The University of Alabama in Huntsville
Graduate Council Meeting
Minutes

Friday / December 12, 2025
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
	Christina Steidl, CAHS*
	Molly Johnson, CAHS
	Joe Conway, CAHS
	Ryan Weber, CAHS
	Lingze Duan, COS*
	Max Bonamente, COS
	Yeow Chye Ng, CON*
	Nilsa Black-Mead, CON
	Lenora Smith, CON
	Tracy Lakin, CON
	Amanda Giles, COEd
	Laura Senn, COEd
	Jon Hakkila, Chair*
	David Moore, Library*
	Misty McFadden, OIREA*
	Members Absent:
	Yi Tan, COB (Proxy: Sophia Marinova)
	Haihong Che, COS
	Seyed Sadeghi, COS (Proxy: Max Bonamente)
	Jeremy Elliott, COEd*
	Amy Smith, Registrar*
Guests:	Bryan Mesmer, COE
	Judy Schneider, Materials Science
	Susan Knight, Graduate School
	Simone Frazier, 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 November 14, 2025**
   Dr. Lenora Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 14, 2025; motion was seconded by Dr. Nilsa Black-Mead. Motion carried.

4. **Announcement(s)**
   a. Recent Graduate School Event(s)
      N/A

   b. Upcoming Graduate School Event(s)
      N/A

   c. Use of AI
      Dr. Jon Hakkila reported that the first PhD student to announce that they used AI in their dissertation had not followed the Graduate School's guidelines. Dr. Hakkila requested that either the student should revise the dissertation to be compliant, or that the program should develop its own set of guidelines, since it did not have one. Dr. Hakkila reminded everyone that, since the AI Guidelines produced by the Graduate School/AI Committee cannot allow for the many variances of acceptable AI usage across programs, programs need to sit down and develop their own guidelines. If they do not, the AI Guidelines prepared by the Graduate School/AI Committee will serve as the default, which could result in students facing academic integrity violations.

5. **Revisions to Academic Probation and Dismissal Policy**
   Dr. Hakkila reminded everyone that, at the last Graduate Council meeting, members were asked to follow up on this topic with their departments and colleges so that a vote could be taken regarding the proposed changes.

   There was concern about whether the five-year post-qualifier time limit might be too stringent for our part-time students. The question was also asked about how long students have before being required to take a second qualifying exam. Dr. Hakkila explained that five years has always been the post-qualifier time limit, and that no changes are being proposed to the post-qualifier language. After further discussion, Dr. Hakkila also explained that he believes the goal of the Provost is to have a minimum doctorate timeline of five years. Students can take a longer time that this minimum, but the goal is to reduce the time to degree completion whenever possible. Additionally, he said that the language in the policy will provide some guardrails that will allow faculty to tell students when they aren't making the expected progress towards degree completion.

   Dr. Laura Senn presented the following feedback from the faculty in the CESHS: "In the past, the Graduate School has outlined academic probation plans for students without direct input from the Graduate Program itself that the student is/will be enrolled in. Additionally the Graduate Program is then unable to later make any modifications to the plan themselves once the student has signed, sometimes making it impossible for the student to reasonably comply. For example, the plan created by the Graduate School may limit the student to only taking 6 credits per semester BUT to complete the program of study/prerequisites for the Graduate Program the student is in, they must take a 3-hour and a 4-hour course, totaling 7 hours. In such a case, there is no other 3-hour course the student could take instead of the 4-hour one due to prerequisites or course offerings that semester; therefore, they would be in breach of the Graduate School plan. Alternatively, they could only take either the 3- or 4-hour course, but it is sometimes the case that the course won't be offered again until the following academic year. Because many courses may only be taken in a specific sequence due to prerequisite requirements, this can also leave the student unable to take further courses until they can complete that course offered only once a year. Because this significantly slows student progress, many end up transferring to different schools to finish their degree." Dr. Hakkila responded that the development of readmission conditions is the responsibility of the program coordinator and advisor, and not of the Graduate School. The Graduate School's role is to work with the program

coordinator and advisor to ensure that the readmission conditions are realistic and in the best interests of both the student and the program. The responsibility of developing a course schedule that will allow a student to roll-off probation belongs to the advisor and program director, in conjunction with the administrative unit that schedules the courses. The advisor and program director should not require the student to take courses that will not be offered; that is in nobody's best interests. Dr. Hakkila recommended that program advisors work with their departments/programs to ensure that the courses they recommend to students are actually available during the semester in which they are being recommended.

Dr. Hakkila asked for a motion to approve the policy as proposed. Motion carried.

