

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

**Friday / January 17, 2025
2:00 p.m. in SSB 201**

Members Present: Mike Anderson, COE*
Maria Pour, COE
Keith Hollingsworth, COE
Nicholas Loyd, COE
Sophia Marinova, COB
Xiaotong Li, COB
Jodi Price, CAHS*
Dylan Baun, CAHS
Lisa Vangsness, CAHS
Lingze Duan, COS*
Haihong Che, COS
Seyed Sadeghi, COS
Nilsa Black-Mead, CON
Lenora Smith, CON
Tracy Lakin, CON
Amanda Aguilar, COEd
Laura Senn, COEd
Jon Hakkila, Chair*
Amy Smith, Registrar*

Members Absent: Wafa Hakim-Orman, COB*
Ryan Weber, CAHS
Larry Carey, COS
Yeow Chye Ng, CON*
Jeremy Elliott, COEd*
David Moore, Library*
Suzanne Simpson, OIREA*

Guests: Letha Etzkorn, COS
Tim Newman, COS
Aleks Milenkovic, COE
Pam Twigg, COS
Misty McFadden, OIREA
Susan Knight, Graduate School
Simone Frazier, Graduate School
Michelle Massey, Graduate School

**Non-Voting Member*

1. Roll Call

A record of new members and attendance was recorded as noted above.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion was made by Dr. Lenora Smith to approve the Graduate Council meeting agenda. Motion was seconded by Dr. Dylan Baun. Motion carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of December 13, 2024

Motion was made by Dr. Nilsa Black-Mead to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 13, 2024. Motion was seconded by Dr. Seyed Sadeghi. Motion carried.

4. Announcement(s)

a. Recent Graduate School Event(s)

- i. Spring Orientation: International Students – January 6, 9-11am, SSB 201
- ii. Spring Orientation: Graduate Students – January 6, 3:30-5pm, SSB 112

b. Upcoming Graduate School Event(s)

- i. Thesis/Dissertation/DNP Writing Workshop – February 6, 11am-Noon, SSB 201
- ii. Thesis/Dissertation/DNP Writing Workshop – February 7, 11am-Noon, Zoom

Ms. Simone Frazier provided information about the recent and upcoming graduate-focused events/topics listed above.

c. Emails, Re: Thesis/Dissertation/DNP Project Deadlines

Ms. Simone Frazier shared that two emails regarding these deadlines had been sent recently—one to all graduate students that included an overview of the thesis/dissertation/DNP project submission deadlines for this term as well as the process involved. A second email was sent to faculty and administrators that included the same content as the email to students, but it also included an update to the Kualu signature form: A question about whether the student's work contains controlled, unclassified information (CUI) was added to help route the submission form correctly and to provide these students a different set of procedures to follow, since the submission process is a bit different for students dealing with CUI.

Ms. Frazier also added that if a thesis/dissertation/DNP project deadline falls on a weekend or during spring break, the deadline will be moved to the following Monday. She stated that the subsequent deadlines do not shift.

d. Potential Meeting, Re: Catalog Edits

Dr. Hakkila explained that a larger meeting to discuss upcoming catalog edits is still being considered, and he reiterated that department chairs and program directors are responsible for their catalog content. He also encouraged everyone to ensure that all relevant content is submitted for publication in the catalog, since not all of this information was transferred when the new Kualu catalog was originally implemented.

Dr. Sophia Marinova asked when the catalog will be frozen due to the upcoming SACSCOC review; Ms. Amy Smith replied that May 1 will be the cutoff date for all non-substantive change submissions.

5. Curricular Items

- a. COE: CE 722 – Sliding Mode Control (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- b. COS: MOD 501 – Survey of Modeling & Simulation (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- c. COS: MOD 595 – Independent Study (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- d. COS: MOD 596 – Selected Topics Modeling & Simulation (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- e. COS: MOD 620 – Modeling & Simulation for Test and Evaluation (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- f. COS: MOD 695 – Independent Study (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- g. COS: MOD 696 – Selected Topics Modeling & Simulation (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- h. COS: MOD 699 – Master’s Thesis (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- i. COS: MOD 795 – Independent Study (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- j. COS: MOD 796 – Selected Topics Modeling & Simulation (*inactivate*) – **Approved**
- k. COS: MDS – Data Science / Concentration (*program revision*) – **Approved**
- l. COS: CERT GCDS – Data Science / Graduate Certificate (*program revision*) – **Approved**
- m. COS: CS 530/430 – Survey of Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning (*course change*) – **Approved**
- n. COS: CH 701 – Research Proposal Preparation (*new course*) – **Approved**
- o. COS: CH 711 – Data Analysis & Scientific Reporting (*new course*) – **Approved**
- p. COE: CPE 586/486 – Machine Learning for Engineering Applications (*new course*) – **Approved**
- q. COE: CPE 587/487 – Deep Learning for Engineering Applications (*new course*) – **Approved**

A discussion took place regarding items 5.k., 5.l., and 5.m. above that focused on the overlap between artificial intelligence and data science, and the number of certificates and concentrations in computer science that seem to be “lumped” together rather than being clearly defined. Dr. Hakkila facilitated this discussion to get everyone to begin thinking about the big picture of the university and the end goal(s) for developing programs that cover a broad area and span a lot of disciplines. The suggestion was made to review all certificates across all colleges to determine areas of potential content overlap and student enrollment for each, to which Dr. Hakkila agreed.

