

**The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Graduate Council Meeting
Minutes**

**Friday / January 16, 2026
2:00 p.m. in SSB 201**

Members Present: Mike Anderson, COE*
Maria Pour, COE
Aubrey Beal, COE
Kader Frendi, COE
Wafa Orman, COB*
Sophia Marinova, COB
Lingze Duan, COS*
Haihong Che, COS
Seyed Sadeghi, COS
Nilsa Black-Mead, CON
Lenora Smith, CON
Tracy Lakin, CON
Amanda Giles, COEd
Laura Senn, COEd
Jon Hakkila, Chair*
David Moore, Library*
Amy Smith, Registrar*

Members Absent:

Yi Tan, COB (Proxy: Sophia Marinova)
Christina Steidl, CAHS*
Molly Johnson, CAHS (Proxy: Nicole Pacino)
Joe Conway, CAHS
Ryan Weber, CAHS
Max Bonamente, COS (Proxy: Sayed Sadeghi)
Yeow Chye Ng, CON*
Jeremy Elliott, COEd*
Misty McFadden, OIREA*

Guests:

Jenny Russell-Clifton, CAHS
Judy Schneider, Materials Science
Bramwell Brizendine, Computer Science
Tathagata Mukherjee, Computer Science
Bryan Mesmer, Industrial & Systems Engineering
Larry Carey, Atmospheric Science
Susan Knight, Graduate School
Simone Frazier, Graduate School
Michelle Massey, Graduate School

**Non-Voting Member*

1. Roll Call

A record of attendance was recorded as noted above.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Dr. Kader Frendi made a motion to approve the Graduate Council meeting agenda; motion was seconded by Dr. Nilsa Black-Mead. Motion carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 12, 2025

Dr. Sophia Marinova made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 12, 2025; motion was seconded by Dr. Kader Frendi. Motion carried.

4. Announcement(s)

a. Recent Graduate School Event(s)

- i. Spring Orientation for Graduate Students – January 9, 3:30-5pm, SSB 201/Zoom (hybrid)

b. Upcoming Graduate School Event(s)

- i. Thesis/Dissertation/DNP Writing Workshop – January 30, 10:30-11:30am, SSB 201/Zoom (hybrid)
- ii. Graduate Poster Session Workshop – February 11, 11am-Noon, SSB 201

Ms. Simone Frazier provided feedback and information about the graduate-focused events listed above.

5. Action Item: Doctoral Entry Pathways in Kualii

6. Doctoral Program Catalog Pages

[Note: Both items 5. and 6. were discussed as one topic.]

Dr. Hakkila reiterated to Council that the new catalog will have different entry pathways listed for both the masters and PhD programs in order to end the transfer of international credits into a degree and thereby assisting the Registrar's Office with tracking. He explained that the main goals for the different entry pathways is to eliminate the problems that we've had with transfer curricula and a number of other items in terms of double, triple, and quadruple counting.

Ms. Michelle Massey then explained how to set up a program, including progression requirements, within the Kualii Academic Ops platform by explaining the layout of the form and providing a quick tutorial. She mentioned that there are a number of PhD programs that still need to submit changes in Academic Ops in order for their programs to be published in the upcoming catalog. She also said that she and Dr. Hakkila are working with Dr. Rhonda Gaede to modify the Kualii form to show a delineation in the information that is entered so that when a program is posted in the catalog, students will be able to very clearly see the difference between a post-bachelor's entry pathway and a post-master's entry pathway with regards to how many credits they need to accomplish.

Upon being asked for additional training by Dr. Lingze Duan, Ms. Massey said she would reach out to Dr. Gaede to see if she would consider arranging a training workshop to help departments enter their programs into Kualii.

7. Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation Form; Change of Program Form

Ms. Michelle Massey directed everyone's attention to the email provided for viewing named, "Graduate School Kualii Forms" dated December 22, 2025, that was sent from the Academic Affairs entity account to all faculty, program coordinators, and administrative assistants. It provided information on two Kualii forms – one that had previously been discussed in Graduate Council called "Change of Academic Program Concentration Request" form and a new form titled "Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation."

