

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

**Friday / September 15, 2023
2:00 p.m. in SSB 201**

- Members Present:** Mike Anderson, COE*
Maria Pour, COE
Keith Hollingsworth, COE
Nicholas Loyd, COE
Wafa Hakim-Orman, COB*
Sophia Marinova, COB
Xiaotong Li, COB
Jodi Price, CAHS*
Lisa Vangsness, CAHS
Joe Conway, CAHS
Larry Carey, COS
Ming Sun, COS
Nilsa Black-Meade, CON
Lenora Smith, CON
Tracy Lakin, CON
Paul Whitehead, CoED
Hamsa Mahafza, CoED
Jon Hakkila, Chair*
David Moore, Library*
Amber Adcock, Interim Registrar*
- Members Absent:** Dylan Baun, CAHS (On sabbatical / Proxy: Stephen Waring)
Lingze Duan, COS*
Tanya Sysoeva, COS
Louise O'Keefe, CON*
Derrick Smith, CoED*
- Guests:** Sara Harper, CoED
Aleksandar Milenkovic, COE
Susan Knight, Graduate School
Simone Frazier, Graduate School
Michelle Massey, Graduate School
Audrey Jupiter, Graduate School / International Services

**Non-Voting Member*

1. Roll Call

A record of attendance was recorded as noted above.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion was made by Dr. Sophia Marinova to approve the graduate council meeting agenda.

Motion was seconded by Dr. Hamsa Mahafza. Motion carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of August 18, 2023

Motion was made by Dr. Paul Whitehead to approve the minutes of the meeting of August 18, 2023. Motion was seconded by Dr. Lisa Vangness. Motion carried.

4. Announcements

- a. Recent/upcoming Graduate School events
 - i. Policies & Procedures Workshop – September 20 / 1-2:30pm / SSB 201
 - ii. CV/Resume Workshop for Graduate Students – September 22 / 2-3pm / SSB 201
 - iii. Dinner with the Graduate Dean – September 26 / 5:30-7pm / SSB 112
 - iv. 3MT Workshop – October 3 / 3-5pm / SSB 201

Dr. Hakkila and the graduate school staff provided information about the graduate-focused events listed above.

5. Curricular Items

- a. HY 590 – Research Seminar in HY - **Tabled**
- b. JUMP NUR MSN NUR – JUMP: BSN, Nursing (MSN) - **Approved**
- c. KCE – MS in Kinesiology; Clinical Exercise Science Physiology Concentration - **Approved by majority via electronic vote on September 27, 2023, with revisions to Program (MS KIN) and concentrations (KCE, KSS)**
- d. KIN 515 – Seminar in Kinesiology - **Approved**
- e. KIN 527 – Clinical Exercise Physiology - **Approved**
- f. KIN 528 – Environmental Exercise Physiology - **Approved**
- g. KIN 547 – Psychosocial Aspects of Health & Disease - **Approved**
- h. KIN 627 – Lifespan Physical Activity & Health - **Approved**
- i. KIN 657 – Cardiopulmonary Exercise Physiology - **Approved**
- j. KIN 670 – Capstone in Clinical Exercise Physiology - **Approved**
- k. COE - Change to MSCBSE Computer Engineering Track - **Approved**
- l. COE – MSCBS CPE Track Justification - **Approved**
- m. COE – Course Approval Form – CPE 449/CS 485 - **Approved**
- n. COE – Course Approval Form – CPE 549/CS 585 - **Approved**
- o. COE – Course Approval Form – CPE 645/CS 685 - **Approved**
- p. COE – Course Approval Form – CPE 646/CS 670 - **Approved**

6. Graduate Faculty Nominations – For Membership Consideration

- a. College of Engineering
 - i. Adams, Robert (PhD) - **Approved**
 - ii. Sood, Rohan (PhD) - **Approved**
- b. College of Nursing
 - i. Hontzas, Jonathan (DNP) - **Approved**
 - ii. Lofton, Tochie (DNP) - **Approved**
 - iii. Pearlman, Michael (MD) - **Approved**
 - iv. Pepper, Linnea (MD) - **Approved**
 - v. Svensson, Brette (DNP) - **Approved**
 - vi. Thayer, Lauren (DNP) - **Approved**
 - vii. Tucker, Lucy (DNP) - **Approved**

c. College of Science

- i. Davidson, Rod (PhD) - **Approved as Full member with appointment coincident with that of current contract period expiring May 31, 2024; must reapply for graduate faculty status upon renewal of next contract period.**
- ii. Sandoval, Betzy (MS) - **Approved**

7. Removal of Expired Courses

Dr. Hakkila shared that Dr. Rhonda Gaede has been contacting colleges regarding courses that have not been taught in many years, equaling approximately 500 courses across all colleges; many of these are graduate courses. Each college is being asked to review these courses that have not been taught in five or more years to determine those that should be moved to an inactive status (with consideration for those that are cross-listed). Once the desired status of these courses is made, graduate council will vote on the graduate courses, as a batch, on those we wish to inactivate. Going forward, these rarely taught courses will be reviewed more frequently by the undergraduate and graduate associate provosts, so that the number of outdated courses does not reach this level again.

