The 3rd meeting of the Graduate Assembly for the 2017-2018 academic year will be held on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. in the Lee Jamail Academic Room, Main Building 212.

Provost Maurie McInnis is scheduled to join the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Order of Business

I. Approval of the minutes of the November 15, 2017 meeting

II. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School (Mark J T Smith)

III. Report of Chair (Hal Alper)

IV. Academic Committee (James Cox)
   A. Proposal to add a Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) degree to the graduate program in Architecture. Minor legislation- vote of Assembly will be required.
   B. Briefing on committee's discussion regarding development of graduate certificate policy on Dec 13 and January 31. Discussion to continue on February 28 with recommendations to follow.
   C. Briefing on committee's upcoming discussion on February 28 regarding program-closure policy, with recommendations to follow.
   D. Briefing on committee's discussion and unanimous vote to recommend approval of the MSITM room-share arrangement. Per Option III Guidelines, the request will be forwarded to the Graduate Dean and Provost for final approval.
   E. Briefing on committee's decision to withhold vote on request to establish room-share arrangements in Nursing DNP program. Proposing faculty were advised to submit a revised proposal.

V. Administrative Committee (Darla Castelli)
   A. Briefing on committee review and support of proposed changes to the graduate student academic grievance policy in the HoP. No action required.
B. Briefing on the current HoP limitation of GRA/TA/AI appointments to no more than 30 hours. No action required.

VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Catherine Weaver)
   A. Proposal to waive the GRE requirement for MSSW program. Minor Legislation – vote of Assembly will be required.

   B. Report of changes to guidelines for GRE/GMAT waiver requests. No action required.

   C. Briefing on committee’s endorsement of the Graduate School’s development of guidelines on holistic admissions. No action required.

VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Regina Mills)

VIII. Adjournment
Proposal to Add the Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) Degree To the Existing Graduate Program in Architecture Summary

This proposal seeks to add the Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) degree to the existing graduate program in Architecture. The Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) program proposal is being made in compliance the National Architectural Accrediting Board's (NAAB) request to clearly distinguish the accredited degree program from the post-professional, non-accredited degree program. The addition of the MAAD degree is intended to provide greater transparency and distinction between master's degrees offered by the School of Architecture that are accredited by the NAAB and those that are not. The proposal does not include proposed changes to the curriculum or the associated Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code.

The School of Architecture currently offers two tracks within the Master of Architecture (MArch) degree program. The first track, referred to as the MAarch (first professional) program, is accredited by the NAAB and fulfills the professional degree requirements for registration as an architect. The second track, referred to as the MAarch (post professional) program, offers students with professional degrees the opportunity for advanced study in an area of concentration: advanced architectural design and theory, historic preservation, interdisciplinary studies, or sustainable design. Unlike the first -professional track, the post-professional track is not accredited by the NAAB and does not fulfill the professional requirements for registration as an architect.

Following a 2012 accreditation review of the MAarch degree program by the NAAB, the visiting team noted an area of concern and “condition not met” arising from the confusion of having two degrees, one of which is accredited and one is non-accredited, with the same name and very different degree requirements. To retain NAAB accreditation, the School of Architecture is required to demonstrate action on resolving this “condition not met” prior to the 2018 accreditation review of the MAarch degree program.

The Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) degree will require completion of thirty credit hours of graduate coursework, including the six-hour thesis, or thirty-six hours of coursework, including six hours of master’s design study or a terminal design studio. Exact degree requirements vary among the four areas of concentration.

The School of Architecture anticipates a total enrollment of 15-20 students each year among all concentrations for the next five years, based on the average enrollment of 18 students per year for the MAarch (post-professional) program. The School of Architecture also anticipates a 100% employment rate within six months of graduation, based on the MAarch (post-professional) Career Services' Employment Reports.

Following required program approvals, the MAAD degree will be implemented in fall 2019 following publication of an official program description in the 2019-2021 Graduate Catalog. The second (post-professional) track of the MAarch degree program will be closed. The School of Architecture will work with the Graduate and International Admissions Center (GIAC) to move students who are enrolled in the MAarch (post-professional) program to the new MAAD degree program. Effective fall 2019, individuals who hold professional degrees and who are interested in pursuing advanced study in Architecture will be directed to apply to the MAAD degree program.

