

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

MINUTES

October 22, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

LJH 325

Council in Attendance:

Marc Giullian (Business)
Doug Downs (Faculty Senate)
Katherine Johnston (Letters)
Chris Livingston (Architecture)
Rachael Filwett (Sciences)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Molly Secor (Nursing)
Akash Gulati (Student Representative)
Kari Perry (Student Representative)
Sarah Mannheimer (Library)
Anna French (Student Representative)
Ryan Thum (Agriculture)
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)

Also in Attendance:

Emily Peters (Graduate School)
Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)
Donna Negaard (Graduate School)
Kirk Lubick (Associate Vice President for Research Integrity and Compliance)

Absent

Rollin Beamish (Arts)
Deborah Haynes (Dean of The Graduate School)
Sally Mudiamu (Office of International Programs)

Meeting started at 10:02 a.m.

October 8, 2025 minutes

Motion to approve by Giullian, Livingston 2nd, unanimous approval, motion passes

Announcements

- Graduate School update
 - Graduate tools launched in MyMSU this morning
 - 330 graduate students attended the community dinner during wellness week
- Faculty Senate update

- First reading on graduate courses
- Allison Harmon, Vice President for Research and Economic Development, provided update on research funding
 - Q: How are funding cuts affecting graduate students?
 - So far, the university has been able to shift students to other sources of funding.

New Business

- Research Misconduct Policy (Kirk Lubick)
 - Proposed revisions mandated by changes at the federal level (Office of Research Integrity)
 - Research misconduct (federal definition): fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting results
 - Must be knowing and intentional
 - Reviewed Process and Proposed Changes (see PowerPoint slides)
 - Questions/Discussion:
 - Sanctions for graduate students currently made by Dean of Students, proposed change to Graduate Dean for graduate students. Have received previous feedback that College Deans should be the decision maker instead of the Graduate Dean. What are Council's thoughts on this?
 - Q: What are examples of sanctions?
 - Examples for a graduate student: take required trainings, lose degree, retract papers, additional oversight over research
 - Who has the most knowledge of what that sanction should be? There are nuances across colleges, but Graduate Dean provides consistency
 - Seems unfair/inconsistent to have different people determining the sanctions
 - Sometimes outside perspective can make students feel heard
 - We as faculty report to department heads, department heads report to Dean of College not Graduate Dean. Deans may feel the appeal should follow that same chain of command.
 - Appeal process is all about consistency and fairness
 - In the student conduct policy, it is stated that decisions go to Graduate Dean for final decision in conjunction with the Academic Dean and appropriate experts
 - Can the College Dean be part of the review committee?
 - Yes, they are part of that process.
 - Does the policy address AI?
 - It is in the plagiarism section. AI, like other sources, must be cited correctly.
 - Lubick will share final policy with Chair Warnat before it goes to University Council
- Recap of President Tessman's Visit
 - Recap of visit
 - Open discussion
- Search for Leader of Graduate Education
 - Warnat and Franklin met with Provost Mokwa: Provost and President are considering a new model for The Graduate School: make the open Dean position a Vice Provost and create a new position of Director of The Graduate School.

- Seeking feedback from council. Ask you to take this back to your college leadership and colleagues for input.
- Discussion
 - Why proposing this model?
 - Deans of colleges report to the Provost. Deans and departments hold the graduate programs. With this model, College Deans could report to Vice Provost of Graduate Education instead of a conflict of power between Deans.
 - Creating a position to be visionary and pursue advancements in graduate education: explore partnerships, philanthropy, 4+1 models
 - This is a hinge point in graduate education—an opportunity to grow and innovate.
 - Graduate Director position would be hired by the new Graduate School leader
 - How will this impact the proposed appeal policy?
 - Could move forward with the policy as is and revise accordingly. Would have to determine whether final decision goes to the Graduate Director or Vice Provost.
 - Seems like a demotion for the position working with graduate students (Dean to Director). The announcement for the leadership level position seems more outward focused – focus on development.
 - Concern that a Dean is more responsive to meeting with graduate students than a Vice Provost. A director would not have same authority as a Dean, regarding addressing concerns from students.
 - Instead of creating another administrative position, could use the funding to more directly benefit students
 - Discussion on structural implications
 - Consider Director of the Graduate School's relationship to Academic Deans
 - Consider implications for students.
 - Graduate School functions as a neutral office—consistency and fairness across disciplines.
 - Open questions: motivations, implications, cost/benefit
- Warnat and Franklin will craft email to Provost Mokwa asking the intention for the feedback
 - Will then send email to Council with summary/directions for soliciting feedback
 - Discuss feedback at next meeting
 - Warnat and Franklin will compile feedback for the Provost

Adjourned at 11:30 am

Next scheduled meeting – November 5, 2025