



## Graduate Council Meeting

Agenda: April 23, 2025

2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

STCT 419

Present: CCHL: Brad van Eeden-Moorefield, Matt Shurts, Meena Mahadevan, Dana Levitt, CEEL: Erik Jacobson, Kayla O'Donnell, CHSS: Tarika Daftary Kapur, Emily Douglas, CSAM: MAtt Schuler, Hao Liu, Melissa Spigelman, Scott Kight, CART: marcus d. harvey, Yi Luo, Ronald Sharps, SBUS: Rashmi Jain, Vidya Atal, Ethne Swartz, Nicole Koppel, NURS: Brenda Marshall, Elizabeth Fitzgerald, TGS: Chris King, Valerie Sessa, Michele Fisher, Stefanie Brachfeld, Laura Valente, Debbie Reynoso, Michael Stuhlmiller, GrAdm: Timothy Hart, Jennifer O'Sullivan, visitor: Marc Austin

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1. Opening remarks from GC leadership / approval of minutes from March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. GC retreat planning.
  - Minutes from March 26 are approved
2. Introducing **Dr. Marc Austin** as the University's inaugural Vice Provost and Managing Director for Montclair Unbound.
  - Unbound–start up, focus to begin is graduate studies.
  - Unbound makes a transition to a more on-line education opportunity but also includes stackables, certificates, and partnerships.
  - In phase 1–getting online infrastructure to work easily and smoothly.
  - Team of 3, relationship with Collegis for marketing and outreach, and other skills that the university does not have.
  - Recruiting–already have 500 applications.
  - Question–GC is working on plans for stackables and swing credits. We should work together on stackables. Austin–keep working, he would love to get our input–this would be phase 2.
  - Question–combined programs, they have to be predesigned, there are universities that have more flexibility. It is that level of flexibility that is exactly what students need, but the operational complexity is high, rather not move too quickly. A big mistake is to make changes before all of the complexities are worked out.
  - Question–Business School worked with an Online Program Management (OPM) company before Collegis, unsure of how to interact with Collegis. Austin says we are going to do a “rent to build” model. His group is the intermediary between the Business School and Collegis.

### 3. Reports: (5-8 minutes each)

- TGS Report

#### Brachfeld

- a) Some decisions have been made about the new graduate center. More will be shared once the graduate team meets with Provost Gonzales.
- b) Independent study form will be changed to google forms. Will serve as a bridge to Workday Student (which is about 1 year out). Will do beta testing this summer with DPDs and GPCs who are working this summer and volunteer. Will be more transparent so that everyone can see where IS study requests are in the workflow.

#### Valente

- a) Retreat will be June 2nd in SBUS. Morning is a business meeting with election of officers, introduction of the new members, and any left-over business.. Afternoon is strategy and planning. Meals will be provided.
- b) Need to nudge colleges/schools to hold elections for 2025-2026 GC representatives.
- c) The 2025-2026 executive team officers will need to be elected at the retreat. Chair (Jain) and Secretary (Sessa) are stepping down. Looking for nominations to fill these positions.
- d) Valente and Reynoso went to a conference for the Council for Graduate Schools. Brought back an idea from the University of Maryland where they hold weekly dissertation support writing circles. The individual meetings at Montclair are labor intensive.
- e) GAs supervisors should have received the GA evaluation form. There will be a luncheon for graduating GAs and their supervisors.
- f) The university gives out awards for outstanding student employees, this year graduate students were included. Two of the graduate students recognized are student reps to GC, Kayla and Dejah. Congrats!!!
- g) Question-how is the university helping international students who have their visas revoked? So far, 4 graduate students have had their F1 status revoked. Others have had their funding discontinued. It is easier to make accommodations for students who are nearly finished with their degree. Students with concerns or questions, particularly if planning to travel outside of the country, should be referred to the Office of Global Engagement (OGE). At this point international students are being discouraged from leaving the country. Those running into problems are being referred to counsel pro bono.

- Report from Graduate Admissions (Tim)

- a) Recruitment of international students is being adversely impacted, both from word of mouth concerns and the revoking of student visas. It is very hard to predict what international enrollment will be this fall. Will know more by mid summer.
- b) Domestic numbers are strong compared to last year.
- c) May 5, will have a new boss, search for an associate vp of admissions. John Van Brunt was hired.