Dr. Michael Anderson reiterated that these courses are not being deleted – just inactivated, which means they can be returned to active status if the need arises.

Ms. Amber Adcock commented that courses are never deleted. Also, course numbers may be used again after a period of seven years in an unused status, meaning that as long as the course has not been offered in the past seven years, the number may be reused for a new course.

8. Tuition Scholarships, Fees, and Graduate Tuition

Dr. Hakkila said that, in the past, students on full-time GTAs were told that their tuition would be covered between 9-12 credit hours while the fees associated with these courses (e.g., international fees, health insurance, infrastructure fees) would only be covered up to 9 credit hours. However, because GTA offer letters allow recipients to take up to 12 credit hours, some students were having up to 12 credit hours of fees paid for them whereas most GTAs were not. In order to resolve this inequity, going forward the Graduate School will cover up to 12 credit hours of fees for all students holding full-time GTAs. Dr. Hakkila indicated that there is a caveat: full-time GTAs should not take 12 credit hours of graduate classes, since this load can cause the student's academic performance, work performance, or both to suffer.

The discovery that GTA letters contained financial errors led to the parallel realization that GRA letters contained similar financial errors. Student fees were not being correctly budgeted by the Office of Contracts and Grants but were being charged anyway. This discovery might help explain why UAH grant recipients often found it difficult to exactly balance their budgets at the end of a contract reporting cycle when graduate students were involved. Because the GRA process is intertwined with federal laws and regulations, a new GRA letter process is being pursued but is not intuitively obvious at this time.

9. Proposal for Revision to APS Policy Regarding Timing of Dismissal Appeals

Dr. Hakkila said that he and Ms. Michelle Massey have encountered some difficulties while enforcing the probation and dismissal policy. Per Ms. Massey, to remedy these difficulties the Graduate School proposed to revise a section of the Graduate Student "Academic Dismissal and Appeal" policy.

During the last Graduate Council on 8/18/23, the Graduate School proposed a revision to the part of the policy that states: "If the appeal is filed within 30 days of dismissal, the student may be considered for readmission in the semester immediately following dismissal. Otherwise, the appeal must be submitted at least 14 days prior to the following deadlines for readmission: July 1 for Fall, November 15 for Spring, and April 1 for Summer."

During the graduate council meeting on 9/15/23, it was proposed to strike the first sentence (underlined in the previous paragraph) due to time limitations between semesters to efficiently conduct the appeal and potential readmission process in time for the subsequent semester. It was also proposed to strike the first part of the second sentence (double-underlined in the previous paragraph) indicating that appeals must be submitted 14 days prior to the stated deadlines for spring, summer, and fall, which caused confusion as to which date was the actual deadline.

Dr. Lisa Vangsness, commented, "I don't know if this is a good enough reason to oppose implementing this, but I want to make a statement, for the record, to think about this from a student's perspective. If I'm a student who is enrolled in a program and I have to sit out for a semester before I can reapply then that's an undue financial burden to me as an individual [...]. There's probably some small number of students such as international students who might be unduly burdened by this by having to return to their home country, and there might also be lower-income students who could be impacted as well [...]."

Dr. Sophia Marinova suggested we find a solution that would not be the extreme on either side. Dr. Hakkila agreed that both these points were valid, but we must consider the timelines between all semesters and at the same time, treat our students in an ethical way. We must also recognize that it's the idea of incremental course correction and that we must address the students with extremely low GPAs. Our goal should be to help these students a lot sooner so that they have a chance to complete their programs.

Dr. Keith Hollingsworth added that he believed our behavior in the past has not lived up to a reasonable, ethical standard, that has had students' best interests in mind.

Ultimately, the following language that clarifies when students are allowed to appeal after receiving an academic dismissal was decided to be implemented: "The appeal must be submitted by the following deadlines for readmission: July 1 for Fall, November 15 for Spring, and April 1 for Summer." Dr. Mike Anderson made a motion to approve; Dr. Joe Conway seconded. Motion carried.

10. OIRA Gathering Data on Percentiles of Grade Distribution for Juniors and Seniors in each JUMP Program

The JUMP Committee met on August 31, 2023, during which there was general agreement on almost all of the items that were proposed regarding discussions about junior status, setting some type of GPA to get into the program if the program is less than 150 hours, having a definitive path between the undergraduate and graduate programs, showing the JUMP plan and the landing pad on the other side so that a connection can easily be identified between the two programs. These proposals are still under discussion, as the JUMP committee is currently seeking feedback from the colleges.

We are also collecting data on the GPA distributions so we can vaguely indicate what they are at this time: if you define it by the 75th percentile, you're looking at exceptional students in all colleges at a 3.7 GPA; however, for business it is 3.6, and for science it is 3.8. The 50th percentile

is about 3.3, so approximately half of your students could get into JUMP if you set the limit at 3.3.

11. For the Good of the Order

Dr. Mike Anderson asked about the reason for requiring two-week notices to the Graduate School for theses and dissertation defenses. Dr. Hakkila responded that, with the help of our Office of Marketing and Communications, within the next year we hope to establish a public advertising component for interested parties to be able to attend our students' theses and dissertation defenses.

12. Reminder: Next Graduate Council Meeting - Friday / October 13, 2023

13. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.