

Graduate Council 2024-2025

March 6, 2025

Members present: Iraklis Anagnostopoulos, Kelly Bender, Scott Collins, Jane Dougherty, Ahmad Fakhoury, Lance Griswold, Dong Han, Karen Johnson, Rhonda Kowalchuk, Cheng-Yao Lin, Kim Parr, Mark Pease, Mark Peterson, Benjamin Richardson, Michael Timm, Tomas Velasco, Hale Yilmaz

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

Guests: Shaikh Ahmed, Kymberli Morgan, Robert Morgan, Julie Partridge, Amber Pond, Hussein Soliman, Spyros Tragoudas, Elyse Weller

Meeting started at 8:00 AM

- Consideration of 2-6-2025 meeting minutes.
 - The vote on a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting passed unanimously.
- Remarks from the Chancellor: Austin Lane – Not present because of attendance at the MVC Tournament.
- Remarks from the Provost: Sheryl A. Tucker
 - The Library Dean search committee sent the Provost three finalists who will be invited to campus the week after spring break.
 - The Honors Director Committee has been charged. This is an internal search, and Rob Lopez is chairing that search. Interviews will likely occur in April.
 - Fiscal Year 2026 budgeting has commenced, with no major changes anticipated. The university has invested significantly in new contracts, limiting available funds.
 - IBHE Review of Low-Producing Programs: Deans have been asked to evaluate programs consistently appearing on the A Peer List. Schools will need to outline action plans for low-enrollment programs.
- Remarks from Vice-Chancellor for Research/Dean of the Graduate School: Costas Tsatsoulis
 - Discussed the ongoing executive orders affecting federal funding and Department of Education policies.
 - AI Research Initiative: A new initiative aims to identify faculty members working in AI and explore creating an IBHE-approved Center for Artificial Intelligence.
- Remarks from Associate Dean & Director of Graduate School: Karen Jones
 - Graduate Fellowships: Winners have been notified and are in the process of accepting their awards.
 - Outstanding Dissertation & Thesis Awards: Recipients include Rupak Thapa, Abhiyan Oli, and Grace Lafo.

- Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition: Two winners tied for first place, with Sanja JS Sakara advancing to the regional competition.
 - Graduate Student Recruitment & Retention Forum: Held on March 5, focused on student success from inquiry to commencement.
 - A Meet and Greet was rescheduled because of the weather but took place at McLafferty Annex.
 - In mid-February we entered our partnership with INTO.
 - Phase 1 (February 18): Computer Science & Cybersecurity programs launched.
 - Phase 2 (April 1): Remaining master's programs to be added.
 - A Graduate Studies Workshop will be held on 3/19/25 from 10:00-2:00 at SSB 150. Please encourage representation from your programs to attend.
 - Student contracts are going online, so contract renewals will switch to a paperless process.
 - Elections for the Graduate Council will occur later this semester. CAM will get two representatives, Engineering one, and HHS two.
- Remarks from Dean of Library Affairs: Jennifer Horton for John Pollitz
 - Oxford University Press Open Access Agreement: SIU-affiliated authors can now publish Open Access at no cost.
 - SIU Library Open Access Programs: Agreements exist with Cambridge University Press, Cold Spring Harbor, and other publishers.
 - Questions were raised about faculty recommendations for future Open Access publishers. Faculty can submit suggestions for evaluation.
 - More information on Open Access can be found here - <https://libguides.lib.siu.edu/siuc-oa-policy/apcwaivers>
 - Remarks from Council Chair: Mark Peterson
 - Nothing new to report.
 - Report from GPSC: Michael Timm
 - The GPSC will be having elections soon.
 - The GPSC is planning an end of year award ceremony.
 - A couple of grievances may be coming.
 - Report from Council Vice-Chair: Andy Wilber
 - Prof. Wilber was not in attendance. Karen Jones reported that the SAC committees on two grievances decided that there was not enough evidence to move to the next step in the process.
 - Mark Peterson reported that the Provost has called a meeting on the Emeritus matter that has been discussed recently.
 - Report from Faculty Senate: Amber Pond
 - Judicial Review Board – New members approved: Cindy Buys, Asgar Asmaeli, Sukesh Bamik, Sunghi Li, and James Condor.
 - The Faculty Senate is in the elections cycle. Please encourage colleagues to consider participating in the Faculty Senate.

