Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

Computer Science 209 and via Zoom
12:00 pm Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Present: Clayton (CJ) Lungstrum, Daniel Shank, Irina Ivliyeva, Jee-Ching Wang, Melanie Mormile, Jee-Ching Wang, Sarah Stanley, Magdy Abdelrahman, Sahra Sedighsarvestani, Gayla Olbricht, Jeffrey Chalfant, Kelly Liu, Alanna Krolikowski, Vahe Permzadian, Cecil Cuha, Haiming Wen, Akim Adekpedjou, Haiming Wen, Lana Alagha, Hyunsoo Kim, Cihan Dagli, Edward Malone, Lijun Jiang, Peggy Lindner, John Harris, Bob Bourret, Ritwak Raj Saxena, Robin Gore, Stephen Raper, Debra Bourdeau, Sharon Matson, Sylvia Skouby, Lauren Noris, Autumn Frazier, Derek Zboran, Madison Smith

President L. Jiang called the meeting to order, 12:00 pm

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes from September 2 Meeting - Motion to approve: second: approved.

3. President's Report
    a. Membership committee update. Steven Corns, Ed Malone, Sarah Stanley, Xuerong Wen are willing to serve. Motion to approve: second: approved
    b. Seeking nominations for the End -of-Year Awards Committee
        i. Nominations and self-nominations are requested for the 2026–2027 End-of-Year Awards Committee. Nominations should be submitted to mstgradfacpres@mst.edu.
        ii. The committee consists of five members: four Graduate Faculty members and one staff member who works with a graduate program or office
        iii. Graduate Council will vote on committee membership at the November meeting.

4. Provost Update
    a. AI: Efforts are progressing, primarily through CDC, with current work focused on undergraduate competencies. Graduate-level discussions are less developed.
    b. St. Louis: Face-to-face master's courses in engineering management and geospatial studies are underway, alongside workshops and other activities. Shuttle service will likely end after this semester because of low ridership and budget constraints.
    c. Graduate School: The founding dean will lead graduate recruitment, retention, enrollment, and support for graduate students and postdocs. ISSS also falls under the dean.
    d. Graduate governance: The Provost encouraged consideration of department-based Council representation and simplifying graduate faculty status renewals. He also raised concerns about undergraduate courses counting toward graduate degrees and differences in course-level practices across departments.
    e. Enrollment and finances: Enrollment declines are creating budget pressure. Undergraduate recruitment and admissions leaders are coordinating closely, with enrollment viewed as a shared responsibility. Online expansion is a major priority, supporting a goal of 12,000 students by 2030, potentially including 3,000–4,000 online students.
    f. R1 status: Maintaining R1 status is a top priority for the Graduate School dean, with emphasis on doctoral recruitment, retention, completion, and time to degree.
    g. National reputation: Stronger marketing, branding, and name recognition are needed to support student and faculty recruitment. The Provost noted that the former UMR name appears to remain more recognizable than Missouri S&T.

5. Dean of Graduate School Update
    a. Faculty fellow: A search is planned for a faculty fellow with a 20% appointment to help the Graduate School implement new programs.
    b. Career fair: Employers will identify whether they seek bachelor's, master's, or doctoral students. This information will be available at the career fair and through Handshake to help graduate students identify relevant opportunities.
    c. Recruitment funding: Up to $1,000 is available to extend professional travel for recruitment visits to universities, domestically or internationally. Admitted-student visits may receive up to $750 per student, with additional support for group visits. Website updates will clarify these opportunities.
    d. Consistent requirements: Programs should ensure degree requirements align across the catalog, websites, recruitment materials, and graduate handbooks to reduce confusion during recruitment and graduation.
    e. Policy and procedures: The dean anticipates bringing proposed policy revisions to the Council for faculty governance consideration and working with graduate coordinators to improve procedures and share practices.

6. Discussion on proposed changes for Graduate Faculty Membership
    a. Proposed revisions: Changes were presented to simplify graduate faculty membership, including giving the Membership Committee final approval authority, eliminating periodic renewals while members remain eligible, and linking membership records to HR appointment changes.
    b. Membership continuity: The draft would allow departing faculty to retain membership for two years to support committee continuity. Emeritus membership and voting rights remain open for discussion.
    c. Associate membership: Members discussed broader versus more restrictive eligibility, particularly for postdocs, visiting scholars, and temporary appointments. Questions focused on qualifications, research experience, and implications for thesis and dissertation committees.
    d. Committee service: It was clarified that graduate faculty membership establishes eligibility; programs still approve individual committee appointments. Separate procedures also permit nonmembers to serve on committees.
    e. Purpose of associate membership: Cihan Dagli recalled why the category was established. Discussion also raised whether a separate associate membership category remains necessary.
    f. Next steps: Council members were asked to discuss the proposals with their faculty and provide feedback. Motions were anticipated in November and December, with policy changes requiring graduate faculty approval. No final policy changes were adopted during this discussion.

Meeting adjourned by President Jiang, 1:05 pm.