

Graduate Council Meeting

Monday, April 7, 2025 ~ 3:30 – 4:30 pm

AD-148

MINUTES

PRESIDING: Terrence Deak, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

STAFF: Andreas Pape, Courtney Ignarri, Erica Sausner, Ellen Tilden, and
Ann Marie Kellogg (recorder)

PRESENT: Alex Jobial, Pegor Aynajian, Sharon Bryant, Brad Cannon, Yetrib Hathout, Norah Henry, Michael Jacobson, Yvonne Johnston, Loretta Mason-Williams, Matt McConn, Jacqueline McGinley, Nicole Rouhana, Hiroki Sayama, Nicole Sirju-Johnson, Tao Zhang

ABSENT: Niyazi Bodur, Sungdai Cho, Judith Deluca, Pamela Stewart Fahs, Praseeda Gopinath, Kyoung-Don Kang, Carl Lipo, Suzanne McLeod, Anjani Praneet Meruvu, Vladimir Nikulin, Josh Reno, Jillian Sandy, Steven Schwartz, David Werner, Sarah Wexler, Yakubu Alhassan Zakaria

GUESTS: Pamela Smart, Kathy Brunt

Call to Order:

Dr. Pape called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meeting on March 3, 2025

Dr. Pape asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 3. A member made a motion and another member seconded. All were in favor and none were opposed. The minutes of the meeting were approved as written.

2. Committee Reports

- a. Academic Standards Committee – met on March 19, 2025
 - Developed Generative AI Policy (see Item #4)
- b. Budget/Grievance Committee – did not meet
 - Will meet to discuss Graduate Student Travel Grants this month

- c. Diversity Committee – met on March 24, 2025
 - Discussed the new Clark guidance from SUNY. The University has little latitude and must adhere to the directives provided by SUNY.
- d. Professional Development Committee – met on March 17, 2025
 - Distinguished Dissertation Awards have been named. There are four awardees. These are at the University level. There is also a SUNY level Distinguished Dissertation Award.

3. Report from the Dean

Dr. Deak reported that students who exceeded five years at ABD status received a guidance letter giving them until May 2026 or be severed from the Graduate School. A second cohort of students who have been matriculated for 5 years and who have not yet achieved ABD status received a separate letter indicating that they must become ABD by December 1, 2025.

Graduate School orientation has traditionally been a half day of speakers. Orientation for the coming academic year is being reformatted. It will involve 5-7 short modules in Brightspace, which students will complete independently. On August 27 at 3-5 p.m., there will be an in-person event held in the Mandela Room and Old Union Hall that will include a panel of faculty, panel of students, and tabling by various campus organizations. The event will be a festive welcome and will invite networking among students and faculty.

A digital humanities fellowship will be offered to two students for internships this summer in collaboration with Harpur and the Libraries. There will be a stipend for time and expenses.

The Graduate School will begin an internal-only search for an Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives to replace Dr. Pape, who will be returning to the faculty. This will be a 12-month management confidential position. Dr. Pape will chair the search. Also serving on the committee are Sharon Bryan, Erica Sausner, and Peter Partell. The new candidate will spend the summer shadowing Dr. Pape to ensure a smooth transition.

Ellen Tilden has accepted a position in Workforce Development working with Shanise Kent. Ellen's last day in the Graduate School will be April 23. Dr. Deak thanked Ellen for her hard work and guidance and wished her the best of luck in her new position.

The Graduate School is working on the Academic Alert System. In the past this was done manually. Work will be done over the summer to automate the alerting of students to ABD, academic probation, and academic jeopardy.

The Department of Education Financial Value and Transparency (FVT) regulations require schools to report a wide range of data to the Department for each Title IV-aided student in (nearly) every program, including details on enrollment, completions, withdrawals, costs, debt, and institutional aid. The Department then calculates two key metrics for each program: 1. The debt-to-earnings (D/E) ratio, comparing typical student debt levels to the median earnings of program graduates; and 2. The earnings premium, comparing the median earnings of graduates to the median for high school graduates in that state. Similarly, part of the admissions process will involve students signing a disclosure of the total cost of education. This is another reason to reign in the time-to-degree. Eventually all programs will be required to comply and report retention and completion rates. The NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates for BS/BA to PhD do not take into consideration part-time status.

4. Proposed Generative AI Policy

[Policy on Generative AI Use in PhD Dissertations and Master's Theses \(Proposed\)](#)
[Two notes on Policy on Generative AI \(Proposed\)](#)

Dr. Pape presented the proposed AI policy that was approved by the Academic Standards Committee to Graduate Council for discussion and final approval. The policy is deliberately brief. The goal of the policy is to be transparent and responsible. Individual programs can set more stringent standards. The policy being presented is to set minimum standards and expectations. It will take effect, upon approval, in the fall of 2025 and will become part of the academic guide. When the policy is adopted, a note will be included in the Graduate School newsletter. Faculty should be explicit with students about the expectation before dissertations are finalized.

After committee discussion and some minor changes were made, a member made a motion to approve the proposed AI policy and another member seconded. All were in favor and none were opposed. The policy was therefore approved.

5. Graduate Council Membership for AY 2025-2026

Graduate Council consists of three types of members: Ex Officio; graduate directors, who hold one-year terms; and faculty representatives, who hold two-year terms. It is recommended that the bylaws be modified to change the term of graduate directors to two-year terms. The terms of the graduate directors and faculty representatives would expire in

alternating years to preserve continuity on the council. To effectuate this change, there was a call for some current graduate directors and faculty representatives to stay on another year. An email will be sent asking for members to voluntarily extend their terms.

A member made a motion to modify the bylaws to change the term of graduate directors from one year to two years and another member seconded. All were in favor and none were opposed. The change in the bylaws was therefore approved.

6. Career survey

Please complete this brief [Career Exploration Platform Survey](#) to help guide the implementation of a platform that supports doctoral students' career exploration and job search. The Graduate School is working with the Fleishman Center on preparing students to plan for academic and non-academic roles.

There being no further business, Dr. Pape asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A member made a motion and another member seconded the motion. All were in favor and none were opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

*****Next Meeting: Fall 2025 TBD*****