



Missouri University of Science and Technology

Graduate Council Meeting

Apr. 2nd, 2025

Call to Order



Missouri University of Science and Technology

Agenda

1. Roll Call



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1. Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes from Mar. 5th, 2025 meeting



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1. Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes from Mar. 5th, 2025 meeting
3. President's report
 - ❑ Graduate curriculum change handling committee setup is still going on

Agenda

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes from Mar. 5th, 2025 meeting
3. President's report
4. The next Graduate Faculty Meeting will be held on May 5, 2025 at 4:00pm in the Carver/Turner Room at the Havener Center. The Outstanding Contributions to Graduate Education and Graduate Staff Excellence 2024-2025 awards ceremony will follow the meeting.



Agenda

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of minutes from Mar. 5th, 2025 meeting
3. President's report
4. The next Graduate Faculty Meeting will be held on May 5, 2025 at 4:00pm in the Carver/Turner Room at the Havener Center. The Outstanding Contributions to Graduate Education and Graduate Staff Excellence 2024-2025 awards ceremony will follow the meeting.
5. Thank you to the following volunteers for agreeing to take part in the 2024-2025 Awards Committee: Dr. Gayla Olbricht, Dr. Clair Reynolds Kueny, Dr. Baojun Bai, Dr. Serhat Hosder and Tina Balch. The Awards Committee members met earlier this week to determine the award winners based on the submitted nominations.



Agenda

6. Nominations are requested for the Faculty Standing Committee by Wednesday, April 23, 2025. Email sent on March 18, 2025. Please send nominations to the graduate faculty president email account (mstgradfacpres@mst.edu).

 - Budgetary Affairs
One member must be elected by the Graduate Faculty at the May 2025 meeting to serve a two-year term (to replace Dr. Jorge Porcel whose term is expiring July 2025).

Agenda

7. Revise contingency policy to remove advisor/committee member



Revise Contingency Policy to Remove Advisor/Committee Member

- The current procedure does not permit the department chair to authorize the removal of an advisor or committee member who fails to respond to email requests (2 attempts from the student, 1 from the department chair).
- There have been several instances where committee members have not responded to removal requests, requiring the student to complete multiple steps before removal can occur, which has delayed progress toward degree completion.
- The proposed changes will:
 - Allow the department chair to intervene and authorize the removal if no response is received from the advisor or committee member, at their discretion.
 - Shorten the overall timeline for the procedure.
 - Eliminate the need for department chair approval in subsequent steps, so the final decision is made by the appropriate committee. In these steps, the department chair will assist in facilitating the process.



Contingency procedure for authorizing the unilateral removal of a member/advisor from a graduate advisory committee

This contingency procedure is meant to address circumstances when a student seeks to change the makeup of their graduate advisory committee, but a member or advisor is either unable or unwilling to provide the required authorization. One example is when a student unilaterally seeks disassociation from their thesis or dissertation advisor.

Proposed solution: We propose a contingency procedure through which unilateral removal of an advisor or member of a graduate advisory committee can be authorized after due diligence is carried out to ensure that the circumstances warrant the removal.

Academic unit responsibilities to carry out the contingency procedure:

Department level - Each department with a graduate program is responsible for designating a committee of at least three department faculty members for adjudicating unilateral removal requests that are not resolved at the graduate advisory committee level. These individuals should be designated at the start of each academic year, prior to initiation of any contingency removal procedures. Any member of the committee who has a conflict of interest with a particular contingency removal case should recuse themselves from that case and a replacement should be designated by the department.

College level - Each college is responsible for designating a committee of at least two college faculty members for adjudicating unilateral removal requests that are not resolved at the department level. These individuals should be designated at the start of each academic year, prior to initiation of any contingency removal procedures. Any member of this committee who has a conflict of interest with a particular contingency removal case should recuse themselves from that case and a replacement should be designated by the college. At the time of initiation of a case, a third member will be added from the degree-granting department.

Process:

The following requirements need to be met before the contingency procedure can be initiated:

- 1) The student is required to provide evidence of seeking authorization from the committee member or advisor to be removed. At least two independent attempts should be documented, with at least five-three business days allowed for a response after each attempt. It is recommended that two different methods be used, for example phone and email. Additional time (up to 15 business days) should be allowed for known circumstances that could delay the response. For example, if the individual is known by the university to be traveling, at a conference, out of touch for university business, or unable to respond due to illness; but is expected to return in a reasonable time.
- 2) Allegations of academic misconduct must be adjudicated prior to starting the contingency removal procedure.

Contingency removal procedure:

Step 1 – Review by graduate advisory committee initiating the procedure:

- 1) The student should make a written (email or paper) request to the department chair for initiating the contingency procedure. The request should contain justification and evidence that supports the unilateral removal request. Evidence of the forementioned communication attempts should also be included with the request.
- 2) Within five-three business days of receiving the request, the department chair should attempt to contact the individual to be removed, allowing five-three business days for a response.
- 3) In the absence of an affirmative response, the department chair should ensure that any academic misconduct cases involving the student have been adjudicated.
- 4) If no response is received, the department chair may approve the removal by contacting the Graduate Education office to request that Form 5A be forwarded without acknowledgment from the member being removed.