The Master of Advanced Architectural Design (MAAD) degree program will be added to the THECB’s seven-year review cycle to be reviewed in conjunction with the graduate program in Architecture.
Proposal to revise Section D of the Handbook of Operating Procedures 9-1240

From http://www.policies.utexas.edu/policies/graduate-school

Handbook of Operating Procedures 9-1240
The Graduate School
The University of Texas at Austin
Executive Sponsor: Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School
February 15, 2005

Proposed revisions to Section D:

1. Adjudicating Grievances of Graduate Students
   
a. A graduate student has the right to seek redress of any grievance related to their academic affairs as they relate to the student’s progress towards their degree.

b. Every effort should be made to resolve grievances informally between the student and the faculty member most directly involved or, such efforts failing, by the graduate adviser, the chair of the graduate studies committee of the student's degree program, and/or the chair of the department (or the director of the academic program if there is no department). When serious issues cannot be resolved informally, the graduate student will have recourse to the formal grievance procedure as outlined below in Subsections 2-43. It should be noted that the precise procedure to be followed in adjudicating a given grievance will depend on the particular circumstances surrounding the case.

Grade disputes are handled according to departmental review policies by the department offering the course in question. The order of review for grade disputes is the course instructor, graduate adviser, department chair (or the director of the academic program if there is no department), and dean of the college or school offering the course. The decision of the college or school dean is final.

Non-academic grievances submitted to the Graduate School will be referred by the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Studies to the appropriate University administrative office, normally the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of Human Resources, or the college/school dean in which the incident of grievance occurred. Only in cases of multiple points of grievance will the complaint be reviewed by more than one administrative unit of the University.

Grievances related to nonacademic issues and scholastic dishonesty are handled according to the procedures outlined in the General Information Catalog.
c. A graduate student may express a formal grievance through the following procedures with the assurance of timely and thorough consideration. Grievants are assured freedom from reprisals for the filing of their grievances.

d. All complaints grievances must be submitted in writing to the Office of Graduate School Studies, which will notify the chair of the graduate studies committee, the department chair (or the director of the academic program if there is no department), and the dean of the college or school that a grievance has been filed and of the procedures for handling the grievance. All time limits given below will be extended only for good cause.

e. A student must initiate submit his or her complaint grievance within six months 60 days of the incident that is the subject of the grievance, or, when there is written notification to the student of the action that is the subject of the grievance, an intent to grieve must be submitted to the Graduate School within 30 days, and the completed grievance must be submitted within 60 days.

2. First Level of Adjudication: Graduate Studies Committee

a. The first level of consideration is the appropriate graduate studies committee. The chair of the graduate studies committee, having received formal notification of the grievance from the Office of Graduate School Studies, shall review the grievance and meet with the grievant if requested. The graduate studies committee shall then vote to either uphold or reconsider the original action that is the subject of the grievance. The chair of the graduate studies committee shall notify the Graduate School of the results of the graduate studies committee review within 30 days of receipt of the grievance. If the chair cannot resolve the matter himself or herself, he or she will convene an ad hoc panel normally consisting of three to five members of the graduate studies committee to review the complaint and render a decision to the graduate studies committee. The student will be granted the right to exclude one person from the panel.

b. After consideration of the student's grievance, including a meeting with the student if requested, the ad hoc panel will report its findings to the graduate studies committee, the student, and the faculty member in writing. A copy of the findings will be retained in the files of the chair of the graduate studies committee. The graduate studies committee will ratify, reverse, or change the decision of the ad hoc panel. The results of the graduate studies committee review will be provided to the grievant. The grievant will have 30 days to notify the Graduate School if they are satisfied with those results or if they wish to proceed to the second level of adjudication as provided below.

