



Graduate Council Meeting

Minutes: January 27, 2025

Attendees: **CCHL**: Brad van Eeden-Moorefield, Matt Shurts, **CEEL**: Erik Jacobson, Kayla O'Donnell, **CHSS**: Tarika Daftary Kapur, Emily Douglas, Jessica Brandt, **CSAM**: Matt Schuler, Nina Goodey, Melissa Spigelman, Scott Kight, **SBUS**: Rashmi Jain, Vidya Atal, Dejah Ndiya, Jonida Dervishi, **TGS**: Chris King, Michele Fisher, Valerie Sessa, Laura Valente, Debbie Reynoso, Michael Stuhlmiller, **Grd Adm**: Jennifer O'Sullivan, Ginneh Collins, **Guests**: Kristen Diaz (assistant Director, SBUS), Mika Munakata (GPC, CSAM)

- a. Opening remarks from GC leadership / approval of minutes from December 11th meeting

Motion to approve the minutes, passed with one abstention

- b. Reports:

- TGS Report:

Stephanie Brachfeld (Vice Provost for Research, recently appointed interim Dean for Grad School). Has business travel conflicts with the meeting today and next month.

Wrote remarks to introduce herself to the council (read by Michele Fisher). See attached.

- please contact her directly if have any questions or concerns
- has many years involved with graduate work and GC in tenure at MSU
- Provost intends to restructure TGS into a graduate center.

Laura Valente: No one needs to worry that there won't be a graduate unit. Really more placement and priorities, there will be a graduate-centered unit. It will not be a school and therefore will not have a dean (title of leadership position TBD). The position will be filled by an applicant from tenure track faculty. The reimagined graduate unit will continue providing student support and academic administrative functions, but with some enhancements.

- There was a report from a faculty member that the recently established "U" grade for dissertation progress was not in place for the fall semester. That has been rectified as of last week.
- Grad student development conference is Mar 28. Offering plenary sessions and 9 topics (that can be done in tracks). If anyone has a suggestion for a track or session, please let Laura V. know. They are considering a research and writing track. Has been free to students (including headshots). Possibly a \$10 fee in the future to reduce no-shows. Can take about 100. Have not yet put the info on the web, will be announced shortly.

- Graduate faculty summit is April 4 with Leonard Cassuto as the Keynote. He has written several books including “The Graduate School Mess” and “Academic Writing as Though the Reader Matters”. All attendees will receive his book.
 - GA allocations—got them out months ahead of time. Released before the budget was approved. Now have Dean’s Distinguished GA (enhanced GAs) for recruiting top students.
 - Hiring a communications coordinator (first round interviews happening soon).
 - We are continuing to keep a close eye on doctoral time to degree (this past year, 54 graduates, on track to meet that again this year).
 - Micro internship is approved, will be sent out soon.
- Graduate Admissions Report (Jennifer O’Sullivan)
 - Today was the last day for add/drop. Getting ready to do all of the headcounts. Spring 2 term will start on Mar 17.
 - 2 policy updates working on implementing
 1. Enrollment deposit for international students will increase to \$1000, while enrollment for domestic students will increase to \$250. This policy takes effect immediately and should reduce the number of applicants who commit but never attend (will be easier to track students who are serious about MSU).
 2. Also working on updating postponement policies. Postponed students tend not to enroll. Now they will have to deposit to postpone with a limit of one postponement request. Have to request postponement by the end of drop/add. Note: deposits go towards tuition and for those with tuition remission, towards graduate fees.
 - GPC survey sent out, what do GAs need? There is now a GA development series (3 in person and 3 on zoom).
 - Val S. asked about marketing (domestic vs international). Some have noticed fewer domestic applicants. Jennifer said that we are 2% up for domestic and 20% up for international but that is across the University, not individual programs. Decisions about funds for marketing come from higher up. Could look into handshake and instagram advertisements (downside, not tracked in our system). Coordinate with Tim H. in Grad Admissions.
 - Matt S. raised the issue of a recent \$1,600 health insurance charge for some international students. When they complete the I20—confirm that they have enough money for all educational expenses. Once here for a couple of years, the state allows them to get subsidized health care. Legal opinion is that this is in conflict with the confirmation that they have enough money. Students who had gotten the subsidized health insurance were able to waive out of the university health insurance. In Dec roughly 300 international students received an email that this would no longer work. Over the break, decision, no way around it—would place us and the students in federal jeopardy. As such, moving forward it must be clear that students will be responsible for health care insurance (\$3,300 for a full year).
- Report from the Curriculum Committee, Chair (Vidya A.)
 - i. Program alteration proposal presentations for vote:

- a. [MS in Computational Linguistics](#) (Anna Feldman)
Joint between linguistics and school of computing. Newish program, needed updating. New courses, some restructuring so students can focus in elective area. New 0 credit research seminar. Committee reviewed proposal and recommends approval. Motion approved by GC.
- b. [MA in Clinical Psychology with Child/Adolescent Psychology conc.](#) (Jessica Spat-Lemus, presented by Chris King)
Streamline and reorganize to make program more straightforward. Committee reviewed proposal and recommends approval. Motion approved by GC.
- c. Nomenclature change of conc. with curriculum alteration: [MS in Kinesiology with Exercise Science & Sport Studies conc.](#) (Michele Fisher)
Part of an MS with 2 concentrations. Just changing one concentration. Some restructuring with addition of 3 informal tracks in electives (strictly through advisement). Renaming concentration to Exercise and Sport Science to better cover tracks and for marketing of program. Committee reviewed proposal and recommends approval. Motion approved by GC.
- d. [MM in Performance with Instrumental conc.](#) (Scott Richards, presented by Vidya)
Introducing a small change (adding a new course for bassoon–reed making). Committee reviewed proposal and recommends approval. Motion approved by GC.
- e. [MS in Mathematics with Mathematics Education conc.](#) (Mika Munakata)
Reorganization of existing courses to form a common core, which had not been present. Committee reviewed proposal and recommends approval. Motion approved by GC.

Vidya will sign on Rashmi’s behalf and forward.

Laura V. has had several conversations with DPDs, with the idea of creating a masters degree in the same program as PhDs. Some students are not finishing (and walk away with nothing). Can the curriculum committee take this on? Would students need to apply to both programs or would they automatically earn a master’s degree once they reach a certain point? These would be considered new master degree programs and would have to go to the state for approval.

The Chronicle of Higher Education offered a webinar this afternoon on The Upside of Upskilling–badges and micro credentials–on-line programs. Those who register will receive a recording of the session.

- Report from the Policy Committee, Chair (Chris K.)
 - Asking for a GC vote on the policy committee endorsed “limitations on thesis attempts” (see below, 2 parts).
- A. Students who are unable to complete the master’s thesis during enrollment in Thesis Course 698, must register for the Master’s Thesis Extension Course 699 (one credit) for the subsequent semester (excluding summer terms, unless making

formal progress). No special permission is required for a student to enroll in one semester of the master's thesis extension course. The master's thesis is expected to be successfully completed and approved by the student's thesis committee during the semester in which the student has enrolled for the Master's Thesis Extension Course 699.

- B. A student may petition to enroll in a second semester of the Master's Thesis Extension Course 699; however, approval of both the Graduate Program Coordinator and the thesis advisor is required for a student to register. If denied by the advisor, the GPC, or both, the student has the right to appeal this decision to the Dean of The Graduate School, or designee. That decision is final.
- a friendly amendment was added to specify "no third attempt". Motion passed by GC.
 - A question was raised concerning time allowance to be under enrolled for international students with 1 credit thesis extension. What about 2 semesters? (OGE needs to find out the answer to this, will Feds say yes?). Should the following be added to the policy for thesis extension limits "International students should consult with OGE" added to amendment?
 - The survey for thesis support is still being worked on.
 - Established an email account for suggestions from students, faculty, and administrators for issues of concern that pertain to policy work.
 - Tabled discussions on forced full time status for students in field placements, as well as tracking standardized milestones for doctoral students.
- Report from the Student Affairs Committee, Chair (Tarika D.)
 - No substantial updates.
 - Implementation of micro internship. Sessa's team will be looking at grad student needs/wants this semester.
 - Will consider setting up an email address similar to that for the policy committee.
 - Laura V. announced that there will be a Valentine's day "hearts and crafts" session for graduate students (food, activities for all grad students). Community building.
 - Report from the GC Restructuring Committee, Chair (Michele F.)
 - The committee has not met this semester.
 - In our last meeting we discussed opening up membership to staff members (up to one staff member per college/school), expanding the executive committee to include subcommittee chairs and a student, and increasing accessibility of the meeting to the broader university community.

- In our next meeting we will re-examine our mission statement and revisit issues from the last meeting.
- c. Break-out discussion on “Swing Credits” – see attached.
Didn’t have time to discuss swing credits.
- d. New Business
Didn’t have time for new business.
- e. Adjourn

Remaining GC Meetings for AY 2024-25: Feb 19th, Mar 19th, Apr 23rd, May 5th