



## GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

September 26th, 2022

The Graduate Council met virtually on Monday, September 26th, 2022, at 2:00 P.M.

Graduate Council members present: Dr. Stephen Shapiro, Chair; Drs. Demetrius Abshire, Hassan Anderson, Subra Bulusu, Jean Ellis, Fang Jing, Edie Goldsmith, Shana Harrington, Kathy Kim, Terrance McAdoo, William Matchin, Srihari Nelakuditi, Sriram Venkataraman, Sheryl Wiskur, Neal Woods, Christina Yao, and Rajat Das Gupta (GSA)

Graduate Council members absent: Dr. David Reisman

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Cheryl Addy, Dr. Toby Jenkins (Excused), Dr. Murray Mitchell (Secretary), Dr. Angelina Sylvain, Dale Moore (Excused), Wright Culpepper, Libby Cross, Kesha Clavon, and Wanda Barr

Provost Office Representative: Trena Houpp

Guests: Dr. Donna Arnett (Provost), Dr. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick (Journalism and Mass Communications), Dr. Matthew Wilson (Political Science), Dr. Sheri Silfies (Exercise Science), Dr. Beth Barnes (COMD), Dr. La Trice Ratcliff-Small (OIRAA), Jenell Peoples (Academic Programs), Ed Short (Registrar), Tara Wright (Registrar), and Maxwell Akonde (GSA)

**NOTE: These minutes will become final on October 25th, 2022, if not challenged.**

- 1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda** (Stephen Shapiro, Chair)  
The meeting was called to order at 2:00p.m., and the agenda was approved.
- 2. Approval of the Minutes from August 22, 2022.** Approved actions by Graduate Council become effective 30 days after posting. A copy is available on the Graduate School website at: [https:// bit.ly/3ekoSm3](https://bit.ly/3ekoSm3).  
The minutes from August were unanimously approved.
- 3. Report of the Chair** (Stephen Shapiro)  
No report.
- 4. Report of the Interim Dean of the Graduate School** (Cheryl Addy)  
Dr. Addy reported that the Graduate Student Association (GSA) has been very vocal in the last couple of weeks advocating for themselves after the Board of Trustees approved the initiative for the classification compensation study that includes increasing the minimum compensation on campus. She does not have an action plan yet because it requires resources. The Provost is already in conversation with the Deans about how we can make this happen or how we can find some central resources to help facilitate this. Everyone

understands how critically important it is. She hasn't taken a thorough look yet at the impact of going up to \$12.00 or \$14.00 an hour. What they had looked at early on was simply an incremental increase for the commitment to go forward, but even that smaller increase will have a huge impact on some units. They are still trying to get a better handle on what that will be, but more to come on this one. She thinks it is very important for us to be able to make that commitment to our graduate students. She will also say that our graduate students from Iran have been very vocal this week because of the political situation in Iran and the impact of that. So that is very much on our radar. We are waiting to find out if the President or Central Communications wants to make a formal statement.

Dr. Addy and Dr. Toby Jenkins are leaving very early Tuesday morning to go to the University of Missouri with their five SEC Emerging Scholars. These are our five advanced doctoral students. The idea of the Emerging Scholars is basically a faculty pipeline. Institutions tend to not want to hire their own graduates into tenure track positions. With the Emerging Scholars program, the goal is to help convince scholars that they may not be best served to stay at their doctoral institution. Maybe they would like to stay at another SEC institution. It is a combination of professional development and to show how wonderful our graduates are to the other scholars at the meeting. Dr. Addy will have a meeting Tuesday afternoon with the other SEC graduate deans who will be in attendance. It will be good to hear some of what they are doing with the issues they are seeing on their campuses.

She is happy to report that Dr. Jenkins reached out and received approval to have a recognition for the Rising Star program for the Rising Star fellows, who of course are all students from or graduates of our state HBCU institutions. This will take place this Saturday at the football game against SC State University. This will be a nice opportunity to highlight that partnership and give some unfilled recognition to our current fellows under that program.

She is working on the Blueprint for the Graduate School, which is supposed to be submitted this week. It may or may not make that deadline, but it is in progress, and will be submitted by early next week, at the latest.