Step 2 – Review by graduate advisory committee

- 5) In the event of a negative response or if the department chair does not wish to approve the removal, the chair should convene the student's thesis/dissertation committee to vote on the removal within three business days of receiving the response. The department chair should convene the student's thesis/dissertation committee for a vote on the removal within ten business days of receiving the request.
- a. A majority vote in favor of the removal allows the department chair to authorize the removal of the committee member or advisor.
- b. The absence of a majority vote initiates Step 2.
- e.a. The graduate advisory committee should inform the department chair of the outcome of the vote within five-three business days, through a written report that includes a summary of their deliberations.
- d.b. Within five-three business days of receiving this report, the department chair should share the report with the student and the committee member or advisor, inform the Office of Graduate Studies of the outcome of Step 1, and initiate Step 2 if needed.
- c. The individual to be removed may appeal the decision in Step 1 by submitting a written request to the department chair within five-three days of being notified of the decision to remove them from the committee.
- d. If no appeal is made, the department chair should then inform the Graduate Education office of the outcome of Step 2, and initiate Step 3 if needed.

Step 2a – Review by departmental committee

- 1) This committee should be convened by the department chair for a vote on the removal within five-three business days of the conclusion of Step 2a or five-three business days of receiving the appeal.
 - a. All supporting documentation from Step 2a, including the final report, should be forwarded to the departmental committee by the graduate advisory committee department chair. The departmental committee has discretion to request any information or supporting

documentation from the student and/or the committee member or advisor being removed.

- b. A majority vote in favor of the removal allows the department chair to authorize the removal of the committee member or advisor.
- e. The absence of a majority vote initiates Step 3.
- d.b. The departmental committee should inform the department chair of the outcome of the vote within five-three days, through a written report that includes a summary of their deliberations and outcome of the vote.
- c. Within five-three business days of receiving this report, the department chair should share the report with the student and the committee member or advisor, inform the Graduate Education office/Office of Graduate Studies of the outcome of Step 2a, and initiate Step 4a if needed.
- e.d. In the absence of a majority vote, Step 4 is initiated.

Step 4a – Review by college-level committee

- 1) The department chair should contact the Dean to initiate Step 4a within five-three business days of the conclusion of Step 2a. All supporting documentation from Steps 1 and 2 the previous steps, including the final reports, should accompany the request. The Dean has discretion to request any information or supporting documentation from the student and/or the committee member or advisor being removed.
- 2) The case should be adjudicated at the college level within ten-five business days of receiving a request from the department chair. The Dean has the discretion of personally adjudicating each case or referring it to the college-level committee designated prior to initiation of any cases.
- 3) If the case is referred to committee, in addition to at least two pre-designated members, the Dean should appoint an additional committee member from the degree-granting department. A majority vote decides the outcome.
- 4) The Dean is responsible for informing the student, the committee member or advisor, the department chair, and the Graduate Education office/Office of Graduate Studies of the decision within five-three business days of the conclusion of Step 4a. This decision will be final and binding for all parties involved.

Contingency procedure for authorizing the unilateral removal of a member/advisor from a graduate advisory committee

This contingency procedure is meant to address circumstances when a student seeks to change the makeup of their graduate advisory committee, but a member or advisor is either unable or unwilling to provide the required authorization. One example is when a student unilaterally seeks disassociation from their thesis or dissertation advisor.

Proposed solution: We propose a contingency procedure through which unilateral removal of an advisor or member of a graduate advisory committee can be authorized after due diligence is carried out to ensure that the circumstances warrant the removal.

Academic unit responsibilities to carry out the contingency procedure:

Department level - Each department with a graduate program is responsible for designating a committee of at least three department faculty members for adjudicating unilateral removal requests that are not resolved at the graduate advisory committee level. These individuals should be designated at the start of each academic year, prior to initiation of any contingency removal procedures. Any member of the committee who has a conflict of interest with a particular contingency removal case should recuse themselves from that case and a replacement should be designated by the department.

College level - Each college is responsible for designating a committee of at least two college faculty members for adjudicating unilateral removal requests that are not resolved at the department level. These individuals should be designated at the start of each academic year, prior to initiation of any contingency removal procedures. Any member of this committee who has a conflict of interest with a particular contingency removal case should recuse themselves from that case and a replacement should be designated by the college. At the time of initiation of a case, a third member will be added from the degree-granting department.

Process:

The following requirements need to be met before the contingency procedure can be initiated:

- 1) The student is required to provide evidence of seeking authorization from the committee member or advisor to be removed. At least two independent attempts should be documented, with at least three business days allowed for a response after each attempt. It is recommended that two different methods be used, for example phone and email. Additional time (up to five business days) should be allowed for known circumstances that could delay the response. For example, if the individual is known by the university to be traveling, at a conference, out of touch for university business, or unable to respond due to illness; but is expected to return in a reasonable time.
- 2) Allegations of academic misconduct must be adjudicated prior to starting the contingency removal procedure.*

Step 1 – Initiating the procedure:

- 1) The student should make a written (email or paper) request to the department chair for initiating the contingency procedure. The request should contain justification and evidence that supports the unilateral removal request. Evidence of the [aforementioned communication](#) attempts should also be included with the request.
- 2) Within three business days of receiving the request, the department chair should attempt to contact the individual to be removed, allowing three business days for a response.
- 3) In the absence of an affirmative response, the department chair should ensure that any academic misconduct cases involving the student have been adjudicated.
- 4) If no response is received, the department chair may approve the removal by contacting the Graduate Education office to request that Form 5A be forwarded without acknowledgment from the member being removed.