6. Graduate Faculty Nominations – For Membership Consideration

- a. COE: Brown, Andrew – PhD/Mechanical Engineering (*request to teach graduate courses*) – **Approved**
- b. COE: Keys, Andrew – PhD/Electrical Engineering (*request to teach graduate courses*) – **Approved**
- c. COEd: Pickens, Tyra – PhD/Adolescent Literacy (*request to teach graduate courses*) – **Approved**
- d. CON: Brown, Katrina – DNP/Nursing (*request to serve as DNP mentor*) – **Approved**
- e. COS: Nguyen, Cuong – PhD/Materials Science (*request to serve on supervisory committee*) – **Approved**
- f. COS: Gasparini, Clelia – PhD/Evolutionary Biology (*request to serve on supervisory committee*) – **Approved**

7. UAH/UAB/UA Joint Graduate Programs

Dr. Hakkila stated that proposed changes to the UA System joint programs have been discussed for approximately one year and have involved the UA Systems office, ACHE, and various representatives from all three System universities, including their provosts, graduate deans, and SACSCOC liaisons. He said, with the exception of the nursing PhD, UAH’s joint programs have not been updated for so long that they are no longer compliant with the SACSCOC rules. This has become a problem for all three universities as we go into reporting for reaffirmation.

He explained that the individual universities want to keep the joint programs running since some, but not many, students are enrolled in them. However, ACHE has viability criteria in which it is stipulated that each program must produce a certain amount of students per year or the program gets cancelled. Only recently, though, has ACHE begun to enforce the viability criteria.

Dr. Hakkila continued, saying, to make the joint programs compliant, we would have to increase the number of credits taken at our partner universities because SACSCOC requires that students earn at least one-third of their credits at each institution involved. Not only is this difficult for programs involving two institutions, but it is almost mathematically impossible if all three institutions are involved. The one-third rule justifies the fact that all participating universities are listed on joint program diplomas.

Additionally, there have been instances when students are enrolled in a doctoral program but, for whatever reason, cannot finish the program and attempt to drop back and get a master's degree in the program instead. This creates a problem because the master's programs are not joint programs in that no written agreement exists for them.

Another issue is that we are not following the rules that were in the original published agreements.

In discussing how to solve the joint program issue, Dr. Hakkila said there were two options: (1) Either the programs must become truly joint and meet all of the requirements, or (2) they would have to go on their own so that they would not have to meet the viability requirements mandated by ACHE.

Instead, the three institutions decided on an intermediate solution in that their joint programs can become "cooperative" programs. The cooperative agreements must stipulate how many courses students will be allowed to take at each of the institutions involved. Dr. Hakkila mentioned that a cooperative agreement allows a maximum of 12 credit hours to be taken at another institution, with no minimum.

ACHE has tentatively approved this solution; they will grandfather in these programs and count the viability factor from the combined programs even though each institution will grant its own degrees. So now, Dr. Hakkila explained, it is up to the programs to decide which option they will choose and determine how they are going to handle the details for this change.

Dr. Hakkila added that this solution should also satisfy SACSCOC since they are most interested in the fact that we realize we have an issue and that we are actively working toward making improvements.

Ms. Amy Smith asked about teach-out. Dr. Hakkila admitted this might be a problem that will need to be handled on a case-by-case basis, since teach-out plans are designed for the dissolution of compliant programs rather than for non-complaint ones.

8. For the Good of the Order

- *Dr. Mike Anderson asked whether it's true that there is an unwritten policy that stipulates GTAs at UAH are not allowed to teach undergraduate courses. Dr. Hakkila confirmed that this is not true and, further, said as long as GTAs have 18 hours of graduate coursework in the discipline they plan to teach in, prior to being appointed instructor of record for the course, it is allowed.*
- *Dr. Hakkila asked everyone to pay more attention to Load Assignment forms to ensure that the student loads listed match the hours that the students are actually working.*

9. Reminder: Next Graduate Council Meeting – February 21, 2025, @ 2:00 p.m. in SSB 201

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:25 p.m.

/srk