

## **Graduate Council Meeting**

Monday, November 3, 2025 ~ 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Couper Administration Building, AD-148

### **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:** Pegor Aynajian, Christopher Bartlette, David Bisaha, Heather Bragg, Kathleen Brunt, Heidi Ewen, Guy German, Debjit Gupta, Yetrib Hathout, Yvonne Johnston, Hyejung Kim, Loretta Mason-Williams, Jacqueline McGinley, Vladimir Nikulin, Aravind Prakash, Nicole Rouhana, Kevin Seeber, Cihan Uzmanoglu, Katherine Wander, Sara Wozniak, Tao Zhang

**ABSENT:** Prabhu Anil Bhor, Judith DeLuca, Samiksha Gaur, Michael Jacobson, Carmen Jones, Carl Lipo, Matthew McConn, Andreas Pape, Jeffrey Pietras, Joseph Roth, Hiroki Sayama, Pamela Smart, Haley Thayer, Rosko Tzolov, Ning Zhou

Call to Order:

Dr. Reno called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

#### **1. Minutes of Meeting on October 6, 2025**

Dr. Reno asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on October 6, 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 as written.

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

Dean Deak welcomed the committee and reported that the new President started today. We look forward to learning her vision for the University and celebrate her expectations. She intends to launch a strategic plan and have it in place in the fall of 2026.

##### **a. Faculty Credentials Memo**

A memo was sent on October 17 to deans, chairs, and graduate director from the Provost and Dean Deak regarding key regulations/policies governing graduate programs. The memo was sent as a reminder of both New York State and campus policies that differentiate instruction at the graduate level that apply to all graduate programs,

including online, hybrid, or in-person. Our current bylaws are very dated in the area of faculty credentials. There are no provisions for qualifications needed for clinical faculty or engineering professionals. Dean Deak asked members to begin thinking about what changes are necessary in their programs so the process of updating the bylaws can begin.

**b. Support for International TAs and the ELI**

In place of the traditional orientation for graduate students that takes place at the beginning of the semester, this past August the Graduate School hosted a Welcome Event. In addition, online modules were created for students to complete independently. Around 60-65 percent of students completed the modules. Dr. Erica Sausner took the lead on this and is working on a model for next year's incoming graduate students as well as training for teaching assistants. Many universities have programs geared toward international students.

Linda Sukarat, Director of the English Language Institute (ELI), was invited to the meeting to share the mission in the ELI. All undergraduate students take a proficiency test and are placed accordingly. Currently, there is no such evaluation for graduate students. Graduate students who present at conferences or who apply for teaching positions either as a student or a post-doc are judged on their language skills. In addition, employability increases as language skills improve. The University needs to have a plan that will further support the professional language skills of graduate students and that will boost their foundational communications skills. An assessment should be done at the beginning and not as an afterthought at the end. The goal is to have a program in place by the fall of 2026. There was lengthy discussion on how to implement a program (i.e. workshops, assessments).

**c. Update on Degree Progress (5-year rules)**

It remains a priority to steward students to completion and improve time-to-degree. The deadline for students more than five years and still not ABD is December 1. The goal is to find solutions where possible, not sever. The majority of programs are doing well.

**d. Tuition Policy for External Grants from RF**

The university just changed its policy regarding budgeting of graduate student support in grant proposals. Previously, tuition costs were capped at \$6000 per student, with the colleges covering the balance of tuition. The new policy requires PIs to budget at the highest rate (international, full time). There are provisions for tuition matching/exceptions that can be approved by the college, including allowing to budget tuition for a (named) ABD student at 1 credit. The policy has now been sent across the PI listserv by the Division of Research.

**e. R25 Submission with Stony Brook University Focused on Evaluation of Mentorship Tools**

Tabled for a future meeting.

**f. Academic Program Review Updates**

Academic program reviews are mandated by Middle States Commission on Higher

Education on a 7-year cycle. The schedule of programs to be reviewed fell behind due to the pandemic, staffing, and other delays. Four reviews have been completed this fall, with 5 more scheduled for spring 2026. This will get us caught up on reviews. Going forward, six to seven will be completed in an academic cycle.

**3. Subcommittee Updates:**

- a. Academic Standards Committee – did not meet.
- b. Diversity Committee – met on October 24. There was a brief discussion about the process for reviewing Clark Fellowships.
- c. Professional Development Committee – met on October 24. There was a brief discussion about the process for reviewing Excellence Awards.
- d. Budget Advisory Committee – met on October 14. There was a brief discussion about the process for reviewing Travel Grants.
- e. Grievance Committee – did not meet.
- f. Strategic Planning Committee – did not meet.

**4. Upcoming Deadlines:**

- a. Excellence awards – November 7, email nomination materials to [kyousey@binghamton.edu](mailto:kyousey@binghamton.edu)

**5. Any Other Business:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

**\*\*\*Next Meeting: December 1, 2025, 3:00-4:00 pm\*\*\***  
**Couper Administration Building, AD-148**