

Graduate Council 2024-2025

February 6, 2025

Members present: Khaled Ahmed, Kelly Bender, Scott Collins, Jane Dougherty, Ahmad Fakhoury, Lance Griswold, Dong Han, Karen Johnson, Rhonda Kowalchuk, Cheng-Yao Lin, Kayla Malone, Kim Parr, Mark Pease, Mark Peterson, Benjamin Richardson, Jennifer Spreng, Michael Timm, Tomas Velasco, Andy Wilber, Hale Yilmaz, Matthew Young

Ex Officio: Jennifer Horton (for John Pollitz), Karen Jones, Constantinos Tsatsoulis

Guests: Julie Dunston, Srilatha Kancharla, Kymberli Morgan, Amber Pond

Meeting started at 8:00 AM

- Consideration of 12-5-2024 meeting minutes.
 - The vote on a motion to approve the minutes of the December meeting passed unanimously.
- Remarks from the Chancellor: Austin Lane – Not present because of attendance at the Board of Trustees meeting.
- Remarks from the Provost: Sheryl A. Tucker – Not present because of attendance at the Board of Trustees meeting.
- Remarks from Vice-Chancellor for Research/Dean of the Graduate School: Costas Tsatsoulis
 - The Graduate School recently completed the Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) survey submitted to the NSF. This survey is a determinant of our ranking through the Carnegie Foundation. Last year we had research expenditures of \$59.3 million. This year the figure is \$61.4 million.
 - Sixteen faculty (15 of them junior faculty) are going through a writing program in CoLA to help them write successful proposals.
 - Constituents can monitor the status of federal proposals at either the OSPA or OVCR websites.
- Remarks from Associate Dean & Director of Graduate School: Karen Jones
 - Today at 1PM the Graduate School will have another *Let's Talk* session. This is a workshop directed at our graduate students and this month's topic is writing theses, dissertations, and papers. Please encourage your students to attend.
 - On February 14th at 2PM the *Three Minute Thesis* competition will take place in SSB 150. GC members are encouraged to attend.
 - On February 19th the Graduate School will have a workshop for Directors of Graduate Studies (DOGS) and their assistants. This will take place from 10AM-2PM in SSB 150. This workshop is designed for new DOGS or assistants and will cover graduate school processes, updates, and upcoming changes.

- A graduate student recruitment and retention forum will take place on March 5th from 8:30AM-4:30PM in the ballrooms. This will focus on graduate student success. Anyone interested in graduate education is invited to attend.
- A new international student recruitment partnership with INTO will launch this spring.
 - Phase 1 (February 18): Targets fall 2025 applications for undergraduate degrees, master's in computer science, cybersecurity, and cyber systems.
 - Phase 2 (April 1): Spring 2026 applications for remaining master's programs (excludes PhD programs). Faculty are encouraged to review applications promptly.
- Remarks from Dean of Library Affairs: Jennifer Horton for John Pollitz
 - A new STEM librarian, Laura Gingrich, with a background in science writing and a graduate degree in speech communication has come aboard. She is able to help faculty and students with research or help with teaching in the areas of physical sciences, computer science, math, and/or engineering.
 - Workshops aimed at graduate education will be starting soon.
 - The Emma Smith Hough Scholarship offers \$2,000 to one graduate student. Applications are open, requiring a paper or project demonstrating extensive use of library materials.
 - Morris Library now has a subscription to Dryad. Dryad is a non-profit data repository offering data curation and publishing services. SIUC is now an institutional member, and SIUC-affiliated researchers can publish their data in Dryad free of charge.
- Remarks from Council Chair: Mark Peterson
 - The GC website has been updated. GC members are encouraged to check it for accuracy and report any errors.
 - Mark Peterson is representing the GC on the University-level Early Career Faculty Excellence Award committee. This committee will wrap up on February 7th.
 - Kelly Bender is representing the GC on the University-Level T-TT Teaching Excellence Award Committee.
 - Mark Peterson is representing the GC on the University-Level NTT Teaching Excellence Award Committee.
- Report from GPSC: Michael Timm
 - The GPSC has been considering two fee increases.
 - The textbook fee initiative has not been received favorably. Near-unanimous rejection as most graduate students saw no financial benefit and found cheaper alternatives. Thus, the GPSC is opposed to the measure.
 - The proposal of a mental health component to student's health insurance is viewed positively, but the GPSC is opposed to the amount of the increase. The GPSC will forward suggestions that would add mental health care coverage but fund it differently.
- Report from Council Vice-Chair: Andy Wilber
 - Faculty Emeritus Policy Proposal – Streamlined based on feedback; will go to Faculty Senate next month before returning to Graduate Council. Requires 10 years of service and ongoing contributions.