6. **Experiential Learning Opportunities in Terminal Master's Degree Programs**
   As an FYI, Dr. Hakkila shared that he recently attended the annual meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools during which he listened to a panel discussion on the topic of how graduate programs can help students more rapidly enter the workforce. One member of the panel suggested that nonthesis master's programs might make students more prepared for the workforce by adding a requirement that these students participate in one or more experiential opportunities. Dr. Hakkila said that a defined experiential learning outcome could be part of a capstone requirement, for example, and that having such a requirement could provide another mechanism by which nonthesis master's programs could more readily assess their students.

7. **Doctoral Entry Pathways in Kuali**
   Dr. Hakkila reminded council that each doctoral program is working on revising their program curricula so that there are defined entry points into the master's and doctoral programs. During this process, Dr. Hakkila said, it has been discovered that the required Kuali form needs to be able to differentiate between the credit hour entry points depending on whether a student is entering with a bachelor's degree or master's degree. So, he said, after discussion with Dr. Rhonda Gaede, it was determined that the form will be revised to create open, fillable sections that should rectify the problem. Dr. Hakkila also reminded everyone that the deadline to submit program changes for the new catalog is February 1, 2026.

8. **Curricular Items**
   a. CAHS: HY 581 – Empire and Nation: Russia *(modify: course title, course description, offering frequency)* – ***Approved***
   b. CAHS: HY 551 – Science and Religion in History *(modify: creating graduate section that disappeared from catalog)* – ***Approved***
   c. CAHS: History, General – Concentration *(modify: reduce # of 600-level courses from 15 to 9 hours)* – ***Approved***
   d. CAHS: Social Science – Concentration *(inactivate, since redundant with HY MA concentration)* – ***Approved***
   e. COE: EM 741 – Research Foundations *(new course)* – ***Approved***
   f. COE: EM 797 – Doctoral Praxis *(new course)* – ***Conditionally approved with the caveat that Dr. Bryan Mesmer will provide the pre-req course [Note: Dr. Mesmer emailed the pre-req course, EM 761, on 12/16/25 to Dr. Hakkila who subsequently added the course to the Kuali program proposal]***
   g. COE: CE 798 – Graduate Research *(new course)* – ***Approved***
   h. COE: Optical Science & Engineering – PhD *(inactivate)* – ***Approved***
   i. COE: Civil Engineering – PhD *(modify: reflect new policy in # of credit hours; reflect CE 799 cannot be taken before qualifying exam)* – ***Approved***
   j. COE: Engineering Management – DEng *(new program)* – ***Approved [Note: For the record, Dr. Maria Pour and Dr. Aubrey Beal opposed]***
   k. COB: Cloud Solutions – Certificate *(new program)* – ***Approved***

9. **Graduate Faculty Nominations – For Membership Consideration**
   a. COE: 1344 Eaton, Casey – PhD/Industrial & Systems Engineering *(supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***
   b. COS: 1349 Yalim, Mehmet – PhD/Engineering Sciences *(teach: MA 503)* – ***Approved***
   c. CAHS: 1352 Krenn, Daniel – PhD/industrial & Organizational Psychology *(teach; supervise student research; supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***
   d. CON: 1306 Woods, Brittany – PhD *(supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***

e. COS: 1245 Kaiser, Scott – PhD/Physics *(supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***
f. CAHS: 1358 Narchet, Fadia – PhD/Psychology *(supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***
g. CAHS: 1371 Yeazitzis, Taylor – PhD/Applied Experimental Psychology *(teach: PY 503, PY 701)* – ***Approved***
h. COB: 1353 Gannon, Christian – DBA/Business Administration *(teach: FIN 6xx, ACC 67x)* – ***Approved***
i. CON: 1366 Bates-Ford, Antonia – DNP *(teach: NUR 739)* – ***Approved***
j. CAHS: 1377 Horn, Ferrell – MA/National Security & Strategic Studies *(teach PSC 5xx/6xx; supervisory committee)* – ***Approved***

10. **For the Good of the Order**
Dr. Yeow Chye Ng asked whether we have a policy to specifically outline that students cannot apply for forgiveness if they are dismissed, make an F for plagiarism, or commit some type of misconduct. Dr. Hakkila responded that there is no such policy yet but that one will be developed, and he proposed that the discussion be tabled until the next Graduate Council meeting at which the Registrar is in attendance.

11. **Reminder: Next Graduate Council Meeting** – *January 16, 2026, at 2:00pm, SSB 201*

12. **Adjourn** – *The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.*

/srk