3. Second Level of Adjudication: Office of the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Studies
a. If the issue grievance cannot be resolved at the level of the graduate studies committee to the satisfaction of both the graduate studies committee and the grievant, both parties concerned at the level of the graduate studies committee, the grievance and the decisions of the previous review panel and the graduate studies committee will be forwarded to the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Studies. The Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Studies, in consultation with the college or school dean(s), may decide the case on their own review and authority, or if he or she deems it appropriate, convene a Graduate School ad hoc committee panel to review the case and provide advice.

b. The Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Studies will review the facts of the case, including any recommendations received from an Graduate School ad hoc committee panel if constituted, and render a ruling within 45 days of the grievant’s decision to move to the second level of adjudication. This ruling will be sent to the student, the any ad hoc panel constituted during the review process, the chair of the graduate studies committee, the graduate adviser, the department chair (or the director of the academic program if there is no department), and the college or school dean(s). The decision of the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School is final.

4. Third Level of Adjudication: Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost: The decision of the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies may be appealed in writing to the Executive Vice President and Provost for a final decision.
Steve Hicks School of Social Work  
The University of Texas at Austin  

Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW)  
GRE Waiver Proposal  

October 25, 2017  

Allan H. Cole Jr.  
Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Graduate Advisor  

Purpose:  
This proposal serves to request approval from the Graduate Assembly to waive the GRE admissions requirements to students applying for the Master of Science in Social Work degree (MSSW). For dual degree applicants, students are admitted independently and would follow the GRE or other testing requirements for each respective program. This proposal has been approved by our Graduate Studies Committee, our MSSW Curriculum Committee, and is supported by our Dean.  

Rationale:  
The Steve Hicks School of Social Work MSSW Program requests this waiver for the GRE Admissions Requirement for the following reasons:  
• The most recent Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Statistical Report (2015) shows that with over 94% reporting, only 24.5% of accredited master’s programs require the GRE for admission. (See Appendix 1)  
• A review of admissions requirements for *US News and World Report’s* top-ranked social work programs shows that only one program ranked in the top 20 other than UT-Austin requires the GRE. Furthermore, only one other program in the state of Texas, which is ranked 38th, requires the GRE. (See Appendix 2)  
• The MSSW is considered the terminal practice degree for the profession. MSSW graduates enter the workforce as practitioners working with or on behalf of clients with health, mental health, or basic life needs. We would continue to require the GRE for students applying to our Ph.D. program.  
• The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredits MSSW programs every eight years. This national accrediting body maintains stringent Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) with minimum competencies and outcomes to be achieved by every student in the program.  
• We find consistently that the best predictors of success in our MSSW program are a student’s undergraduate GPA, responses to narrative portions
of the application, recommendations from former faculty and professional supervisors, and work experience.

- Each year, highly qualified students who have an interest in our program opt not to apply and instead apply to other top social work programs that do not require the GRE. Our goal is to strengthen our ability to compete for these students. Related, we have also heard from underrepresented and/or minority applicants that the cost of the GRE and the time needed to prepare for it are deterrents to applying. The result is that we lose talented students before they apply.

In a recent study, Vliek, Fogarty, and Wertkin (2015) reported that

The large majority of MSW programs do not currently require the GRE for admission or they require it at the university level and not the program level (National Association of Deans and Director of Social Work Admissions membership, personal communication, October 15, 2014). This trend reflects the concerns of social work educators about the bias of the GRE, the content validity of the reading comprehension section of the GRE, and evidence that the GRE is not predictive of performance in social work programs (Donahue & Thyer, 1992; Milner, McNeil, & King, 1984; Thomas et al., 2004). Two popular studies in social work influenced the trend. The first of these studies made the bold statement that the “GRE is largely irrelevant in social work education” (Milner et al., 1984, p. 949). The study compared two groups of students in one MSW program—one group that was required to take the GRE before admission and one group that was not. The study found no significant difference in the students’ field performance, retention rates, or graduation rates. Milner et al. (1984) also pointed out that the admission rate of minority students increased from 9.8% in schools which required the GRE to 17.5% in schools that did not require the GRE. The second study questioned the validity of the reading comprehension portion of the GRE. This study showed that factors other than reading comprehension, such as guessing ability or general knowledge, greatly impacted an individual’s score (Donahue & Thyer, 1992). Donahue and Thyer (1992) caution against using a tool that is shown to discriminate against minorities and does not correlate with MSW student’s performance in the program.1

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Current Admissions Process:

The MSSW program of the Steve Hicks School of Social Work seeks to admit candidates who demonstrate a personal and professional readiness to pursue graduate education in social work and to make a significant contribution to the profession.