Dr. Donna Arnett, Provost, joined the meeting and expressed her appreciation to the Graduate Council for all that they do for graduate education. It is one of her areas of focus and in the next few months is hoping to launch a national search for a permanent full-time dean for the Graduate School, which is a change from how it has been officially led in the past. They have formed a search committee and entered a contract with Academic Search and will continue with them as a partner for this search. They hope to get the search launched with this committee moving as soon as possible. She wanted to give a heads up about that because it is so critically important to advancing graduate education on campus.

She brought up to the Deans Council that they are going to have to find innovative ways to raise the level of stipends for students. It has been a huge concern for many years. And it is going to take some innovative strategies to figure out how to do that. She has a call with another RCM budget model university, Auburn, which has a similar budget model to ours. She asked them how their graduate students funded under an RCM model like we have. Hopefully, she will get some answers from them about how we can manage that here at UofSC. The Graduate Student Association has already sent her a request now that the class and comp study is done. The Board of Trustees approved increases in salaries for those very low-level entry-level positions to get to the 90% of the band for that position, but also \$14.00 an hour as the minimum wage for staff. Graduate students would like to get to that minimum wage as well. It is going to take effort, creativity, and a new dean; but hopefully we can get that resolved. This may not happen by spring, but hopefully by the next academic year. These are her priorities right now in graduate education--dean search and figuring out how to fund students.

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

Dr. Mitchell echoed Dr. Addy's characterization of a general culture of not hiring graduates to stay on at their terminal degree-granting institution. Protection for the student for not being able to escape treatment as a student, and in the hope of avoiding "academic inbreeding" and to allow new ideas and approaches to be accessed by hiring graduates from other programs. Certainly, there are exceptions to this practice, when there is a specific expertise being brought by an individual, and/or there is an absence of qualified applicants from elsewhere.

He also requested that Graduate Council members remind their colleagues that instructors of record are required to submit a grade for every course, every semester.

Dr. Subra Bulusu suggested that there may be some confusion in summer semesters where there are so many parts of term as to when they should submit a grade.

Dr. Mitchell responded that grades are due at the end of the course.

**6. Report of the Interim Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Associate Director, Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program (Kesha Clavon for Toby Jenkins)**

Kesha gave brief updates for Dr. Jenkins regarding the Rising Star Fellowship which is an initiative that provides full funding, tuition and fees, and health insurance in addition to a stipend for South Carolina HBCU graduates. They have some additional funding for this year--last year was their pilot year of the program. She and Dr. Jenkins are revisiting the eligibility criteria aspects of it, the process for nominating, and the awarding of students for the fellowship. They are working through that process and hope to have some updates in the coming weeks regarding the fellowship.

On Friday, November 4th, they are working with five academic units across campus to house an inclusive excellence and graduate education Open House. This initiative started with the College of Information and Communications. Dr. Jenkins thought it would be wonderful to scale this event. At this point, they are working with Information and Communications, Education, Law, Public Health, and Arts and Sciences. The eventual goal is to open it up to all academic units so they will have a university wide open house for graduate education. As it stands now, they are thrilled to be working with these academic units. They are specifically targeting South Carolina HBCUs and they have hosted several meetings during semester. In terms of planning, they will launch the registration page hopefully within the next week or two for students. Ideally, our university partners will transport their students to campus to take the burden off them traveling to Columbia on their own. They are anticipating 150 to 200 students across those five academic units. The goal is to have a general opening session and then students will break out into their academic areas of interest in the afternoon. The event right now is tentatively planned from 10am until 4pm on Friday, November 4th.

**7. Report on Professional Development (Wright Culpepper)**

Wright commended Kesha and Dr. Jenkins for all the work they are doing with the Open House. If anyone is interested in collaborating with them on that, please do so. They are doing a lot of heavy lifting, and it is fantastic to see this sort of work being done months in advance before it comes to fruition.

He informed the Council that we are shifting the three-minute thesis competition from Discover UofSC, which is always done in April every year, instead to November. The reason we are shifting is that historically, we have tried to send our winner to the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools to compete in their regional competition with students from campuses across the southeast. We have been challenged in the past by doing an April competition and then scrambling trying to track down

the winner or the runners up to send them. Oftentimes our winner has graduated which makes them ineligible to participate in the next March conference. We think that doing this in the fall will help send a current student who won an award against other current students. It will help us be more relevant in the competition.

With Discover UofSC getting so large, graduate students have sort of been pushed a bit. This past year in April, the three-minute thesis competition was held across the street from the Convention Center in the Pastides Alumni Center. Because space was what it was, the visibility of the competition was lower than what we would define as ideal. This semester, we are going to hold a three-minute thesis competition that will be open to any graduate student who is one of the first 60 to register. We anticipate opening the registration in the next few weeks. The competition is going to be November 11th.

