



## GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

March 25th, 2024

The Graduate Council met on Monday, March 25, 2024, at 2:00P.M. in Room #584, Close-Hipp Building.

Graduate Council members present: Mr. Hassan Anderson, Drs. Kenneth Campbell, Besim Dragovic, Fang Jing, Edie Goldsmith, Dianna Inman, Amy Lehman, William Matchin, Terrance McAdoo, Wendy Regoeczi, David Reisman, Sheri Silfies, Sriram Venkataraman, Neal Woods, Christina Yao, and Gaurav Harshe (GSA).

Graduate Council members absent: Drs. Sourav Banerjee (excused), Marketa Kubickova, and Nick Watanabe.

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Ann Vail, Dr. Murray Mitchell (Secretary), Dr. Andrea Fleming (excused), Dr. Jean Ellis, Dr. Angelina Sylvain, Dale Moore (excused), Wright Culpepper (excused), and Wanda Barr

Provost Office Representatives: Trena Houp and Dr. LaTrice Ratcliff-Small

Guests: Dr. Hala Ghattas (HPEB))

**NOTE: These minutes will become final on April 22, 2024, if not challenged.**

**1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda** (Hassan Anderson, Chair)

The meeting was called to order at 2:02p.m., and the Agenda was approved.

**2. Approval of the Minutes from February 26, 2024.** Approved actions by Graduate Council become effective 30 days after posting. A copy is available on the Graduate School website at: <https://bit.ly/3SvPOOE>.

***The minutes from February were unanimously approved.***

**3. Report of the Chair** (Hassan Anderson)

Mr. Anderson shared that many students in his department have reported the feeling of being overwhelmed. He suggested that it may be beneficial for faculty to explore the extent to which students in other programs are experiencing similar feelings. Discussion followed where there seemed to be some consensus of other students expressing similar concerns.

Mr. Anderson also shared that he had attended a recent faculty meeting regarding graduate comprehensive exams where there was a general sense that exams need to be more comprehensive and rigorous. Discussion revealed that there may be a need for more consensus within the faculty for what is expected and clearer communication to students so that they might better understand what is expected of them. He asked the members of the Graduate Council if their departments used a rubric or

if they used the pass/fail option grading scale. This topic led to an extensive discussion. Dr. LaTrice Ratcliff-Small from the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics offered her assistance in working with academic assessment liaisons in each college and departments in defining rubrics and determining how to move forward in this effort. Her email address is [LaTrice@sc.edu](mailto:LaTrice@sc.edu) should you have questions or need her assistance.

**4. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School (Ann Vail)**

Dean Vail reported that Student Health Services just hired a new consultant for graduate students. Her name is Nikki Buie, and she can assist you in strategizing and setting up resources/referrals to help educate your young new faculty and established faculty members as well. She can be reached by email at [BUIEN@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:BUIEN@mailbox.sc.edu).

The attached Fact Sheet for Foreign Credential Evaluations shows the two vendors that the Graduate School has been reviewing for the implementation of evaluating international transcripts. They are World Education Services (WES) and Education Perspectives. Unless something odd happens, WES is the company that we will go with since they offer a broader and more comprehensive service. Our main reason for doing is to avoid the likelihood of fraud and misrepresentation of credentials due to the sheer number of applications we have received. If a student has already engaged a different international transcript service, we are investigating the possibility of accepting it as an exception. We are still evaluating how that would be handled. This information was presented to some of the Graduate Directors and Associate and Assistant Deans last week, where some concerns were expressed.

The Graduate School is holding an informational TEAMS meeting for Graduate Council, Graduate Directors, Associate and Assistant Graduate Deans, and other interested parties on April 9th at 10 am. We anticipate that the number of international applications received will decline. For the use of an international transcript service to be effective, official international transcripts will be required at the point of application. Unofficial international transcripts will no longer be accepted.

We will be using the WES ICAP services, and the cost will be \$225.00, effective applications received September 1st and after. We have not made the final decision, but it will be made very soon. Departments who are heavily recruiting students can purchase a voucher to assist with this cost. One good thing about WES is that their credentials do not expire. Some of the smaller companies only hold credentials for five years. These are in perpetuity. Our undergraduate admissions office uses WES, and our athletes also use WES.

Dean Vail recognized Graduate Council Graduate Student Representative, Gaurav Harshe, for an article that he wrote for *The Daily Gamecock* that was published on March 19th. The article is entitled "Graduate Students Deserve Better". She will contact them to see if they will accept a response from her regarding her support for many of the issues that Gaurav noted.

The second bi-annual Graduate Student Needs Assessment was released on March 20th. Dr. Angelina Sylvain is providing the leadership on this. Please encourage students to complete the assessment. At present, 322 completed surveys have been received, but we need more! The issues that you bring up are really what we need to collect data about to present to the decision makers for better opportunities for our graduate students.

Dean Vail reminded everyone of the Graduate School Recognition of Excellence awards program will be held at 3pm in the Lexington Room, Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, immediately following Discover USC on April 19<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you there since many of you will already be there as reviewers for your students. Dr. Jean Ellis provides leadership and can answer any questions that you may have.