Admission to the MSSW degree program is competitive and early application is encouraged. Application to the MSSW program requires admission to both The University of Texas at Austin Graduate School and the Steve Hicks School of Social Work.

Applicants are reviewed and evaluated on the basis of their applicant file, which includes:
- Records of academic work
- Personal narrative statements (See Appendix 3)
- Scores on the Graduate Record Examination General Test (GRE)
- Letters of recommendation
- Professional Resume

Minimum requirements are as follows:
- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in the United States or proof of equivalent training at an institution outside the United States.
- A grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in upper-division work (junior- and senior-level courses) and in any graduate work already completed.
- A satisfactory score on the Graduate Record Examination General Test (GRE). Consistent with Electronic Testing Service (ETS) reporting guidelines, the University of Texas at Austin Graduate School will not accept GRE scores completed over five years ago.
- Adequate undergraduate preparation with a range of studies in the liberal arts and behavioral sciences.
- Successful completion of at least one introductory statistics course that covered inferential applications. The course must be taken for a letter grade (C or better).

Review Process

All complete applications are independently evaluated by members of the social work graduate faculty review committee and are then sent to the Assistant Dean for Master's Programs for final review and recommendation. The Senior Associate Dean/Graduate Advisor then forwards recommendations to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. Applicants are admitted on a competitive basis, considering GPA, GRE scores, letters of reference, employment and volunteer history, and the applicant's personal narrative statements. Although a GPA of 3.0 is
desired for admission, the average GPA of our admitted applicants is significantly higher. Acceptance or denial of applications is based upon expert faculty judgment, reflecting the relative ranking of the applicant among applicants in the following areas: human service motivation, academic potential, interpersonal effectiveness, capacity for sustained effort, communication skills, and contribution to diversity. Therefore, denial of admission does not necessarily mean that the applicant could not have completed the program successfully, but that there were stronger applicants in the pool.

**Proposed Admissions GRE Waiver Process:**

Wording on all MSSW Admissions materials would change to

**Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is accepted but not required. Please note that applications with non-traditional transcripts or undergraduate upper division coursework GPAs below 3.0 may be strengthened by scores on the GRE.**
Current Standardized Test Requirements and Waiver Information
The Graduate School requires master and doctoral degree applicants to submit a satisfactory score on either the GRE or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Applicants to dual or combined degree programs with the School of Law must submit a satisfactory score on the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) as well as on the GRE or GMAT. The University of Texas Medical Schools require the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), and most of the joint PhD-MD programs of the Graduate School likewise substitute the MCAT in place of the GRE.

Graduate programs, including Option III graduate programs, may propose to use alternative measures in place of standard numeric test scores on the GRE or GMAT when the nature of the specific target audience justifies. Examples include performance areas such as Dance, Acting, and Studio Art that use auditions and portfolios as alternate measures or programs that are geared to working professionals and substitute work experience for the test scores.

Recommended Guidelines for Future Standardized Test Waivers
The Admissions and Enrollment Committee believes that it is important for the Graduate Assembly to provide guidelines to programs requesting waivers of standardized exam scores in admissions decisions, and to Admission and Enrollment (A&E) Committee members considering such requests in the future.

We note that most of the requests for waivers in the past have come from programs that are not integrated programs. (Integrated programs are those that are available only to our own undergraduate students.) For example, the integrated program in Computer Science requires that applicants take the GRE before applying, recommending that the test be taken no later than December of the applicant’s fourth year of undergraduate study. However, the Select Admission Program, an initiative that was created and is supported by the Graduate School and approved by the Graduate Assembly, offers highly qualified undergraduates at UT-Austin a waiver of the GRE or GMAT if approved by the graduate program. This initiative has served as precedent for the recent A&E Committee decisions regarding exam score waivers.

We note that standardized entrance exams are intended: (a) to give program administrators an opportunity to evaluate and compare the merit of applicants on a common metric (e.g., GPAs from different universities, programs, or forms of academic preparation are not always comparable), and (b) to measure general and specific academic achievements that are equally predictive—across diverse student groups—of future performance in a program. We note further that in making admissions decisions, programs should seek to triangulate across multiple data sources.

