

1 **Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council**

2 **Date:** April 8, 2025

3 **Location:** Griffin Hall Room 315

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5 **Members Present**

6 Nathan Rabalais (MODL - Chair), Marietta Adams (EDCI), Elena Babatsouli (CODI), Josh  
7 Bendickson (MGMT), Brian Bolton (ECFN), Wesley Bradford (MUSC), Beenish Chaudhry (CMIX),  
8 Mary Farmer-Kaiser (Graduate School, ex-officio), Raju Gottumukkala (MCHE), Natalie Keefer  
9 (EDCI), Nicholas Kooyers (BIOL), Robin Koytcheff (MATH), Christy Lenahan (NURS), Amanda  
10 Mayeaux (EDFL), Javier Portillo-Elias (ECFN), Catherine Roche-Wallace (MUSC), Laurel Ryan  
11 (ENGL), Meng-Ru Shih (CJUS), Scott Sittig (HLSI), and Frances Stueben (NURS).

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13 **Members Absent**

14 Gracie Babineaux (Grad Student Rep, PhD EESC), Ashlie Boelkins (ARCH), Farzad Ferdowsi (EECE),  
15 Clement Okolo (GSO President, PhD CMPS), Peng Yin (MCHE), Mark Zappi (CHEE), and Rui Zhang  
16 (GEOS).

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18 **I. Call to Order**

19 The meeting was called to order by Nathan Rabalais, chair, at 2:16 PM.

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21 **II. Announcements and Approvals**

22 **Provost Meeting Recap/Update**

23 Rabalais shared that the meeting with the Provost is being rescheduled.

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25 **Catalog Revision Update:**

26 Farmer-Kaiser shared that the “Summer Enrollment Requirement for Graduate Assistantship  
27 Appointments” policy update has been approved by the Provost. The policy will be effective  
28 Summer 2025.

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30 **March 11, 2025, Meeting Minutes:**

31 Motion made to approve the February meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and carried.

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33 **III. Standing Committee Reports**

34 **Appeals – Yung-Hsing Wu:**

35 No report.

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37 **Curriculum – Amy Brown:**

38 No report.

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40 **Fellowships – Ryan Nelson:**

41 Farmer-Kaiser shared that the Fellowships committee has been reviewing the nominations for the  
42 Outstanding GTA Award and the Graduate Teaching Excellence Award. Final decisions will be  
43 announced soon.

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

2 Rabalais shared two reports that submitted by Farmer-Kaiser on behalf of P. Lanier, not present,  
3 and the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. The first report detailed 14 graduate faculty  
4 applications that did not require Committee review as all three independent review entities  
5 (College Dean, Department Head, and College Peer Review Committee) were in agreement with  
6 recommendation for appointment at the level requested by the individual applicants. Motion made  
7 to approve the Grad Faculty Membership report 1 as presented. The motion was seconded and  
8 carried. The second report offered overview and recommendations on the 8 graduate faculty  
9 applications that required review by the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee. Motion was  
10 made to approve the Grad Faculty Membership report 2 as presented. The motion was seconded  
11 and carried.

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13 Discussion was held regarding the number of applications that were missing review and  
14 recommendation from one of the college review entities, thus requiring review by the Graduate  
15 Faculty Membership Committee. Council members made the following recommendations: 1). That  
16 Graduate Coordinators be copied on the email message that notifies Graduate Faculty that it is  
17 time for them to reapply and that the application cycle is open. Graduate Coordinators can follow  
18 up with departmental faculty to avoid lapse in membership, and 2). That the Graduate School to  
19 review their communication and timeline processes to avoid lack of responses by one or more of  
20 the three college entities.

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22 **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access – Meng Ru Shih:**

23 Shih shared that two sessions of Grad School Demystified have been scheduled during Graduate  
24 Student Appreciation Week with a panel of guest speakers to recruit undergraduate students to  
25 Graduate School.