Step 2 – Review by graduate advisory committee

- 1) In the event of a negative response or if the department chair does not wish to approve the removal, the chair should convene the student's thesis/dissertation committee to vote on the removal within three business days of receiving the response.
- 2) The graduate advisory committee should inform the department chair of the outcome of the vote within three business days, through a written report that includes a summary of their deliberations.
- 3) Within three business days of receiving this report, the department chair should share the report with the student and the committee member or advisor.
- 4) The individual to be removed may appeal the decision in Step 1 by submitting a written request to the department chair within three days of being notified of the decision to remove them from the committee.
- 5) If no appeal is made, the department chair should then inform the Graduate Education office of the outcome of Step 2, and initiate Step 3 if needed.

Step 3 – Review by departmental committee

- 1) This committee should be convened by the department chair for a vote on the removal within three business days of the conclusion of Step 2 or three business days of receiving the appeal.
 - a. All supporting documentation from Step 2, including the final report, should be forwarded to the departmental committee by the department chair. The departmental committee has discretion to request any information or supporting documentation from the student and/or the committee member or advisor being removed.
- 2) The departmental committee should inform the department chair of the outcome of the vote within three days, through a written report that includes a summary of their deliberations and outcome of the vote.
- 3) Within three business days of receiving this report, the department chair should share the report with the student and the committee member or advisor, inform the Graduate Education office of the outcome of Step 3, and initiate Step 4 if needed.
- 4) In the absence of a majority vote, Step 4 is initiated.

Step 4 – Review by college-level committee

- 1) The department chair should contact the Dean to initiate Step 4 within three business days of the conclusion of Step 3. All supporting documentation from the previous steps, including the final reports, should accompany the request. The Dean has discretion to request any information or supporting documentation from the student and/or the committee member or advisor being removed.
- 2) The case should be adjudicated at the college level within five business days of receiving a request from the department chair. The Dean has the discretion of personally adjudicating each case or referring it to the college-level committee.
- 3) If the case is referred to committee, in addition to at least two pre-designated members, the Dean should appoint an additional committee member from the degree-granting department. A majority vote decides the outcome.
- 4) The Dean is responsible for informing the student, the committee member or advisor, the department chair, and the Graduate Education office of the decision within three business days of the conclusion of Step 4. This decision will be final and binding for all parties involved.



Agenda

7. Revise contingency policy to remove advisor/committee member
8. Adjust the requirement of when Form 1 is due (pertains to master's degree students)

Adjust Requirement of when Form 1 is Due

- The current rule states the Form 1 is due during the semester a student will have completed nine hours of graduate credit. If the Form 1 is not received by the deadline, the office of graduate education will place a registration hold on the student's account for the following semester, which will be released upon acceptance of the Form 1.
- There are issues with the current rules, such as:
 - Placing holds near the end of the semester gives students little time to complete the form before enrollment deadlines. This creates panic among students who need the hold lifted to enroll, often leading them to call or email multiple staff members, causing confusion and chaos.
 - If students are pre-enrolled when the hold is placed, they cannot add or drop courses until Graduate Education receives the Form 1 and the hold is lifted. This often occurs after the semester has started, and students are trying to resolve it before the 100% refund period ends.

Proposed:

Plan of Study

~~By the end of the fourth week of the second semester of enrollment in the master's program. During the semester a student will have completed nine hours of graduate credit,~~ the student must formally plan the remainder of their graduate program in consultation with their academic advisor (and selected committee members, if applicable), and submit a Form 1 for approval, first to the department chair and then to the vice provost of graduate education. ~~Students who fail to comply with the deadline to submit Form 1 will have a registration hold placed on their account for the following semester by.~~ Within that semester, the office of graduate education ~~will place a registration hold on the student's account for the following semester,~~ which will be released upon acceptance of the Form 1. Courses applied toward one master's degree cannot also be applied toward another master's degree.

With Track Changes Accepted:

Plan of Study

By the end of the fourth week of the second semester of enrollment in the master's program, the student must formally plan the remainder of their graduate program in consultation with their academic advisor (and selected committee members, if applicable), and submit a Form 1 for approval, first to the department chair and then to the vice provost of graduate education. Students who fail to comply with the deadline to submit Form 1 will have a registration hold placed on their account for the following semester by the office of graduate education, which will be released upon acceptance of the Form 1. Courses applied toward one master's degree cannot also be applied toward another master's degree.



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8. Adjust the requirement of when Form 1 is due (pertains to master's degree students)
9. **New Business**
 - ❑ Before the meeting: Through emails or online form [New Business Online Form](#)
 - ❑ In the meeting: please speak out

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9. New Business

Adjourn