Below is the information provided in the email about the new Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation form:

GRADUATE TRANSFER CREDIT ARTICULATION:

The new Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation form is for graduate students who wish to request transfer credit on their Programs of Study. Graduate students preparing to develop their Programs of Study and wish to list transfer credit should meet with their academic advisor before submitting the new Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation form. Once a student submits the new form, the Kualu workflow will verify that the student has official supporting documentation in their Xtender record consisting of an official transcript for domestic credits or an official transcript and external transcript evaluation form for international credits. Based on the request for either domestic or international transfer credit, the new Kualu form will route to the Graduate School (for domestic transfer credit) or Graduate Admissions (for international transfer credit). The form will then proceed to the appropriate faculty advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator for their review and approval. After that, the form will advance to the Department Chair and the Graduate School Dean for their review and approval.

Once approved, a notice will be sent to the Registrar's Office requesting articulation of the approved transfer credit to the student's DegreeWorks profile and transcript. The faculty advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator will then receive a notification of the completed Kualu form. The Graduate School or Graduate Admissions (depending on the type of transfer credit requested) will then upload the form to the student's record in Xtender. Students will only be allowed to list transfer credit on their Programs of Study that has been approved on the Graduate Transfer Credit Articulation form.

Beginning with the Spring 2026 semester, all graduate students must submit this new Kualu form before transfer credit on their Programs of Study will be reviewed/approved.

Ms. Massey explained that, ideally (before the completion of 18 credit hours), the student will speak to their advisor and let them know that they have transfer credit they want to use at UAH. The advisor will then explain to the student that they need to complete this form to ensure their transfer credit is vetted and approved before being added to their program of study. The form prompts the student to indicate whether they are requesting the transfer of international or domestic credit.

For international credit, the student will attach an unofficial copy of their transcript showing where the credits were earned as well as the transcript evaluation form. They will then contact one of the approved transcript evaluation companies from the UAH graduate admissions webpage to get their transcript evaluated. The form will route to the Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions who will check to ensure the student has the official international transcript as well as the official transcript evaluation form on file. The form will then process through the designated workflow for vetting of the transfer credit and subsequent approvals and notifications.

For domestic credit, Ms. Massey said the process is a bit less involved and that she is the gatekeeper for students requesting domestic transfer credit and that she will check to ensure we have an official transcript on file for the student to cover our bases.

Ms. Massey concluded saying that it is important that we vet transfer credit on the front end rather than at the back end during the degree audit stage, and that if there are any issues with the form to contact her directly for assistance.

The question was asked about students pursuing education degrees, for example, who might be using history classes toward the degree. Dr. Hakkila said this has come up recently with the reaccreditation process and that, under the circumstances, the decision was made that the education faculty should probably be the ones evaluating the transfer credit. Dr. Hakkila continued saying that this scenario does have repercussions that should be considered, because there seems to be a lot of back and forth between science and engineering over physics courses and math courses. He stated

that as of yet, there haven't been a lot of these but thinks the problem should be addressed sooner rather than later.

Dr. Hakkila explained that we are in the transition stage with implementing the new entry point requirements and that, ideally, we would like any transfer credit vetting to be done within the students' first 18 credit hours. Realistically, he said that has not been the case, so we will have to retroactively vet some of the transfer credit listed on the programs of study – not because of a graduate school decision but, instead, because of we have been in violation with regards to our accreditation. In closing, Dr. Hakkila reiterated that beginning with the Spring 2026 semester, all graduate students must submit this new Kualii form before transfer credit on their Programs of Study will be reviewed/approved.

Below is the information provided in the email about the existing Change of Academic Program Concentration Request form:

CHANGE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM CONCENTRATION REQUEST:

Graduate programs are already familiar with the existing Change of Academic Program Concentration Request form, administered by the Graduate School. Although Graduate Admissions has historically implemented concentration updates in Banner, the Graduate School has agreed to update its processes to better align with undergraduate student practices and proposed a change in procedure during the October Graduate Council meeting. After consulting with graduate program directors in their colleges, Graduate Council members voted to approve the decision that the individual graduate programs should be responsible for updating their students' concentration changes in Banner. As such, the Change of Academic Program Concentration Request form has been updated to allow Graduate Program Coordinators to assign the Banner update task to the appropriate person in their respective programs. The person assigned the task will receive an email notification with a link to step-by-step instructions (attached) on how to perform the task.

As a reminder, current students who are in an established UAH graduate degree program and wish to change their program may contact Graduate Admissions for a fee waiver before submitting an application to change programs.

