

Texas A&M International University
University Graduate Council (UGC)
Meeting: Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 4:00-5:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

Dr. Lola Norris called the virtual meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

II. Roll Call

Present: José Cardona-López, Gloria Sánchez, José Seiba Moris, Haibo Wang, Triana González Valdez, Amanda Peña, Nicole Songstad, Abhijit Patwardhan, Asligul Berkday, Jeffrey Brown, Yin Anwen, Lola Norris

Graduate School: Martha (Marty) Pérez

Absent: Youmna Deiri

Two members on Faculty Development Leave: Lourdes Vilorio and Paul Niemeyer

No Faculty Senate and no graduate student representative

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the April 14, 2024, meeting had been sent via email prior to the present meeting. Dr. Norris went over the minutes. Dr. Berkday made a motion to approve, and Dr. Cardona-López seconded. The other members voted to approve the minutes as written.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. New Graduate Faculty Status Membership Categories

Dr. Norris followed up on the discussion from the previous meeting regarding the current graduate faculty status categories: Full, External, and Temporary. She reviewed the requirements and duties for each category. She reiterated that two of the current categories did not align with the current faculty composition, which includes tenured, tenure-track, clinical, fixed-term, and adjunct faculty. She recommended the following categories: Full, Associate, Visiting. The requirements and duties for each category were presented and discussed. New language for the Faculty Handbook was presented. Dr. Moris moved to approve the changes, and Dr. Brown seconded the motion. The motion carried. The changes will be brought to the Faculty Advisory Committee once it is constituted.

B. The title (GRAD 5101) and language for the 1 semester credit hour thesis continuation course were approved. It will need to go through the curriculum committee process before it can be added to the catalog. Dr. Moris moved, Dr. Peña seconded. Motion carried.

V. New Business

A. The committee addressed the need to establish a time limitation and catalog year validity for doctoral programs. Dr. Norris noted that the current catalog only imposes a 5-year completion window for master's programs: "All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within five years or within the time specified for the particular program. No credit completed under a catalog older than five (5) academic years or within the time specified for the particular program will be recognized as graduate credit applicable toward a graduate degree."

Various options were considered for doctoral program timelines, including 7, 8, and 10-year limits. The committee agreed to postpone the vote until the next meeting to allow time for reviewing comparative data from peer and aspirational institutions.

Dr. Norris suggested a tentative schedule for the next meeting, possibly during the common hour, from 3:20 to 4:20. A Doodle poll will be sent for the first or second week of November.

VI. Reports

A. The Graduate School now has a Graduate Writing Consultant. This position was originally created and funded by the ARC Grant, written by Dr. Coronado and Dr. Tobin. With the ending of the grant, the position has been institutionalized.

B. The Graduate School has started holding bi-weekly virtual recruiting/information sessions via Teams. The sessions titled "Beyond the Bachelor's" and "Pathway to the PhD" will provide information for students interested in master's programs and doctoral programs, respectively, and occasionally invite representatives from the different departments.

VII. There was no other business

VIII. There were no announcements

IX. Dr. Moris motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Peña seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 pm.