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27 **IV. Old Business**

28 **Catalog Revision: GTA English Language Proficiency and English Language Proficiency Exempt**  
29 **Countries:**

30 This agenda item was tabled until the September 2025 meeting with a specific request to  
31 benchmark Duolingo data.

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33 **Ad Hoc Committee: Guidelines for Graduate Assistants Handbook:**

34 Farmer-Kaiser shared that the Ad Hoc committee has a draft of the new Graduate Assistantship  
35 Handbook that offers guidance on responsibilities, procedures, and resources to graduate students  
36 appointed to GTA, GRA, GA roles, faculty and other individuals who serve as supervisors, and  
37 University units who employ graduate students in these roles. She has been asked to review and  
38 provide initial feedback. The Ad Hoc committee will have a final meeting after Spring break. The  
39 handbook draft will be presented to the Grad Council at the May meeting.

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41 **Follow Up: Post-Complaint/Resolution Title IX and Power-based Violence:**

42 Follow up discussion was held regarding the procedures for reporting Title IX violations and  
43 investigation process. Members agreed that the topic be addressed in the future with other  
44 interlocutors on campus to consider the topic from different perspectives.

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**Follow Up: Emergency Graduate Faculty Appointment:**

Discussion was invited regarding follow-up discussion with guests on a past emergency graduate faculty appointment request. It was determined that no additional discussion was necessary.

**V. New Business**

**Graduate Council Commencement Representatives and Message:**

Rabalais requested members of the Graduate Council volunteer to deliver the message across all colleges during commencement on behalf of the Graduate Council. The Graduate School will notify the College Dean’s office with the names of the volunteers and send a copy of the final message. College volunteers are as follows:

- Arts: Catherine Roche-Wallace (speaker); Wesley Bradford (backup)
- Business: Josh Bendickson (speaker); Brian Bolton (backup)
- Education: Natalie Keefer (speaker); Amanda Mayeaux (backup)
- Engineering: Farzad Ferdowsi (speaker); Raju Gottumukkala (backup)
- Liberal Arts: Nathan Rabalais (speaker); Laurel Ryan (backup)
- Nursing: Scott Sittig (speaker); Frances Stueben/Christy Lenahan (backup)
- Sciences: Nicholas Kooyers (speaker); Beenish Chaudhry (backup)

Rabalais also reminded all members that the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 15 at the Cajundome Convention Center. The doors will open at 6pm and the ceremony will begin promptly at 7pm.

**Preparing for Graduate Council Elections and Call for Standing Committee Interest:**

Farmer-Kaiser reported that the form for Graduate Council nominations and committee interest will be made available to all graduate faculty and asked that members of the Graduate Council encourage their colleagues to participate. Elections for the College of Engineering and College of Liberal Arts representatives will occur after Spring break. Farmer-Kaiser said that the results of the election will be reported during the annual meeting of the graduate faculty on May 7.

Election of the new Graduate Council Chair will occur at the May meeting. Interested individuals should reach out to Rabalais to learn more about the role.

**Request for Transfer Credits:**

Rabalais shared that there was an additional new business agenda item regarding a request by the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership to approve six additional hours of transfer credit for an individual student. The Catalog policy governing grade, credit, and time requirements for the Doctor of Education Degree states: “A maximum of 12 semester hours of appropriate graduate coursework (six from the master’s degree and six from post-master’s course work), subject to approval by the Consortium, with prior approval by the candidate’s advisor, the program coordinator and the Graduate School Dean, may be transferred from other accredited institutions or from within a consortium institution.” Mayeaux shared background information regarding the request, including that the Ed.D. program in Educational Foundations and Leadership is no longer part of a consortium, and that the department is reviewing a request to update this University-level

1 policy related to transfer credits to more closely align with the University-level policy governing  
2 transfer credits for the Ph.D. degree. Motion was made to approve the use of six additional transfer  
3 credit hours. The motion was seconded and carried.

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5 **Dissolution of the IDEA Committee:**

6 The Council considered an additional new business agenda item regarding the IDEA committee.  
7 Discussion was held regarding the IDEA committee and University compliance regarding the recent  
8 federal Executive Order. Motion was made, “Be it resolved that, in compliance with the recent  
9 Executive Orders, we dissolve the IDEA committee.” The motion was seconded and carried.

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11 **VI. Adjournment**

12 Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:50pm. The motion was seconded and carried.