

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

MINUTES

April 15, 2026

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

LJH 325

Council in Attendance:

Marc Giullian (Business)
Chris Livingston (Architecture)
Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Rollin Beamish (Arts)
Ryan Thum (Agriculture)
Kari Perry (Student Representative)
Anna French (Student Representative)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Akash Gulati (Student Representative)
Sally Mudiamu (Office of International Programs)
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)
Katherine Johnston (Letters)
Molly Secor (Nursing)
Doug Downs (Faculty Senate)
Deborah Haynes (Dean of The Graduate School)

Also in Attendance:

Emily Peters (Graduate School)
Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)

Absent

Amy Reines (Sciences)
Sarah Mannheimer (Library)

Meeting started at 10:32 a.m.

April 1, 2026 minutes

Motion to approve by Windchief, Beamish 2nd, unanimous approval, motion passes

Announcements

- Graduate School update
 - Crawford Scholarship event tomorrow
 - Three-minute thesis competition on April 23rd: 18 participants
 - Establishing award budget for 26-27 fiscal year
 - Presentation to Alumni Foundation: requested funds for discretionary emergency funding for graduate students
- Faculty Senate update

- Passed bylaw update, course updates, reviewed honorary doctorate nominations
- Final meeting of semester is next Wednesday: electing new chair-elect
- Graduate Student update
 - Town Hall yesterday: housing council discussion
 - Housing council members will attend upcoming ASMSU meeting.
 - Working with data office to draft a survey for graduate students. Survey will come from GSLC when it is sent out.
 - Requesting meeting with President Tessman to go over survey results.
 - Q: Is there an established survey (e.g. from WAGS) that graduate schools use?
 - Dean Haynes will email WAGS President to check if there is an existing survey
 - Q: Should a question be added about satisfaction with the academic side?
 - Will review with Data office. Can add a more in-depth question in the next level of survey.
 - Ex: How satisfied are you with the quality of education you have received in your graduate degree?
 - Q: What about a question of what made students decide to come here?
 - Could be a question for a different survey (e.g., climate survey that comes from the university/Graduate School – project for next year).
 - Q: Do we survey students that decline admission?
 - There is a response field for a student to indicate why they are declining.
- Office of International Programs:
 - Changes to duration of status. Example of other universities planning to enforce 4-year deadline for doctoral students. There will be a mechanism to request extensions, but there will not be a guarantee. Some schools are planning ways for students to start online before coming in person to the US.
 - Official announcement was expected in July and has not come out yet.
 - Concern for recruiting new students for fall.
 - Concerns regarding how international students will be able to afford to live here. Rent increases without corresponding increases to stipends. Restricted on how many hours a week they can work. International students are the biggest users of the food pantry on campus.
 - Insurance changes: will not have access to health insurance through the marketplace next year.
 - University insurance plan is very expensive.
 - OIP has asked for own health insurance plan for international students – not approved.
 - Suggestion of writing a grant for DNP students to provide care for graduate students.

Old Business

- Academic Standing and Appeal Policies
 - Faculty Senate steering committee had no suggested changes to the policies.
 - Chair Warnat will present appeal policy at Academic Council on April 17th.

- Will also present new graduate policy approval process

New Business

- Graduate Fresh Start Policy (Negaard)
 - Reoccurring topic that comes up for graduate students. There is a fresh start policy at the undergraduate level.
 - Review example graduate student that would benefit from a graduate level fresh start policy.
 - Review Graduate Fresh Start policy draft.
- Discussion
 - Q: GPA would start again but courses could still count toward program of study?
 - Yes, if a course meets all other policy requirements (e.g., age of courses, minimum grade requirement).
 - Q: Student has to take 6 credits of graded courses (not p/f thesis credits)?
 - Correct. Must have a minimum 3.0 in traditionally graded coursework.
 - Discussion on restarting GPA but still being able to use the credits toward degree requirements.
 - Grades do still stay on the transcript, just excluded from the GPA.
 - Q: What are the implications of GPAs beyond academic standing?
 - Funding (TA/RA must be in good academic standing), scholarships, minimum GPA requirements to graduate.
 - Q: What would happen if a student retakes a course?
 - Students can request an include/exclude and the original course no longer counts into GPA.
 - This is an option, but students don't always need to retake courses if they change programs. In some cases, the courses no longer exists to retake.
 - If a student had such a low GPA, some may argue they were not graduate student material.
 - At that time. This policy provides a pathway for a second chance years later when life circumstances may be significantly different.
 - Proposed policy requires review on a case-by-case basis.
 - Student has to be accepted into the program by the department.
 - The department must submit support with the GARC.
 - Criteria for consideration? What justifies department approval? Ex: what if a faculty member does not support a student?
 - Negaard will check what criteria GARC is looking for in the petition review.
 - Giving students a second chance has a lot of merit.
- Suggested changes:
 - Explicitly state that department must accept students into the program and provide support with the GARC petition.
 - Redact more of the student information, so the specific student example can be presented throughout the policy review steps.
- Make revised policy an agenda item for the first fall meeting

Subcommittee updates

- Governance Subcommittee: UGC Bylaws review
 - Give new VPGE opportunity to review and weigh in on changes.
- Curriculum Subcommittee: continuing to review changes

Adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting – April 29, 2026