Even if a program does not require standardized tests, students who believe that exam scores would strengthen their applications should not be discouraged from submitting those results.
**Integrated programs**

For integrated programs, the committee suggests that future justifications for waiving exam requirements include (but need not be limited to) the following considerations:

1. Applicants must have had their most recent four semesters of preparation (graded coursework) at UT-Austin, thus making their GPAs particularly diagnostic for graduate coursework at UT-Austin.
2. Applicant performance should be well known to the faculty in the program, i.e., references should be provided primarily by faculty in the program.
3. Applicants must have outstanding undergraduate academic history, particularly in courses critical to the discipline.

**Option III and other programs**

For context, we include two excerpts from the Graduate Assembly Option III Task Force final report of April 5, 2013:

- a. Given the non-traditional nature of these programs both in terms of student clientele and program delivery, flexibility is a key desideratum; however, program quality and academic standards remain the highest priority.
- b. Applicants to Option III graduate programs should be asked to supply normal test scores (e.g., GRE/GMAT/LSAT/MCAT or TOEFL/IELTS). Option III programs may propose to use alternative measures in place of these standard numeric test scores, when the nature of the specific target audience justifies. Such alternative admission criteria must be approved by the Graduate Assembly as part of the program approval process.

We recognize that the purpose of admissions materials is both to identify qualified applicants and to meaningfully differentiate between their prospects for future success. So, in light of the Task Force guidelines above, our recommendations are that future waiver requests include, but are not limited to, factors comparable to the following:

1. Benchmarked information from well-designed selection/validation studies at peer institutions offering like programs confirm that standardized test scores are not predictive of an applicant’s ability to succeed in programs of this type. In such cases, a program may be asked to identify which predictors are stronger.
2. If available, information from a well-designed selection/validation study in the UT-Austin program itself shows that there is minimal additional predictive value in using standardized exam scores to predict success in that graduate program.
3. The program is directed at working professionals who have significant experience in the field.
For programs of any type, we do not recommend justifications like the following:

1. The program wants to increase the pool of applicants; programs should be of such high quality that there will be an abundance of qualified applicants.

2. The program believes that students don't have time to prepare for the tests or will be distracted from their other studies by having to prepare for the tests.

3. Students have to take the test earlier than those who are applying for graduate admission in their last year of undergraduate studies.

4. Anecdotal or case (i.e., non-rigorous) evidence suggests that the exam scores do not predict success in the program.

5. Faculty or program administrators are of the opinion that the test would not be useful (without supporting data).
To: Dr. Mark Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies  
From: The Admissions and Enrollment Committee of The University of Texas Graduate Assembly  

Re: Recommendation to Issue Guidance on Holistic Admissions Processes  

1 December 2017

Dear Dean Smith,

The Graduate Assembly Admissions and Enrollment Committee would like to thank you and your staff for raising awareness about the importance of holistic admissions processes for graduate admissions at The University of Texas at Austin. Holistic admission processes are critical to admitting and recruiting top-notch graduate students to UT and to ensuring that our graduate student body is diverse and inclusive.

The Committee would like to request that the Office of Graduate Studies continue to work on developing guidelines on Holistic Admissions that may be offered to schools and departments on campus. Likewise, we encourage OGS to distribute information and to promote training with respect to implicit bias and GRE use in admissions processes.

We would also like to request that the OGS clarify how it uses GRE scores in OGS fellowship decisions, such as the Harrington, to address misalignment in expectations for departments and schools nominating students for these fellowships.

The Committee would welcome the opportunity to discuss these guidelines and materials once they are drafted. Thank you once again for your leadership on this important matter.

With best regards,

The UT Graduate Assembly Admissions and Enrollment Committee  

Catherine Weaver, Chair, LBJ Public Affairs  
Andrea Alu, Electrical & Computer Engineering  
Tasha Beretvas, Educational Psychology  
James Buhler, School of Music  
Allan Cole, Social Work  
Catharine Echols, Psychology  
Wonsuck Kim, Geosciences  
Paula Murray, Business  
Jo Worthy, Curriculum & Instruction