

## **Minutes of the Graduate Council**

**Date of Meeting: September 17, 2025**

The September 17, 2025, meeting of the Graduate Council was called to order at 1:02 p.m. via Zoom by Dr. Ann Wheeler, Chair of the Graduate Council.

**Members in Attendance:** Alexandra (Ale) Babino, Amanda Arnold, AnaLouise Keating, Ann Wheeler, Brigitte Vittrup, Catalina Pislariu, Chanam Shin, Daniel Newmire, Daniela Ventura, Dayna Averitt, Della Molloy-Daugherty, Derek Crews, Faheemah Hannah, Helen Everts, He Ren, Hope McCarroll, Hyuk-Jin Lee, Jaesin Sa, Jennifer Quong, Kanchan Budhathoki, Kimberly Mory, Lamar Muro (Lilia), Mark Tengesdal, Mikyoung Lee, Paula Clutter, Pat Driscoll, Rachelle Campbell, Sharon Wang-Price, Xiaofen Du, and Zhen Li. **Substitutes:** Gretchen Johnson for Jennifer Martin and Dimple Vadgama for Nerissa Gillum

### **MINUTES APPROVED**

- The minutes of the April 16, 2025, meeting were approved.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT BY DR. CAROLYN KAPINUS, DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL**

### **Purpose of Graduate Council**

Welcome to our new members. The Graduate Council serves as the delegate body of the Graduate Faculty, formulating Graduate School policies and reviewing all matters affecting the University's graduate programs. Our accreditation body, SACSCOC, emphasizes the importance of faculty in academic policy and curriculum development—this council fulfills that vital role.

As Dean of the Graduate School, I serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member. I bring policy matters to your attention via the Executive Committee, provide background information and starting points, and outline federal, state, university, and accreditation requirements. However, you—the council—create and approve our final academic policies.

Thank you for your service in this important capacity.

### **Enrollment**

Our final enrollment report (post Census day) indicates Fall 2025 graduate enrollment is up 4.2% (225 students) compared to last year. Good job everyone! Recruitment and retention are collective efforts.

### **Guidance on AI for Theses and Dissertations**

Last week, I sent out an email offering a suggestion for how to approach AI use. We (the Graduate School, Graduate Council Executive Committee) recommend that your program look at

publisher policies—particularly those from journals in their relevant subject areas—and adopt similar standards for theses and dissertations. I want to emphasize this is not a policy or a mandate but a suggestion.

### **Zoom Sessions**

If you missed yesterday's Zoom Session on "**Communication and Admission Practices that Increase Graduate Program Enrollment**," you can reach out to Danita for the recording.

There are three upcoming Zoom sessions for graduate students:

**"Beyond the Syllabus: Real Talk from Experienced Graduate Teaching Assistants"** on Thursday, September 18, from 12:00–1:00 PM.

**"From ABD to PhD: Advice from Recent Doctoral Graduates on the Dissertation Process"** on Wednesday, October 1, 6:00–7:00 PM.

**"Thriving while Parenting in Graduate School"** on Thursday, October 9 at noon.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT BY DR. RUTH JOHNSON, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL**

Welcome to another academic year!

Offering minors in your area: please provide the appropriate credit hours for your area and share this information with me. This project is ongoing and is being carried out in collaboration with the Registrar's Office and Scott Martin, Manager of Curriculum Catalog.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

- **Dana Mordecai** - Director of Graduate Admissions Recruitment
- **Alli Peterson** - Director of Instructional Development & Learning Design, Revised Title II Regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

### **SUMMARY REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Executive Committee – Chair: Dr. Ann Wheeler**

- No report.

**Executive Committee – Vice Chair: Dr. Dayna Averitt**

- No report.

**Research Committee – Dr. Catalina Pislariu**

- Welcome! Our committee brings joy to students and is mostly active during the spring.
- Awards to be addressed:
  - The Graduate Council for Exceptional, Original Scholarship Award
  - Chancellor's Student Research Award
- Last year, the committee worked to establish the Outstanding Theses and Dissertations Award. We hope to finalize it this semester so it can be approved and become effective as soon as possible.

**Academic Standards Committee – Dr. Sharon Wang-Price**

- Introduction: I am new to chairing the committee. I look forward to working with the committee members.
- The committee reviews policies and procedures for proposals under the guidance of Dr. Kapinus, which will be brought forward to the Graduate Council for discussion and approval.
- Upcoming policies to be reviewed: Post-Master's and Post-Bachelor's certificate programs, as well as Graduate Faculty Status policy.

**Academic Programs Committee – Dr. Zhen Li**

- This committee reviews proposals (new and revised) and brings them forward to the Graduate Council for a vote.
- No proposals are being presented today; a few are expected next month.
- I look forward to working with everyone this upcoming year.

**Membership Committee – Chair Nominee: Dr. Helen Everts**

- The committee evaluates all faculty status applications for Full and Full with Dissertation Chair endorsement. It is critical that applicants have the appropriate RCR and list the graduate committees they have served on, including the duration and which ones have been completed, as these are some of the key factors the committee considers.
- There are no recommendations for today, pending a vote on the committee members. Recommendations for new and renewing applications will be presented at the October meeting. Please ensure that your department's faculty check their expiration dates on the website.

- Note: Graduate School Dean Carolyn Kapinus added that the Membership Committee was formed based on the policy requiring one member from each college to serve, and this is how the committee is structured. The same structure applies to each subcommittee. The standing committee assignment list will be made available in the shared Google Drive Graduate Council folder.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Membership Committee Election**

- Chair nomination: Dr. Helen Everts. There were no other nominations from the floor. **Voted on and approved.**
- Committee members: See the list of Membership Committee members on page 2 of the agenda (page 4-5 of these minutes.) **Voted on and approved.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

- 1:57 p.m.

The next Graduate Council meeting will be Wednesday, October 15, 2025.

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### **Membership Committee Members (Voted on and approved under New Business on September 17, 2025)**

<b>Membership Committee Members</b>		
Della Molloy-Daugherty	CAS	Music Therapy
Helen Everts - Chair	CHS	NFS
Jennifer Quong	COPE	Sch of ED
Mark Tengesdal	COB	Finance
Mikyong Lee	NURS	NURS