

## **Graduate Council Meeting**

Monday, October 6, 2025 ~ 3:00 – 4:00 pm

University Downtown Center, Room 220A

### **MINUTES**

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

**STAFF:** Joshua Reno, Mohamadreza Babaee, Courtney Ignarri, Yongabi Ngoh, Erica Sausner, Kim Yousey-Elsener, Ann Marie Kellogg (recorder)

**PRESENT:** Prabhu Anil Bhor, Pegor Aynajian, Christopher Bartlette, Heather Bragg, Samiksha Gaur, Guy German, Debjit Gupta, Yetrib Hathout, Michael Jacobson, Yvonne Johnston, Loretta Mason-Williams, Jacqueline McGinley, Andreas Pape, Aravind Prakash, Nicole Rouhana, Kevin Seeber, Cihan Uzmanoglu, Katherine Wander, Sara Wozniak, Tao Zhang, Ning Zhou

**ABSENT:** David Bisaha, Judith DeLuca, Heidi Ewen, Karen Jones, Hyejung Kim, Carl Lipo, Matthew McConn, Vladimir Nikulin, Jeffrey Pietras, Joseph Roth, Hiroki Sayama, Pamela Smart, Rosko Tzolov, Haley Thayer

Call to Order:

Dr. Reno called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### **1. Minutes of Meeting on September 8, 2025**

Dr. Reno asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 8, 2025. A member made a motion to approve the minutes and another member seconded. All were in favor and none were opposed. The minutes of the meeting were approved.

### **2. Report from the Dean:**

#### **a. Ongoing Policy Review Process**

The Graduate School is in the process of evaluating all policies to update, streamline, and clarify them. Graduate School staff are taking a deep dive into the policies and benchmarking against other universities. Currently there are two places to find policies—the Academic Guide and the Graduate School Manual. Much of the content in these overlaps or is redundant. The goal is for the guide to outline policies, while the manual will contain procedures. In addition, policies are being updated for clarification and simplification so they provide clear and concise guidance.

#### **b. Anticipated Growth in Online Graduate Programs**

There are 86 graduate programs, with 150 pathways to earn a degree. Currently, there are 5-6 online programs and the goal is to expand to 25-30. This will be a substantial change

to graduate education at Binghamton. The entire Decker graduate programs and all of the Watson master's programs will be going online. Much of the driving force is workforce development and there is a strong market demand for online education. The advantage is lower costs. Hybrid is not currently an option but is a possibility in the future. We are proceeding cautiously. R1 institutions have less flexibility than all-online and for-profit institutions. With this expansion, we need to ensure the quality of the content stays at the graduate level and complies with the State requirements, standards are set for faculty credentialing, and institutional standards are maintained for quality of education. The online classes will be mostly asynchronous. Changes to online offerings and graduate programs will likely receive attention in the upcoming Middle States accreditation process, underscoring the need to have a deliberate plan for quality standards as a campus. The goal is not to increase enrollment exponentially but to enhance current enrollment and alleviate structural limitation of "brick and mortar" only options.

**c. Progress toward Electronic Forms**

We are working on ADA compliance and workflow and are pushing ITS for a quick turnaround.

**d. Professional Development Update**

The Graduate Center for Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs celebrated National Postdoc Appreciation Week September 15-19 by hosting several events, including a breakfast September 18 that was attended by President Stenger and Provost Hall. Basic asynchronous training for TAs is now being offered online. Teaching tools will be added soon. The Graduate School is offering a "road show" to spread the word of resources offered by the Graduate Center for Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs. Please reach out to Dr. Sausner if you have a group of students who would like to learn more.

**3. Subcommittee Updates:**

- a. Academic Standards Committee – Two proposals to amend the bylaws were presented to Graduate Council for consideration. The first proposal is to add the Vice President of DEI to the membership as an ex officio voting member. The second proposal relates to Article II and the renumbering of items 3 and 4 to 2a and 2b for clarification. A motion was made to approve the proposed changes. All were in favor and none were opposed. The amendments were therefore approved.
- b. Diversity Committee – nothing to report
- c. Professional Development Committee – nothing to report
- d. Budget Advisory Committee – nothing to report
- e. Grievance Committee – nothing to report
- f. Strategic Planning Committee – The Provost Summer Doctoral Fellowship (PSDF) will shift its focus to dissertations to increase the scholarly impact of dissertations and decrease time-to-degree. We also need to find a way to increase scholarly impact of our faculty, as we lag behind other R1 institutions in citations per faculty.

**4. Upcoming Deadlines:**

- a. Travel Grant - November 1 deadline for travel occurring Oct 1 - January 31
- b. Excellence awards - November 7, email nomination materials to [kyousey@binghamton.edu](mailto:kyousey@binghamton.edu)

- c. Others – We have Clark Fellowship funds available. Only first year Clark students are eligible, and nominations are currently restricted to student who started in the fall of 2025 or will start in the Spring of 2026.

**5. Any Other Business:**

There being no further business, Dr. Reno 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 4:08 p.m.

**\*\*\*Next Meeting: November 3, 2025, 3:00-4:00 pm\*\*\***  
**Couper Administration Building, AD-148**