Chair Maria Juenger called the fifth meeting of the Graduate Assembly for the 2015-2016 academic year to order on Wednesday, November 11, 2015, at 2:18 PM in the Harry Ransom Center, Tom Lea Room, 3.206.

**Faculty Members Present:** Alper, Balhoff, Brustad, Busch-Armendariz, Canning, Castelli, Cox, Deigh, Frazier, Harrison, Juenger, Kim, Knopf, Konana, Mueller, Murray, Ostrower, Schallert, Srinivasan, Strong, Trace, Worthy

**Faculty Members Absent:** Anderson, Arapostathis (excused), Kintner (excused), Landsberger (excused), Mackert, Matouschek (excused), Pollak (excused), Rascati (excused), Srinivasan, Thompson.

**Student Members Present:** Swaim, Tarlaci, Wilkey

**Ex Officio Members Present:** none

**Representatives from the Office of Graduate Studies Present:** Bancroft, Broadway, Hackert, Neikirk, Silvia, Riley

**Visitors:** Alu, Brown, Chen, Cicero, Clark, Cole, Cozzolino, Hasenbein, Miller, Radhakrishnan, Weaver

Prior to the beginning of the meeting, those newly elected members of the Graduate Assembly who were in attendance introduced themselves.

**Order of Business**

I. **Approval of the minutes of the November, 2015, February 3, 2016, and March 23, 2016 meetings**

   The minutes were approved unanimously with one correction.

II. **Report of the Graduate Dean, ad interim (Marvin Hackert)**

   Dean Hackert thanked the outgoing Graduate Assembly members and the committee chairs, and summarized some of the Graduate Assembly accomplishments for the year.

   He then described some of the Graduate School changes: Graduate advisors no longer are required to sign off on graduate students’ milestones agreements, the dissertation signature page will no longer require signatures from all of the committee members but instead only the GSC chair. The Higher Education Coordinating Board has agreed to permit alignment of programs’ professional accreditation review cycles with coordinating board review cycles. The Graduate School is now administering more than $20 million in fellowships, including $5 million in external awards. The site plan for the Graduate and Professional Housing Project, which will provide about 750 new beds, has been approved.
Dean Hackert thanked Maria Junger for her service as Graduate Assembly Chair. He then extended a special thank you to Karen Bancroft, who would be retiring at the end of May, for all of her behind-the-scenes contributions to the Graduate Assembly.

III. Report of Chair (Maria Juenger)

Chair Juenger called on Nominating Committee Chair Konana to present the 2016-17 slate of officers.

Konana reported that James Cox was selected as Administrative Committee Chair and Diane Schallert as Admissions and Enrollment Committee Chair. No vote was required for these positions.

Charlotte Channing was nominated as Secretary of the Graduate Assembly. Canning’s nomination was approved unanimously by the Graduate Assembly.

Hal Alper was nominated as Chair of Academic Committee, which is also Chair Élect of the Graduate Assembly. Alper’s nomination was approved unanimously by the Graduate Assembly.

Graduate Assembly Chair Juenger noted that Academic Committee Chair Konana will be 2016-17 Chair of the Graduate Assembly.

IV. Academic Committee (Prabhudev Konana)

A. Proposal to create a graduate portfolio program in Security Studies

Paul Miller, Associate Director of the Clements Center for National Security gave an overview of the proposal: This transcript-recognized interdisciplinary portfolio in Security Studies responds to a University level interest in security studies and the Chancellor’s desire to create a network for national security. The program could benefit Master’s and Ph.D. students in, for example, the History and Government Departments and the LBJ School.

The proposal had been approved by the Academic Committee and did not require a vote of the Graduate Assembly. It would be forwarded to the Graduate Dean and Provost for final approval.

V. Administrative Committee (Dean Neikirk for Eileen Kintner)

A. Report regarding unanimous decisions of committees

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Neikirk presented for Administrative Committee Chair Kintner, who could not attend. The Graduate Assembly had passed legislation to change the requirement for unanimous decisions on Ph.D. dissertations at the November 11, 2015
meeting. Because this was major legislation, it was distributed to all Graduate Studies Committees, Deans and Department Chairs and, given that more than 10 protests were received, it was referred back to the Administrative Committee. The Committee scheduled a meeting for discussion with those who filed protests and, following that discussion, recommended that the legislation be withdrawn. This decision did not require a vote of the General Assembly.

