

**DOCTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**March 20, 2006**

**Present:** Muehsam, Conroy, Creighton, Mullings, Price, Watts

**I. Approval of Minutes from March 6, 2006**

The minutes from the March 6, 2006 meeting were approved.

**II. Thesis/Dissertation Committee Composition**

There was discussion regarding the number of faculty members needed to serve on a thesis/dissertation committee to ensure the ultimate goal of a quality dissertation. Consensus of the Committee was that 3-5 faculty members should serve on a thesis/dissertation committee. The specific number should be decided by the College. Questions were presented: what role should a non-chair member play, should we have guidelines for chairs to follow, should we have a limit on how many thesis/dissertation committees a person can chair? It is quite evident to the Committee that guidelines or a policy need to be developed to address these issues. It was suggested that the policy be written to allow for a procedure to adjust the committee size. The process should initiate from the doctoral advisor, to the dean of the College, to the dean of Graduate Studies for final approval. It was suggested that a minimum number of members (3) be from the particular discipline, and the additional members may be from within the discipline or from a supporting discipline. The Committee decided to present this discussion to their doctoral faculty for their input before recommendations are presented to the Graduate Council.

**III. Graduate Faculty Status**

Dr. Muehsam distributed to the Committee membership the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's policy. Their policy is a good guideline for the Committee to consider when developing recommendations for improving SHSU's Graduate Faculty Status policy.

**IV. SACS**

A discussion was held about SACS standards 3.6.1 and 3.6.2. These standards discuss the need to demonstrate that graduate programs are progressively more rigorous than undergraduate programs and enable the students to be independent learners and contributors to their discipline or profession. Dr. Muehsam emphasized that the most commonly used support document demonstrating our compliance with these standards is the graduate course syllabi. Dr. Muehsam requested an opportunity to meet with departmental faculty to discuss this issue.

**V. Miscellaneous**

Dr. Mark Klespis will be added to the membership of the Doctoral Advisory Committee as an ex-officio. He will represent the prospective Math Education doctoral program.

A discussion was held on the need to develop a graduate studies handbook discussing procedures and policies. The Committee will think about guidelines on how to proceed with a handbook including ideas of content, process, timeline, etc.