The Dissertation Writing Academy is a collaboration among The Graduate School, Libraries, and the Writing Center. It will be held on May 6<sup>th</sup> – 23rd. The purpose of the Dissertation Writing Academy is to provide guidance, instruction, motivation, and support for completing your dissertation. The program is specifically designed to support graduate students in the final stages of writing their dissertation. Applications are now being accepted. More information can be found at the following link:

[Dissertation Writing Academy - Graduate School | University of South Carolina](#)

The website presents the objectives of the program, describes eligibility and who should apply, and describes how to apply. A link to the application is provided. A brief email of support from the student's major professor is required. Applications are being accepted from now until April 1, 2024. There are limited slots available so encourage students to apply soon. Applications will be considered in the order they are received.

**5. Report of the Secretary of the Graduate Council (Murray Mitchell)**

No report.

**6. Report on Professional Development (Murray Mitchell for Wright Culpepper)**

Dr. Mitchell reported that Discover USC is coming up on April 19th, and they have more graduate students presenting this year than ever before. The total number is 228 presently. The increase in presenters means a greater need for reviewers. While reviewer registration technically closed on March 22nd, the registration portal will likely stay open through next week. Everyone is encouraged to register to review. Faculty can review presentations from any population (undergrad, grad, postdoc, etc.), and graduate students can review undergrad presentations. We also need staff to register to help with logistics on the day of the event.

The Student Success Center has hired an advisor for graduate students, and he will be located full-time in the Grad Hub. If programs have students who have questions about or are struggling with time management, study skills, financial literacy, etc., they should contact Josh Dunn at [dunnjc@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:dunnjc@mailbox.sc.edu).

**7. Report of the Graduate Student Association (Gaurav Harshe)**

Gaurav reported the following for GSA:

- The last Cabinet meeting will take place on March 29 and have invited Provost Arnett and Dean Vail as guests.
- Affiliate scheduled events are as follows:
  - Women's Luncheon on 3/25
  - LGBTQIA+ Social on 3/29
  - International Community Luncheon on 4/15
  - Black and African American Graduate Students Luncheon on 4/18
- Theme scheduled events are as follows:
  - Sustainability Luncheon on 4/3
  - Mindfulness Walk on 4/8
  - Spring Social on 4/10
  - Cooking Prep Class on 4/10
  - Cabinet Appreciation Year-End program on 4/16

- Transition Period with wrapping up this academic year's reports coming in and upcoming elections declaring results on 3/27.

**8. Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee** (Terrance McAdoo)  
No report.

**9. Report of the 500/600 Level Courses** (Jean Ellis)

This report is presented to Council for informational purposes only; no action is necessary.

**500/600 Courses for March 2024 Grad Council**

(CCP = Course Change Proposal; NCP=New Course Proposal). Total: 1

**MART 581E** (3) New Media Advanced: Sound Art (CCP: Fall 2025)

**10. Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations** (Murray Mitchell)

Name: **Mostafa Mobli, PhD 2018**  
Program: Mechanical Engineering  
Term: Spring 2022 – Spring 2028

Name: **Austin Worden, PhD 2005**  
Program: School of Medicine/Biomedical Sciences  
Term: Summer 2024 – Spring 2030

Name: **Karen Worthy, PhD 2015**  
Program: Nursing  
Term: Spring 2024 – Spring 2030

**These nominations were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.**

**11. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee** (Edie Goldsmith)

Dr. Goldsmith shared that they received a little more than 40 Presidential Fellows nominations across campus, and the reviews have been completed. They have received 5 acceptances thus far. They are waiting to hear back from the other offers extended. A total number of 12 will be accepted. This committee will continue to review the other Graduate School fellowships and scholarships award nominations to make offers.

**12. Graduate Student Awards** (Jean Ellis)

Dr. Ellis reported that these awards have been renamed as the Recognition of Excellence Awards. They received a total of 41 applications from 21 unique departments. There were 29 total award applications, and 12 total trustee applications. The Recognition of Excellence Ceremony is April 19<sup>th</sup> in the Lexington Room of the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center from 3pm to 4pm. All are welcome to attend.

**13. Report of Science, Math, and Related Professional Programs Committee** (Jing Fang)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Total: 10

- **Biostatistics, M.P.H.**, (Program Inactivation: Fall 2025)

- **Biostatistics, M.S.**, (Program Change Request: Fall 2025)
- **Biostatistics, Ph.D.**, (Program Change Request: Fall 2025)
- **CSCE 785** (3) Quantum Computer Science, (CCP: Fall 2025). Cross listed with **MATH 763** and **PHYS 743**
- **HPEB 775** (3) Health of Populations Affected by Humanitarian Crises, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **MCBA 740** (3) Biological Microscopic Imaging I, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **MCBA 741** (3) Molecular Methods of Biomedical Research I, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **MCBA 742** (3) Biological Microscopic Imaging II, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **MCBA 743** (3) Molecular Methods of Biomedical Research II, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **NURS 743** (3) Advanced Nursing Practicum for the Educator, (CCP: Summer 2024)