The concerns raised by those who protested included concerns that, with the recent decrease of the required committee size to four members, the non-unanimous decision would leave the decision with a small group of individuals; it could disenfranchise the outside member of the committee; and it could affect the prestige of the university.

B. Resolution endorsing the spirit expressed in the GSA document on graduate student rights and responsibilities

Neikirk reported that representatives of the Graduate Student Assembly met with the Administrative Committee on March 30 to discuss an earlier version of the document. The current version incorporates Administrative Committee feedback, so the Committee recommended that the Graduate Assembly pass a resolution endorsing the spirit expressed by the Graduate Student Assembly document of Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Brian Wilkey, Chair of the Graduate Student Assembly was invited to present the document. He asked the current and former chairs of that committee, Margaret Clark and Beth Cozzolino, respectively, to present the document. Clark noted that the document describes a set of principles that faculty, students and administrators can agree are reasonable expectations for one another. Many of the principles are already in place, so the document serves to codify them in one place. Some recommendations for small policy changes also are included.

The resolution to endorse the spirit expressed in the GSA document on graduate student rights and responsibilities was approved unanimously by the Graduate Assembly.

C. Proposal to establish Dell Medical School representation on the Graduate Assembly

The Administrative Committee recommended that the Graduate Assembly pass a resolution (1) acknowledging that the Medical School and associated degree program had received final approval from the Coordinating Board and (2) that representation of the Dell Medical School be added to the Graduate Assembly. Neikirk noted that the Graduate Assembly currently has 31 members, so adding a member would require either taking a slot from another program or increasing the number to 32.
Discussion followed about the timing of any changes in representation and/or apportioning of seats.

In response to a question, Neikirk clarified that the apportionment of Graduate Assembly representation is determined by number of members of Graduate Studies Committees, as well as the number of doctoral and masters degrees granted over the preceding three years. Discussion followed about how the number of representatives for the Medical School would be determined.

In response to a question about whether the decision had to be made at that meeting, Dean Hackert suggested that it was important that Dell Medical School representation be in place by the beginning of the fall semester; among other upcoming issues, the dual degree programs planned by the Medical School will have to be approved by the Graduate Assembly.

Beth Nelson, Associate Dean of Medical Undergraduate Studies, was asked to describe the Medical School’s Graduate Studies Committee. Nelson indicated that what she believed to be the comparable body in the Medical School would include tenured and tenure-track faculty. Michelle Broadway, Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies, believed that she had received from Dr. Sue Cox, Executive Vice Dean of Academics and Chair of Medical Education a list for a proposed Medical GSC; it was her understanding that the Medical School faculty would include approximately 30 to 35 tenure track faculty, along with a larger group of clinical faculty. Broadway also noted that Dr. Cox seemed to expect a single representative.

In response to concerns raised about the lack of clarity in the proposal, Dean Hackert indicated that there would be a single medical school representative.

After additional discussion, Neikirk recommended the following proposals for Graduate Assembly vote:

1. An acknowledgement that the Medical School degree program has received final approval from the Coordinating Board and
2. that one member from the Dell Medical School be added to the Graduate Assembly, increasing the total Graduate Assembly membership from the current 31 to a new 32, and the member be elected using the normal and stated procedures in the Graduate Assembly by-laws.

VI. Admissions and Enrollment Committee (Dan Knopf)

A. No report

VII. Graduate Student Assembly (Brian Wilkey)
Graduate Student Assembly Chair Wilkey reported that the GSA had a successful lobby day in Washington DC, talking with representatives about the reinstatement of subsidized graduate student loans, increased research funding, and funding for campus mental health and wellness. He thanked the Graduate Assembly for its receptivity to the Graduate Student Statement on Rights and Responsibilities, which will be forwarded to the Faculty Council C-12 Committee on Graduate Student Rights and Welfare. As a member of the campus carry implementation task force, Wilkey is creating training modules for faculty and graduate students and teaching assistants. He closed by reporting that the incoming Graduate Student Assembly President would be Willis Brown and the incoming Vice President would be Francesca Cicero.

Before the meeting was adjourned, Academic Committee Chair thanked Michelle Broadway and Rebecca Sylvia for their contributions. He then presented a gift basket to Graduate Assembly Chair Juneger in appreciation of her leadership.

Dean Hackert noted that, starting in the fall, the Graduate Assembly meetings would be beginning at 1:30 p.m.

IX. Adjournment at 3:15