

## UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

### MINUTES

September 24, 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)  
Ryan Thum (Agriculture)  
Akash Gulati (Student Representative)  
Kari Perry (Student Representative)  
Sally Mudiamu (Office of International Programs)  
Sarah Mannheimer (Library)  
Deborah Haynes (Dean of The Graduate School)  
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)

#### Also in Attendance:

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

#### Absent

Rollin Beamish (Arts)  
Anna French (Student Representative)  
Sarah Mannheimer (Library)

#### Meeting started at 10:04 a.m.

#### **September 10, 2025 minutes**

- Motion to approve by Livingston, Thum 2<sup>nd</sup>, unanimous approval, motion passes

#### **Announcements**

- Graduate School update
  - MyMSU rollout October 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - Students will need to add classes to a cart and then “checkout”—make sure they complete the final step, or they won’t be registered

- Program of Study and committee tools will have a transition period (likely a few weeks). Students will not be able to submit new requests during this time.
  - Graduate Student Leadership Council worked with housing to establish a graduate housing council. 2 graduate students serving on the council.
    - Meeting weekly this semester
  - Fall graduation application is still open. Please encourage your students to apply by the end of the week.
- Faculty Senate update
  - Passed along feedback from UGC discussion regarding policy approval pathway.
    - Potential options: consent agenda, provide policy to Faculty Senate for discussion earlier in the process – provides time to get feedback from constituents and could allow for one reading
    - Dean Haynes is meeting with the Provost next week to discuss the policy approval process
      - Could create flowchart with timelines of when each review/approval body meets
  - All graduate courses in 2<sup>nd</sup> reading were approved
  - Question: How did the conversation about AI go?
    - University AI Summit
    - Provided feedback from faculty discussions to Board of Regents

## **Old Business**

- Subcommittee appointments
  - Vice Chair nomination
    - Nominate Katey Franklin as Vice Chair
      - Discussion
      - Motion to vote for Franklin as Vice Chair
        - Thum seconds
        - Unanimous approval
        - Franklin elected as Vice Chair, will be Chair starting AY 26-27

## **New Business**

- International student concerns (Gulati)
  - Housing: international graduate students have reached out with concerns about the rent increases being unaffordable. International students are not eligible to work off-campus jobs, with current stipend rates international students won't be able to afford rent increases.
    - Reached out to OIP with concerns
    - Individual students have expressed that they don't know who to talk to or are afraid of drawing attention to themselves – helpful to have a representative to advocate for them
    - Things that would be helpful: increased communication, addressing the expense/stipend gap

- Suggest adding international student representative to the new Housing Council. Could also provide a forum for international graduate students to meet with the Housing Council.
  - Graduate student collective bargaining in progress
  - Working with CFE to host workshop on finances
  - Discussion on non-compete clause that prevents offering housing lower than market value
    - Is there a legislative representative to advocate policy changes on behalf of student/staff/faculty concerns?
      - Yes
      - Faculty senate may be the best body work through
      - Does UM have a similar requirement? Could it be addressed at a MUS level?
- Visas: H-1B visa concerns
  - What do we know and how to do we handle it?
  - Right now, if you're applying for a H-1B visa, an employer has to sponsor you and it's \$100,000/year. We don't know yet if universities are exempt from this or not. 30% of faculty in STEM are on H-1B visa.
  - Proposal that students must finish within 4 years for doctorate (or have to go back to home country and reapply – no guarantee you can return).
    - Impacts to OPT visas – international students are coming for the opportunity to stay and work here. If that is no longer an option, will deter students from coming to the US.
  - Went into effect Saturday morning, but under review until 29<sup>th</sup> of September. Anticipate an edict around Thanksgiving.
  - OIP currently looking at students that are delayed and working with advisors to get them fast tracked to complete their degree.
    - Some universities are looking at opening branch campuses in other countries, redesigning program structures, looking at how to help international students graduating on time – if you don't, lose OPT and potential for your career in the country.
    - Can students finish remotely?
      - Yes, as long as they can finish their requirements remotely
      - Many graduate students are supported under federal grants, even if working abroad, causes problems with funding mechanisms
- Update from meeting with President Tessman
  - Dean Haynes, Chair Warnat, Provost Mokwa, and President Tessman met last week
  - President wants to expand graduate programs, will begin strategic planning
  - Chair Warnat suggested UGC be involved with strategic plan
    - All stakeholders will be involved
  - President Tessman invited to attend a fall UGC meeting and a meeting with GSLC
  - Chair Warnat encouraged the administration to be more transparent with faculty leadership

- Comments/Discussion
  - Could create a strategic plan subcommittee, take the opportunity to participate in the planning process
  - Need to hire faculty lines, GTA lines, to increase enrollment
    - Important to focus on growth in all areas at the same time
    - Discussion on funding
  - Did you get any sense of their perspective on the role of graduate education in maintaining our R1 status?
    - Yes, President Tessman has emphasized that new knowledge gain is an important aspect of our land-grant mission
- Syllabus learning outcomes for 590/690
  - Cases of graduate students failing 590 or 690 credits without written expectations, how they would be graded
  - Accreditation review stated that learning objectives and outcomes should be listed in CIM for every course
  - Suggest creating template syllabus for research courses to send to departments
  - Review example of EMEC 590 syllabus
  - Discussion
    - Written expectations protect the student and faculty
    - Helps time to degree to review the expectations for research
    - See the syllabus as a contract with the student – student has to know what they need to do, how they will be graded, how to progress
    - Students feel unsure of expectations with advisor, this would be helpful
    - Move to policy subcommittee

Updates from subcommittees

### **Public comment**

Adjourned at 11:30 am

Next scheduled meeting – October 8, 2025