriguez, Mary Runnels, Sheryl Santos, Doug Simpson, Walter Smith, Reese Todd, Jennifer Wilhelm

**Opening Remarks**

Dean Santos: This is a very important committee. You have been selected to represent your area. By the end of this semester I expect to have the recommendation for the direction of a graduate core, foundations courses, what all graduate students need to know. What I have heard is a lot of qualitative-oriented faculty. The focus is on the students. We want the best for our students, our specialty, be passionate about this.

Focus on students, their potential of what the world looks like now. What do they, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, experience? I am a hiring agent. I know a weakness. I want to hire someone prepared for the 21st century. Think about your own students; are we rigorous in our entry requirements? Are we mentoring properly? Do we get them through in time, or in 3 years, do we hold them up? When they present a dissertation topic, do faculty jump on it right away, give feedback? I want us to look at the whole scheme. Is the product good? Are you happy, do you feel your programs are well respected by faculty and others we hire?

Decide where the expertise lies. There are not just courses in your area; you as a group decide that. If you choose to use courses in other programs, be sure they meet all expectations. If a student takes x, y, z with no rigor, that does not help us as a college in setting a standard, a core, a foundation.

Those are my ideas and I hope by May 2, at the final graduate faculty meeting, we will have a recommendation to present to the larger faculty group. I am here to help you.

Dr. Claudet: I called the Higher Ed Coordinating Board to let them know about this meeting. I asked for their information, for materials, advice, issues covering the State of Texas, their views. I have a hand out to be distributed today. I asked if there are any documents on a website to access. There are: *2004 and 2005: The Coordinating Board's document: Education in Texas: Part 1&2*. The Coordinating Board expects the same research rigor whether it is a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. They have a nice way of framing it: "the Ed.D. is *research to practice* in its focus and the Ph.D. is *research to new knowledge*".

So, the Coordinating Board expects research in either degree. They expect the general requirements for the doctoral programs to be the same.

## **Open Discussion**

Discussion was held among all attendees as to graduate core courses, syllabi, programmatic offerings. Dr. Benavides summarized his understanding of this by noting: University curriculum is really predicated on three issues - breadth, depth, and scope. We are getting the same material at masters' as at the doctoral level, and when do they go beyond? The problem is not enough faculty. We need variety, so we have to go into other disciplines. There are plenty outside of my area such as sociology, anthropology. Let's explore the notion of utilizing these other departments. Let's collaborate as to what will fit our students. The notion here is that programs need to be different. They should be. We need a way to agree that programs can differ which helps us with diversity. There needs to be some room for students to get specific. I think our task is to come up with and agree on something to help all students meet their own personal goals in their doctoral program. Forget Ph.D., Ed.D. How do we prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a manner commensurate in less than 10 years?

Additional discussion occurred about a core set of courses for every program and the distinctions between a Ph.D./Ed.D., if there are any, with Dean Santos summarizing: I have an epiphany regarding the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The definition of the Ph.D. is exactly the same [as the Ed.D.] — but broader in courses, less structured, more individualized. Students should take outside education courses over and above the language requirements or whatever. That is exactly it. It is broad and individualized. Sticking all doctoral programs into a “one size fits all” is a problem.

Dr. Mendez-Morse then noted that she felt the committee has several issues to address: (1) to decide if Ph.D./Ed.D. are the same; (2) based on committee's decision regarding number 1, does the committee believe there should be a common core research list of whatever methods/foundations/knowledge that is the same for both Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees or should there be different core requirements/lists?; and (3) flexibility. What is the program's focus? Do we want to agree to allow each program to have research core requirements in that discipline? Research methods offered for language and literacy and then at the individual level? At the individual level, we go back to the big COE product, and that is - what types of student do we want to come out of the COE? We need to be in agreement. We have students working as professors and as practitioners. Discussion continues.

Dr. Claudet: The motion put forward by Dr. Mendez-Morse is that the committee focus its energies, time, and effort on doctoral education in the College through the end of April. Motion seconded by Dr. Walter Smith.

Votes: In favor – all. Opposed – none. Motion carries.

## **Future Agenda Issues**

Dr. Claudet then encouraged the committee to develop future agenda issues to address. As a first committee assignment, Dean Santos suggested that Dr. Runnels and Dr. Claudet update and correct the College of Education's current Graduate Program Minimum Core Requirements listing. Drs. Claudet and Runnels agreed to work on this. Dean Santos then suggested a second assignment be that committee members go back to their own programs/departments and ask their colleagues to engage in group conversations on what kind of common or core curriculum their department or program in COE should have – what kind of research core faculty would like their department/program to have. Committee members agreed to take on this assignment.

Dr. Button then stated that she, along with Dr. Janisch, would volunteer to communicate with recent COE doctoral program graduates. Dr. Button indicated that she and Dr. Janisch would contact individual members of the committee to find out the names of individual programs' most recent graduates. Dr. Button emphasized that these recent doctoral graduates are the College's "customers" and, in that regard, it would be useful to gather data on the following: What jobs are they presently in? What strengths do these graduates perceive about our doctoral programs, their perceptions regarding areas of doctoral program weakness, and their recommendations. Dr. Button invited other committee members to assist with this effort. Dr. Davidson volunteered to assist.

Dean Santos then suggested the committee take on another assignment — i.e., to look at other Colleges of Education. Specifically: Within the doctoral programs in other Colleges of Education, how do they handle their core courses? Call them. Do these core courses always need to be prescriptive? Dean Santos encouraged each committee member to take a look at other institutions to see what they do.

Dr. Claudet then summarized the task assignments to be completed by committee members in preparation for the next committee meeting: First, Drs. Runnels and Claudet are to review and update the College of Education Graduate Program Minimum Core Requirements listing. Second, each committee member is to go back to their own program/department and poll colleagues as to what they believe should be (if any) a common core of courses at the doctoral curriculum level. If there is one, what should it be at that level — each committee member is to bring their program's perspectives back to share with the committee at the next meeting. Third, each committee member is to contact at least one other institution (College of Education) to get information as to what that College of Education does regarding their doctoral degree programs, their common core, etc.

The next meeting will be held at 10:00am, next Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, in room 001.