- The Faculty Senate has passed some resolutions from the UEPC
 - Elimination of the Fashion Styling Specialization.
 - Elimination of the Electronic Journalism Specialization.
 - Renaming of the News Editorial Specialization.
 - Elimination of Photography Specialization.
- Report from Educational Policies Committee: Ahmad Fakhoury
 - First reading of the resolution concerning the Graduate Alternate Tuition Rate policy, proposing:
 - New GPA requirement: 3.25 (Master's) and 3.5 (Doctoral).
 - Revised GRE/GMAT/MAT criteria: GRE Verbal & Quantitative combined 70th percentile; GMAT/MAT 80th percentile.
 - Duration limits:
 - Master's: 2 years max.
 - Doctoral: 6 years + 2-year extension (with Graduate Dean approval).
 - Strict application deadlines to maintain eligibility.
 - Discussion
 - Karen Jones suggested changing approvals to the Graduate Dean for catalog consistency.
 - The final vote will occur in the next meeting after the second reading.
 - The committee also discussed the memo from the Registrar's Office asking for input on the proposed fall break schedule. The committee decided to send out a survey to Graduate Council members and summarize the responses and forward that information to the Registrar's Office.
- Report from New Programs Committee: Tomas Velasco
 - Second reading of a resolution in 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.
 - There was a question of whether the new program is cost neutral or whether the program will rely on internal reallocation. Profs. Tragoudas and Ahmed were in attendance to answer questions. Prof. Tragoudas responded that the new program would not require new funds. Currently, the College has master's and bachelor's degrees in biomedical engineering, so they have the infrastructure in terms of labs. Prof. Tragoudas believes that they have enough faculty to be able to teach the program, and most courses exist in the catalog.
 - Another question asked whether there are enough faculty to serve on doctoral committees (inc. serving as chair). Prof. Tragoudas noted that they have four faculty members with Ph.D.'s in biomedical engineering and three additional faculty who are already teaching biomedical engineering.
 - A vote on the resolution was taken and was approved unanimously.
 - Second reading of support of a Doctorate in Social Work. The program aims to train social workers in advanced clinical practice, leadership, and research.
 - There was a question of whether the new program is cost neutral or whether the program relies on internal reallocation. Prof. Julie Partridge responded that they could offer the courses as needed right now. In the future the College may reallocate lines within the College. Prof. Partridge pointed out that this program is one that involves individuals who are paying students. That is, they do not require assistantships.

- A vote on the resolution was taken and was approved unanimously.
- Report from Program Review Committee: Iraklis Anagnostopoulos
 - The committee received a request to review the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute. The committee studied the CVs of two reviewers and found that they would be suitable for the task.
 - The committee also updated the TAA proposal that they prepared last year. The committee recommended a couple of changes. First, they added language to make it clear that non-tenure track faculty could participate. Second, the proposal made it clear how the program would work in cohort-based programs.
 - There was a question on the timeline of the implementation. Prof. Anagnostopoulos and the committee will provide the timeline at our next meeting.
- Report from Research Committee: Kelly Bender
 - Review of First-Quarter Equipment Funding Proposals:
 - The committee met on March 5, 2025, to discuss equipment requests submitted for funding through the Vice Chancellor for Research's Office.
 - Proposals were evaluated based on research impact, funding availability, and departmental priorities.
 - A summary report of recommendations is being finalized and will be submitted to Vice Chancellor Tsatsoulis for review and approval.
 - Future Research Committee Initiatives:
 - The committee will continue reviewing funding applications for the upcoming quarters.
 - Faculty are encouraged to stay updated on internal research grant opportunities and submit proposals before the next funding cycle deadline.
- Other

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 a.m.