

Graduate Council Meeting Agenda

140 Toomey Hall and via Zoom

12:00 pm, October 4th, 2023

< <https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/94366817629?pwd=RnhNOXIFRmpJc0NvMG11cjJrcFJndz09> >

Meeting ID: 943 6681 7629

Passcode: 796856

Present: Serhat Hosder, Gayla Olbricht, Irina Ivliyeva, Sarah Stanley, Aditya Kumar, Jee-Ching Wang, Manashi Nath, Sahra Sedighsarvestani, Sanjay Madria, Yishu Zhou, Chang-Soo Kim, Steve Corns, Kyle Perry, Katherine Grote, Michael Meagher, Vahe Permezadian, Xiaodong Yang, Chan Dagli, Ed Malone, Jade Sinnott, Anita Ahl, Abo Taleb-Hameedi, Mina Amini, Samuel Frimpong, Colin Potts, , Manoj Twarakavi, Madison Armstrong, Petra Dewitt, Sharon Matson

1. Roll call

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes from April 5, 2023 meeting

The minutes of the April 5 meeting of the Graduate Council were approved by assent.

3. Interim President's report

After thanking Dan Oerther, V. P. Reddy, and Sarah Stanley for their service as officers last year, Steve Corns announced that Sarah has agreed to serve as interim parliamentarian. Steve is interim president, and Ed Malone is interim secretary.

Steve noted that the Graduate Council must provide a representative to the personnel committee. If anyone is willing to serve in this capacity, they should contact Steve.

4. Provost Potts

The provost explained that the role of the Graduate Council is not only to advocate for faculty interests as they relate to graduate education but also to advocate for graduate students, who may be employees as well as students. He asked that all of us start the academic year with this understanding: "We're here for them; they're not here for us."

"There's a landscape of higher education that is changing underneath us, whether we like it or not," the provost said. "Generally, things go better if we embrace change." He expressed his view that graduate degrees are needed for career advancement. It used to be that graduate degrees were research degrees, so it was natural to think of graduate students as more a part of the university's research mission than its teaching mission, but that's no longer true. He predicted that in the future, research students will increase but not be the majority; as the

university pushes to increase the number of graduate students to 4000, more emphasis will shift to non-thesis master's students.

"As the Graduate Faculty Council, I would like to urge you to consider yourselves as advocating on behalf of all kinds of graduate education. all kinds of graduate students, as they change their academic demographics over the next few years."

The provost would like the Graduate Council to be heavily involved in a number of initiatives. We need to take an interest in graduate student welfare and support the graduate students' bill of rights. As a university, faculty, and administration, we need to show that we are student-centered.

The provost noted that the university has bylaws that prohibit true interdisciplinary programs that are governed jointly by faculty across departments. Yet interdisciplinary programs are important for the future of graduate education. In such programs, the faculty in different departments must treat one another as co-equals, with all voices heard. A success story is Environmental Science, officially a biology degree, but interdisciplinary in its core courses. "Let's have our culture and goodwill drive the process and not bureaucracy," he urged. "Most problems that our graduate programs are going to solve are not necessarily going to be siloed into single academic departments."

In closing, he said, "You have my assurance that Samuel and I will have your backs in managing the development of graduate programs, advocating for your graduate faculty colleagues, and advocating for graduate students."

5. Vice-Provost Frimpong

The Vice Provost of Graduate Education said that, when he started his current position on June 1, the Graduate Council had had no elections and the previous executive committee was still shouldering the administrative responsibilities. He thanked Dan Oerther, V. P. Reddy, and Sarah Stanley for their service in this regard.

The Graduate Council is important to the university because it leads the graduate faculty in administering policies properly. He assured all in attendance that the administration is supportive of the Graduate Council and his office will assist with the council's work.

The vice provost noted that we have under 2,000 graduate students now, and he asked us to imagine that we will have 4,000 graduate students in the future. It will take a lot of policy work, and the Graduate Council will be essential to this work.

He spoke about the possibility of an expanded Graduate Track Pathway program in which students can go straight from a bachelor's degree into a Ph.D. program.

Because the Graduate Council is vital, he asked all of us to support the interim leadership; he appealed for members to attend council meetings and help with the work. He assured us that permanent leadership will be elected by the end of the Fall 2023 semester. Being the President of the Graduate Council is an excellent way for a faculty member to enhance their profile at the university. He suggested that four or five candidates for the presidency should share their visions at a council meeting before the election is held.

6. Graduate Faculty Reappointment Review Update for FS23

Steve announced that this year's membership committee will be Ed Malone, Sarah Stanley, Vy Khoi Le, and Steve Corns. Application packages are due by Oct. 16

7. Students have to be enrolled on the date of their exam (any exam requiring a graduate education form).

- a. Students are not allowed to take exams during intercession without enrolling for Oral Exam**
- b. These examination credits are discussed in the chancellor's policy memorandum II-20.**
- c. Should we continue to require these students to enroll in Oral Exam?**

Steve explained this requirement in greater detail. Council members discussed the requirement briefly. The matter was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting.

8. Elections:

- a. Nominations for President of the Graduate Faculty**
- b. Nominations for Secretary of the Graduate Faculty**

Steve asked members to send nominations for council president and secretary to Anita Ahl (aa9kx@mst.edu). He thanked Anita, Jade Sinnott, and Sharon Matson for their service to the Graduate Council.

9. New business

No additional business was introduced. The meeting was adjourned at 1 p.m.