

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

MINUTES

March 5, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

LJH 325

Council in Attendance:

Marc Giullian (Business)
Rollin Beamish (Arts)
Kari Perry (Student Representative)
Anna French (Student Representative)
Rob Maher (Faculty Senate)
Catherine Dunlop (Letters)
Stephan Warnat (Engineering)
Chris Livingston (Architecture)
Sarah Mannheimer (Library)
Amy Reines (Sciences)
Sweeney Windchief (Education)
Ryan Thum (Agriculture)
Akash Gulati (Student Representative)
Deborah Haynes (Interim Dean of The Graduate School)

Also in Attendance:

Emily Peters (Graduate School)
Lauren Cerretti (Graduate School)

Absent

Katey Franklin (Health & Human Development)
Molly Secor (Nursing)
Brennan Reeves (Office of International Programs)

Meeting started at 10:04 a.m.

February 19, 2025 minutes

- Motion to approve by Beamish, Livingston 2nd, unanimous approval, motion passes

Announcements

- Graduate School update
 - Arranging housing meeting with graduate student leadership and Jeff Bondy
 - Would appreciate discussing policy on partners living in campus housing

- Working with Alumni Foundation to provide funding for graduate students to help with housing costs
- Federal funding updates
 - Monitoring updates; planning to continue as usual for next year
 - Official communication channel to notify campus of any funding cuts: PI→Alison Harmon→HR→Graduate School
 - Other large funding sources: GTA pool is state funded, private foundations, and continuing to submit requests for grant proposals
 - Comments
 - USDA currently paused all grants – MSU is not allowed to charge that account and pay for students. Two of Warnat’s grants are paused. MSU picked up the cost for the graduate students on the grant through the end of the semester.
 - Graduate student feedback: appreciate transparency in communicating funding updates
 - Would be great to subsidize GTA pool from professional master’s tuition
 - Not possible with the way budget is structured
 - Are there plans to set aside emergency funds for potential changes next year? Seems ethically important when making funding offers to students. Other universities are reducing or stopping offers for next year.
 - Alison Harmon has been doing everything she can to allocate funds from other places. Uncertain at this time of what changes will actually happen. There is no real way to create an emergency fund to cover the amount of federal funding.
 - Asked HR if open positions could be restructured into assistantship appointments. Looking into whether this is possible.
 - Many schools that have closed admissions are private schools concerned about proposed increase in endowment tax.
- New Crawford Fellowship: biggest endowment for fellowships we’ve had. Open to students involved with anything related to wildlife habitat. Application is on the Graduate School website. Due on March 15th for this coming year. 80 fellowships for \$10,000.
 - What is the review process?
 - Dean Bajwa is organizing a review committee
 - Discussion on examples that would be eligible
 - Haynes will check if one semester scholarships are possible
 - Scholarship can be stacked on top of other funding (e.g., GTA or GRA). Appointments cannot be reduced based on receiving the scholarship.
- Faculty Senate update
 - Ongoing discussions with MSU leadership about federal funding

- Friday, March 7th, is a standup for science event at 12pm. In the past President Cruzado has spoken at these events. Do not appear to have official backing from leadership this year.
- Tracy Ellig addressed faculty questions regarding advocacy. Can advocate as a private citizen on your own time on personal devices. Faculty with connections to local industry can discuss potential implications with their industry partners.
- F&A/IDC (indirect cost) changes are impacting startup packages for faculty. Any new faculty hired this year have startup packages about ½ of what they would have been.
 - Finding funding for this year, but next year is more uncertain
- Opportunity for faculty to present/teach for Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). Good outreach opportunity.
- Presidential Search: finalists should be announced this month.
- State legislature in session

Old Business

- Update on College of Nursing request for NTT representative on UGC
 - College of Nursing appointed an alternate, Molly Secor, to attend spring meetings. Will appoint a new representative for next year.
 - Secor is a TT faculty member. No need to change bylaws or make an exception.
- Updates on pending policies
 - Appeal policy
 - Policy subcommittee met last week. Made some minor changes to suspension (dismissed) language.
 - GS/legal reviewing policy and will move back to subcommittee
 - Haynes spoke to Justin Arndt about policy this morning about policy approval process. Haynes will work on drafting a clearer outline.
 - GS also working to clarify what is policy v. catalog v. procedural information.
 - Comprehensive Exam/Defense policy
 - Policy subcommittee prefer existing language. Decided not to make any changes at this time to this existing policy.

Subcommittee updates

- Curriculum
 - Math program changes approved that state the program does not automatically report second exam fail to The Graduate School, as required by policy
 - Curriculum subcommittee will email Kealy to request changes to comply with Graduate School policy
 - American Studies submitted curriculum changes to thesis credits that does not make it clear students have to take 9 credits of thesis.
 - Curriculum subcommittee will review for clarity
 - Discussion on the spirit of 9-10 thesis requirements policy that was approved last year
- Why is the program of study required for all graduate students?

- Used to determine degree requirements and track graduation requirements are met
- Protects the student. Written agreement between the student, department, Graduate School of requirements to complete degree.

Public comment

Adjourned at 11:23 am

Next scheduled meeting – April 2, 2025