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- **Biostatistics, Certificate, (New Program: Fall 2025)**
  - **Approved last month as New Program. Administrative change to start Fall 2024 instead of Fall 2025**

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*These proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.*

#### **14. Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee (Wendy Regoczi)**

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Total: 16

- **EDUC 898** (1-12) Capstone Research Preparation, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **MUSC 745** (3) Music and Culture of Tudor England, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **MGSC 779** (3) Innovation and Product Development, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **EDRM 724** (3) Survey Design and Analysis, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **EDHE 834** (3) Internship in College Teaching, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **EDHE 748** (3) Staff Development and Talent Management, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **EDHE 745** (3) Capstone for Higher Education Leadership, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **EDHE 744** (3) Enrollment Management in Higher Education, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **EDHE 743** (3) Strategic Planning for Data-Informed Decision Making, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **EDHE 742** (3) Higher Education Learning Environments, (NCP: Summer 2024)
- **EDHE 739** (3) Equity and Diversity in Higher Education, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **EDHE 730** (3) History of Higher Education, (CCP: Fall 2025)
- **Higher Education and Student Affairs**, M.Ed. (Program Change Request: Summer 2025)
- **Language and Literacy**, M.Ed. (Program Change Request: Fall 2025)
- **Language and Literacy**, Ph.D. (Program Change Request: Fall 2025)
- **Educational Practice and Innovation**, Ed.D. (Program Change Request: Fall 2025)

*These proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.*

#### **15. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (David Reisman)**

- Dr. Reisman moved for the Graduate Council to go into Closed Session.

- Upon returning to open session, the motion from the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee to not support the student's petition was unanimously approved with two abstentions.

**16. Other Committee Reports**

None at this time.

**17. Old Business**

None at this time.

**18. New Business**

None at this time.

**19. Good of the Order**

Dr. Silfies requested that a future discussion item that she hoped the Graduate Council could consider was in regard to dissertation requirements. Some brief discussion indicated a shared interest in this topic to be more fully explored.

Reminder Dates:

March 5 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Elections
April 1 <sup>st</sup> :	Dissertation Writing Academy Application Deadline
April 3 <sup>rd</sup> :	GSA Sustainability Luncheon
April 8 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Mindfulness Walk
April 10 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Spring Social
April 10 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Cooking Prep Class
April 15 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA International Community Luncheon
April 16 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Cabinet Appreciation Year-End Program
April 18 <sup>th</sup> :	GSA Luncheon for Black and African American Graduate Students
April 19 <sup>th</sup> :	Discover USC
April 19 <sup>th</sup> :	Graduate School Recognition of Excellence Awards
May 6 <sup>th</sup> – 23 <sup>rd</sup> :	Dissertation Writing Academy

**20. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24p.m.

Murray Mitchell, Secretary

CC: Michael Amiridis, President  
 Donna Arnett, Provost  
 Ann Vail, Dean of the Graduate School  
 Deans  
 Department Chairs  
 Graduate Directors  
 Aaron Marterer, University Registrar  
 Elaine Belesky, Office of the Registrar  
 Malia Kiehl, Office of the Registrar

## FACT SHEET for Foreign Credential Evaluations

<b>WES (New York and Toronto)</b>		<b>Education Perspectives (Chicago)</b>	
<b>History</b>	Founded: 1974	<b>History</b>	Founded: 2002
<b>Experience</b>	3M+ evaluations	<b>Experience</b>	12,000/year
<b>Affiliation</b>	NACES (charter member (1987))	<b>Affiliation</b>	NACES (2003)
<b>Process</b>	Receipt of official documents from issuing authority Verification and validation of documents Evaluation Report creates permanent record Original documents may be required	<b>Process</b>	Receipt of official or unofficial documents Unofficial documents must be verified Evaluations are available for 5 years Original documents may be required
<b>Evaluation</b>	Course-by-course or credential	<b>Evaluation</b>	Course-by-course or credential
<b>Security</b>	Password protected AccessWES portal	<b>Security</b>	Digitary Core password access
<b>Fraud</b>	Document verification & Certification	<b>Fraud</b>	Verification if necessary
<b>Tech. support</b>	Student/applicant WES IT Team (AccessWES/Slate integration) Graduate School	<b>Tech. support</b>	Slate partner CertFile/CollegeNet/ADMIT partners Graduate School/Banner partners
<b>Services</b>	Q&A Call Center (800.361.3106) (1-2 day response time) Email (1-2 day response time) Global partners (48K across 200 countries) Gateway Program (credentials for displaced people)	<b>Services</b>	Q&A Call Center (312.421.9300) Email (info@edperspective.org)
<b>Costs</b>	WES ICAP: \$225 WES Basic: \$176	<b>Costs</b>	Course-by-Course: \$195 General: \$135
<b>Turnaround</b>	Course-by-course 7 business days	<b>Turnaround</b>	Average 5 working days (delays during peaks)