

**Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council
December 12, 2023**

Members Present: Amanda Shuford Mayeaux (Chair, EDFL), Marietta Adams (EDCI), Elena Babatsouli (CODI), Ashlie Boelkins (ARCH), Wesley Bradford (MUS), Ignatius Cahyanto (MKTG), Amy Brown, (PSYC), Frank Del Favero (EDFL), Javier Portillo-Elias (ECON), Kelly Robinson (BIOL), Leah Orr (ENG), Nathan Rabalais (MODL), Catherine Roche-Wallace (MUS), Frances Stueben (NURS), Beenish Chaudhry (CMIX), Clement Okolo (Ph.D. CS, GSO), Colleen Wolverton (MGMT), Peng Yin (MCHE), Mark Zappi (CHEE)

Members Absent: Farzard Ferdowsi (EECE), Raju Gottumukkala (MCHE), Deedra Harrington (NURS), Kalimuthu, LaToya Roberts (PhD ALSS, GSO), Robin Koytcheff (MATH), Christy Lenahan (NURS)

Invited Guests Dr. Jaimie Hebert, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

The provost discussed the university's strategic planning efforts, emphasizing that all grad education is central to programmatic development. He added that, now that R1 status has been achieved, programmatic growth and process improvement will be essential to maintain the university's progress. In response to a question about upcoming challenges, he said that adding new faculty and filling vacant lines will be crucial, but these requests need to be informed by data. He also noted the importance of demonstrating the value of new graduate programs with changes in state leadership.

Approval of the November 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion made to accept the November 14, 2023 meeting minutes with edits. Motion seconded and carried.

Thank you to judges – 3MT Preliminary Finalists Update

P. de Mahy thanked the graduate faculty who volunteered to serve as judges for the 3-Mintue thesis competition and announced that the 8 finalists were selected from 31 applicants across 14 programs. He added that the finals competition will be held in January to select the graduate student who will represent the university at the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools in March 2024.

Graduate Council Dates

M. Farmer-Kaiser reported that the spring semester will be over by the second week in May so that the last Graduate Council meeting will be held on May 7th rather than the 14th.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee

No report.

Student Appeals:

No report.

Fellowships Committee

No report.

IDEA Committee

No report.

Old Business

Ad Hoc Committee on Ph.D. Credit Hour Requirements Recommendations

N. Rabalais reported that the committee had continued to discuss the matter but that there was an overall lack of consensus since the initial report. He shared that one of the questions that had come up was ambiguity about how changes to the credit hour requirements would impact the maximum number of transfer credits allowed. He added that the Graduate School had recently shared data from the University of Alabama that considered similar questions about Ph.D. credit hour requirements but that there had not been enough time to consider this material as a committee. Given these developments, he said that the original report remains the official recommendation of the committee and that they would be willing to study the matter further if given more time. M. Zappi thanked the committee for their work and asked that the Graduate Council come to a decision at least for the Engineering program specifically in the current meeting. A general discussion followed, and it was noted that more flexibility could be offered to doctoral programs if the minimum total number of hours was greater than the minimum number of hours for coursework and dissertation preparation combined. A motion was made for the required minimum total number of hours for doctoral programs to be 66, with at least 24 hours of dissertation preparation and at least 39 hours of coursework. Motion seconded and carried.

New Business

Request from ENGL - Preferred Names on Theses and Dissertations

L. Orr reported that her department has several trans students and that it has been problematic to have their former names on theses and dissertations. Several faculty members also noted the challenges of students whose names changed after getting married or divorced. After some discussion, M. Farmer-Kaiser suggested inviting M. Kightley to the Graduate Council meeting in February to come and formally present the proposal and the research on it in order to inform future procedures related to this issue.

Graduate Faculty Appeal

A. Mayeaux asked that M. Farmer-Kaiser lead the discussion on the Graduate Faculty appeal since it involved members of her department. M. Farmer-Kaiser reported that, in this case, the college peer review committee along with their dean recommended appointment at the associate level but the department head did not. She added that the committee followed the recommendation of the department head to deny graduate faculty membership. It was noted that, in this case, there was concern that the instructor was an adjunct faculty member and therefore status with the university was not consistent from one semester to the next. After discussing the appeal and a letter from the dean of the college, a motion was made to grant appointment at the associate level, clarifying that it is contingent on their continued affiliation with the university. Motion seconded and carried. A. Mayeaux added that this discussion would inform a conversation in the spring semester about potentially developing distinct graduate faculty levels for emeritus faculty and non-tenured permanent employees at the university.

Catalog Revisions - UL System Admission to Graduate Study Changes

M. Farmer-Kaiser re-introduced catalog changes that would allow the Graduate School admissions policy to implement more flexibility in alignment with changes the UL System has made to required documentation for admission. She reminded the Graduate Council that, currently, to calculate an overall GPA on all coursework attempted, the policy requires the Graduate School to require transcripts from every institution an applicant has ever attended. This change would require official transcripts from all

- 1 degree granting institutions and all institutions where graduate coursework has been attempted. A
- 2 motion was made to accept the proposed revisions. Motion seconded and carried.
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- 4 Motion made to adjourn at 4:18. Motion seconded and carried.