- Report from the Curriculum Committee, Chair (Vidya)
  - a) No curricular proposals for voting.
  - b) The committee has been discussing the policy for swing credits including data from other universities and collaboration with the policy committee. The proposed revision to swing credits is summarized below:

*Students enrolled in the undergraduate portion of a combined program are permitted to take predetermined (generally specified) graduate-level coursework, prior to completion of the bachelor's degree, which will fulfill the undergraduate credit requirements in the major as well as meet graduate program requirements as outlined in the program of study.*

*The minimum number of these swing credits is 6. The maximum number of swing credits is determined by the number of credits required for the graduate degree as specified below. Individual combined programs may set lower limits than those specified here.*

<b><i>Graduate Program Total Credits</i></b>	<b><i>Swing Credits</i></b>
30-36	6-12
37-45	6-15
More than 45	Minimum 6, up to one-third of the program total credits; capped at a maximum of 24.

*For most programs, these thresholds support student outcomes; however, discipline-specific program components and requirements may warrant flexibility. Such exceptions will be reviewed by both the graduate and undergraduate curriculum committees.*

A friendly amendment was added in the case where one-third of the program total credits is not divisible by 3. In that case the maximum number of swing credits would be rounded to the nearest 3 credits (up or down). The curriculum and policy committees would fine tune the language after the vote.

Question-What is the relationship between the work of the Graduate Council and the provost's academic affairs policy committee? The academic affairs policy committee typically does not handle curriculum related policies, rather administrative policies.

The revised swing credit policy was approved with the friendly amendment.

The curriculum committee will meet on Friday to discuss a few curriculum proposals and continue work on stackable degrees.

Question-Where do we stand on the revision to the external transfer credit policy? The policy committee will revisit the transfer policy with the new swing credit policy in mind. We should also consider internal transfer credits and how that would cross with stackable

degrees and dual degree programs. For example, can business courses for a completed MSU degree be counted for a nursing admin degree?

- Report from the Policy Committee, Chair (Chris, Yi)
  - a) Need to add the new College of Communication and Media to the by-laws. Addition of the new college to the bylaws was approved.
  - b) Internal conversations on graduate student government.
- Report from the Student Affairs Committee, Chair (Tarika)
  - a) Nothing to report. We need to think about what we should be doing as a committee. We don't really have a specific charge. Not much comes to us.
  - b) They will send someone to Sessa's course to see the presentation.
- Report from the GC Restructuring Committee, Chair (Michele)
  - a) Discussing adding NTTPs and professional staff members to GC.
  - b) Gathered information from colleges/schools on voting procedures for representatives to GC. Some include TT faculty only, some include TT and NTTP, and one includes TT, NTTP, and professional staff). Could apply skip logic to online election surveys so that one's position (TT, NTTP, PS) is identified in the first question, and they would only vote in the elections for which they are eligible.
  - c) Also looking at the structure of the University Senate with consideration for at large positions for professional staff members who are not housed within academic units.

4. Updates from the International Advisory Committee (IAC) (Ethne)

- a) Pulled together all the knowledge and assets across the university on a global footprint for the university. A report was submitted with a recommendation to constitute an international advisory committee to solidify and deepen what existed.
- b) IAC is hosting an event, and invited a writer/commentator for international affairs from Minnesota, Harvey Charles. Trying to get the message out. Please come!

5. Open discussion on questions for Dr. Koppel's visit to GC on May 5th.

- a) International issues—impressions, what he is concerned about. What is going to happen with our developing relationship with India and Asia.
- b) Restrictions with DEI programs. How is this going to impact academic programs (e.g., higher ed is dei focused).
- c) Lean times at the university, to what extent will graduate programs be used to generate revenue.
- d) What talking points does Dr. Koppel use in Trenton when referring to graduate education? Is there information we can provide to strengthen his arguments?
- e) What's going on about R1? Grants getting cancelled. We were close with grants (until they got canceled) but we are short of research doctorate. (Grow existing or both).

6. New Business

7. Adjourn