- Student Grievances – Two cases require review, one being urgent (potential student dismissal). Each committee must have three members (two faculty, one graduate student). Cases involve Political Science and Occupational Therapy.
- Secure Document Sharing – Discussion on using Dropbox or Outlook-based systems for managing grievance-related documents. Wilber will share files via Dropbox.
- Report from Faculty Senate: Amber Pond
 - Emeritus Status Resolution – Simplified version expected to pass on Tuesday with a minor wording change. Final wording will be shared once approved.
 - Judicial Review Board – New members approved: Cindy Buys, Asgar Asmaeli, Sukesh Bamik, Sunghi Li, and James Condor.
 - Intimate Relationships Policy – Ad hoc committee finalized a policy on faculty-student relationships, now under admin review. It did not require Faculty Senate approval and was requested by the Provost's Office.
 - Policy Distribution – Those interested in the intimate relationships policy can request a copy via email. It will likely be available on the Provost's Office website.
- Report from Educational Policies Committee: Ahmad Fakhoury
 - Nothing new to report.
- Report from New Programs Committee: Tomas Velasco
 - First reading of support of a Ph.D. program in Biomedical Engineering. The program aims to provide a cross-disciplinary research platform, combining engineering and biomedical sciences to prepare graduates with advanced skills.
 - OVCR Tsatsoulis indicated he was supportive of the program but raised concerns regarding:
 - The current number of master's students in Biomedical Engineering.
 - The number of faculty actively involved in the program.
 - The availability of research funding and infrastructure to sustain PhD students.
 - A representative from Biomedical Engineering will be invited to the next meeting to provide clarifications on student demand and faculty support.
 - Questions were raised about how the PhD program will be funded, considering the cost recovery model changes.
 - First reading of support of a Doctorate in Social Work. The program aims to train social workers in advanced clinical practice, leadership, and research.
 - Prof. Velasco will invite guests from the Social Work area to discuss the proposed program at our next meeting when the second reading occurs.
- Report from Program Review Committee: Iraklis Anagnostopoulos
 - The committee had no report.
- Report from Research Committee: Kelly Bender

- Prof. Bender reported that she attended meetings with the Chancellor's committee on promoting research in January. The university is pushing to market its upcoming R1 status, including developing a new website to highlight research and creative activities.
 - Efforts are underway to identify 12 key research and creativity areas for SIU's marketing strategy.
- February 28th is the deadline for proposals on equipment funding through the OVCR.
- Other
 - Dr. Constantinos Tsatsoulis inquired about updates on the alternate tuition rate (ATR).
 - Dr. Ahmad Fakhoury reported that the Ed Policies Committee has been working on the ATR and the redefinition of graduate faculty status.
 - The committee sent recommendations to the Vice Chancellor, received feedback, and met again to refine their proposal.
 - A formal proposal for ATR is expected to be presented at the next Graduate Council meeting.
 - The graduate faculty status review is more complex, but initial findings will also be shared at the next meeting for input.
 - Dr. Tsatsoulis emphasized that ATR discussions may also impact undergraduate tuition rates and thanked the committee for their efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.