

1 **Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council**

2 **Date:** October 8, 2024

3 **Location:** Alumni Center Board Room

4

5 **Members Present:**

6 Nathan Rabalais (MODL - Chair), Marietta Adams (EDCI), Ashlie Boelkins (ARCH), Brian Bolton
7 (ECFN), Wesley Bradford (MUSC), Ignatius Cahyanto (MGMT), Beenish Chaudhry (CMIX), Farzad
8 Ferdowski (EECE), Natalie Keefer (EDCI), Nicholas Kooyers (BIOL), Robin Koytcheff (MATH), Christy
9 Lenahan (NURS), Amanda Mayeaux (EDFL), Clement Okolo (GSO President, PhD CMPS), Catherine
10 Roche-Wallace (MUSC), Laurel Ryan (ENGL), Meng-Ru Shih (CJUS), Scott Sittig (HLSI), Frances
11 Stueben (NURS), Peng Yin (MCHE), Mark Zappi (CHEE), and Rui Zhang (GEOS)..

12

13 **Members Absent:**

14 Elena Babatsouli (CODI), Gracie Babineaux (Grad Student Rep, PhD EESC), Mary Farmer-Kaiser
15 (Graduate School, ex-officio), Raju Gottumukkala (MCHE), and Javier Portillo-Elias (ECFN).

16

17 **I. Call to Order**

18 The meeting was called to order by Nathan Rabalais, chair, at 2:01 PM.

19

20 **II. Announcements and Approvals**

21 **Provost Meeting Recap/Update**

22 Rabalais shared a recap of his meeting with Provost Jaimie Hebert and Dean Farmer-Kaiser.
23 Rabalais asked the Council if there was need for any further discussion of the Provost's remarks at
24 the September council meeting, and there were not.

25

26 **September 10, 2024, Meeting Minutes:**

27 A motion to approve the September 10 meeting minutes was made by Amanda Mayeaux and
28 seconded by Natalie Keefer. The motion carried.

29

30 **Call for Judges – 3MT Preliminary Rounds of Competition**

31 Rabalais encouraged Grad Council members to volunteer as 3MT judges for the preliminary rounds
32 of competition.

33

34 **III. Standing Committee Reports**

35 **Appeals – Yung-Hsing Wu:**

36 No report.

37

38 **Curriculum – Amy Brown:**

39 No report.

40

41 **Fellowships – Ryan Nelson:**

42 No report. Rabalais shared that the Fellowships committee may soon take on some of the
43 programming initiatives organized by the Graduate School.

44

1 **Graduate Faculty Membership – Patricia Lanier:**

2 No report.

3

4 **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access – Davide Oppo:**

5 No report.

6

7 Rabalais also asked Brian Bolton, who is on the Graduate Student Success and Retention
8 committee to share an update on the committee’s recent progress.

9

10 **IV. Old Business**

11 **Graduate Faculty Membership: Emeritus/Retired Faculty and Non-Tenured/Temporary Faculty:**

12 Rabalais shared with council members that discussions regarding creating distinct categories of
13 Graduate Faculty membership for retired/emeritus and non-tenured/tenure-track faculty and
14 temporary UL employees will be discussed at the upcoming Graduate Program Leadership Meeting
15 and with the Dean’s Council. Recommendations and discussions will be brought forward at a future
16 Graduate Council meeting for review and discussion.

17

18 **Graduate Council Goals and Objectives for 2024-2025:**

19 Rabalais confirmed that discussion had begun on the two issues brought forth in the September
20 meeting, namely the expansion of the list of countries considered "English-speaking" for admission
21 requirements and improving support for graduate programs in the context of post-resolution of Title
22 IX and power-based violence complaints.

23

24 Rabalais then asked the council to share other goals and objectives for the 2024-2025 academic
25 year.

26

27 One council member brought up the issue of a lack of clarity surrounding how graduate assistants
28 handle duties in the context of short-term illness. The council discussed the possibility of a sick
29 leave policy or some other guidance to mitigate these issues. It was decided to share these
30 concerns with Dean Farmer-Kaiser and with HR to learn more about potential solutions or
31 obstacles.

32

33 Council members discussed topics from the State of the University address involving the addition
34 of new graduate programs. Discussion was had regarding the funding needed to support new
35 programs and the impact it would have on the current graduate education community.

36

37 Several council members expressed concern about difficulties with recruiting students given
38 current stipend levels, particularly at the master’s level. Members expressed frustration with the
39 University’s push for increased doctoral production without having necessary faculty support and
40 compensation for the increased workload. One member suggested creating an ad hoc committee
41 to look at benchmarking of other institutions handling of stipend offers and ways to improve
42 recruitment.

43

44 **V. New Business**

1 **Call for Grand Marshal Nominations**

2 N. Rabalais reminded council members about the Grand Marshal Call for nominations.
3 Recommendations are due to the Graduate School office by October 31, 2024. Voting will take
4 place at the November 12, 2024 Graduate Council meeting.

5

6 **Graduate School Request to Expand English Language Proficiency Exempt Countries**

7 N. Rabalais presented the request from Dean Farmer-Kaiser regarding English Language Proficiency
8 Exempt Countries. Discussion was held by council members regarding aligning our policies with
9 other state institutions to expand our list of exempt countries. Council voted unanimously to
10 recommend to adopt the change as outlined in Dean Farmer-Kaiser's memo to include the list
11 currently offered at Louisiana State University Baton Rouge.

12

13 Several members expressed the desire to look further into expanding the list, and it was decided
14 that more information was needed. Rabalais asked for any specific information regarding other
15 regions to be considered to be sent to him by November 5, 2024

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17 **VI. Adjournment**

18 The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 PM.