8. Curricular Items

Courses:

- a. COE: EM 751 – Research Methods in Engineering and Management (new course) – **Approved**
- b. COB: IS 565 – Cloud Architecting (new course) – **Approved**
- c. COB: MSC 540 – Cloud Prompt Engineering (new course) – **Approved**
- d. COB: MSC 560 – Introduction to Analytics with AWS (new course) – **Approved**
- e. COB: ACC 670 – Financial Insights for Executive Decision-Making (new course) – **Approved**
- f. COB: BLS 677 – Navigating Regulation and Political Risk (new course) – **Approved**
- g. COB: ECN 670 – Strategic Economics: Competing in Dynamic Markets (new course) – **Approved**
- h. COB: FIN 670 – Financial Strategy in Action: Building Organizational Value (new course) – **Approved**
- i. COB: IS 672 – Leading with Data: Building Strategic Analytics Capabilities (new course) – **Approved**
- j. COB: MGT 670 – Influence & Impact: Human Behavior in the Workplace (new course) – **Approved**
- k. COB: MGT 672 – Strategic Project Leadership: Navigating Complexity & Delivering Value (new course) – **Approved**
- l. COB: MGT 673 – Executive Innovation Lab: From Vision to Value (new course) – **Approved**
- m. COB: MGT 675 – Negotiating for Results: Strategy, Planning, & Influence (new course) – **Approved**
- n. COB: MGT 677 – Leadership 1/Leading with Purpose: Foundations of Authentic Leadership (new course) – **Approved**
- o. COB: MGT 678 – Leadership 2/Inner Strength, Outer Impact: Advanced Leadership Development (new course) – **Approved**
- p. COB: MGT 679 – Executive Leadership Capstone: Integrating Vision & Execution (new course) – **Approved**
- q. COB: MKT 670 – From Insight to Impact: Strategic marketing for Growth (new course) – **Approved**
- r. COB: MSC 670 – Strategies for Operations Excellence (new course) – **Approved**

[Note #1: For items e. thru r. above, Registrar to add "This course is restricted to students enrolled in the Executive MBA program."]

[Note #2: The EMBA diploma will be different from the standard MBA diploma.]

[Note #3: For EMBA items e. thru r. above, Dr. Maria Pour opposed.]

Programs:

- s. COB/COE/COS: Cybersecurity (MS) – *(modify program: course replacement)* – **Approved**
- t. CAHS: Clinical Mental Health Counseling *(new program)* – **Approved**

Concentrations:

- u. CAHS: Correctional Counseling *(new concentration)* – **Approved**

9. Graduate Faculty Nominations – For Membership Consideration

- a. CAHS: Kochhar-Lindgren, Gray – PhD/Liberal Arts Interdisciplinary Studies *(teach: EH 540)* – **Approved**
- b. COE: Darakorn na Ayuthya, Pongkrit – PhD/Aerospace Systems Engineering *(teach: MAE 540,541,569,580,610,620,640,695,740,754)* – **Approved**
- c. COS: Weimer, Jeffrey – PhD/Chemical Engineering *(teach; supervise student research; supervisory committee)* – **Approved**
- d. COE: Kendrick, Kip – PhD/Chemistry *(renewal: supervisory committee)* – **Approved**
- e. COEd: Senn, Laura – PhD/Behavior Analysis *(teach: ABA 601-609,620,621,623,624, EDC 660)* – **Approved**

10. For the Good of the Order

- *Dr. Mike Anderson asked about the issue that had surfaced about needing to take attendance in graduate classes. Dr. Hakkila responded that attendance is required to ensure that students are enrolled in courses for the purpose of financial aid. However, recently, admissions discovered that there were some students who had been admitted to the institution that didn't exist, and credit cards, social security numbers, and State of Alabama addresses had been used that were involved in cases of identity theft. Ultimately, false applications were submitted for admission to the university so that the perpetrators could get refund checks.*
- *Dr. Hakkila mentioned that the U.S. government has currently blocked approximately 17 countries. And, for H1B visas there is a block on approximately 75 countries; he said students aren't affected by this as much as potential faculty hires.*

11. Reminder: Next Graduate Council Meeting – February 13, 2026, at 2:00pm, SSB 201

12. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

/srk