We will have five different heats that run concurrently from Noon until 1pm with twelve presenters in each heat. There will be two winners in each heat. The top two vote getters from each heat will advance on to a final round that will be held from 3pm to 4pm in the afternoon. This competition will be held in the Close-Hipp Building. We are working out the logistics right now, but what is most important at this point is finding judges to serve from 12pm to 1pm. He would love to hear from you if you are interested. This is what is going to be the heaviest lifting at this point. We need folks who are willing to serve in this capacity on Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, from 12pm until 1pm. He asks that you not publicize this information too heavily at this point since we do not have a registration link available yet. In support of the students, we will do a three-minute thesis training for anyone who is in that first 60 to register that will progress on to the competition. This training will happen on October 28th and will be led by Dr. Jonathan Edwards from Composition and Rhetoric. He has done this workshop for us for almost a decade now; so, your students will be well trained on that. If anyone would like to participate, please e-mail him and you will be added to the judges list.

#### **8. Report of the Graduate Student Association (Rajat Das Gupta)**

Rajat reported the following for GSA:

- They have been awarded with the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Grant to arrange the mentorship luncheon. The amount of grant is \$2,000.
- International Student Services has committed \$500 to arrange the mentorship luncheon for the international students. They are planning to organize the luncheon for the international students on November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- They will soon circulate a link in the Faculty Senate to identify those who are interested in becoming a mentor.
- They had their fall GSA social on September 15<sup>th</sup> at the Columbia Craft.
- They have started their biweekly meetings from September 9<sup>th</sup>. They have had two meetings thus far. At the first meeting, Dr. Toby S. Jenkins, Interim Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion at the Graduate School, was the speaker. At the second meeting, Molly Peirano, Assistant Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX/Title IX & ADA Coordinator, was the speaker.
- In general, they are continuing their conversation with the graduate and professional students. The graduate and professional students are concerned about the stipend amounts. The University's minimum wage for faculty and staff will increase from \$12 to \$14 an hour. However, for the graduate and professional students no such measures were addressed. The graduate and professional students are raising their concerns about this topic.

**9. Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee (Jean Ellis)**

No report.

**10. Report of the 500/600 Level Courses (Murray Mitchell)**

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

**500/600 Courses for September 2022 Grad Council**

(CCP = Course Change Proposal; NCP=New Course Proposal)

**ECHE 567** (3) Process Safety, Health, and Loss Prevention (CCP: Fall 2023)

**ECIV 502** (3) Life Cycle Assessment of Engineering Systems (CCP: Fall 2023)

**EXSC 626** (3) Cardiorespiratory Exercise Physiology (CCP--delete: Fall 2023)

**HSPM 500** (3) Data Science Methods (CCP: Fall 2022)

**ISCI 534** (3) Combustion (CCP: Fall 2023)

**PSYC 506** (3) Psychology of Language (Crosslisted as LING 567) (CCP: Fall 2023)

**SOCY 561** (3) Real World Research Experience (CCP: Spring 2023)

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

Name: **Juliano Schorne Pinto** (PhD)

Program: Mechanical Engineering

Term: Fall 2022 – Fall 2028

***This nomination was unanimously approved by Graduate Council.***

**12. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee (Srihari Nelakuditi)**

No report.

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

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee.

- **PHYT 750** (4) Orthopedic Physical Therapy I, Arnold School of Public Health, Change to Existing Course: Fall 2023
- **PHYT 751** (3) Orthopedic Physical Therapy II, Arnold School of Public Health, Change to Existing Course: Fall 2023

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

**14. Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee (Murray Mitchell for Wendy Regoeczi)**

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee.

- **EDCS 899** (1-12) Dissertation Preparation, College of Education, Change to Course Delivery Only: Spring 2023
- **EDLP 899** (1-12) Dissertation Preparation, College of Education, Change to Course Delivery Only: Spring 2023

*These proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.*

**15. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (Shana Harrington)**

No report.

**16. Other Committee Reports**

None.

**17. Old Business**

None.

**18. New Business**

1. Grade Mode Change Proposal for 799/899 courses. A possible action item.  
Most UofSC courses provide an option to instructors to submit a grade of incomplete when students are faced with some barrier beyond their control that prohibits them from finishing all course requirements. To date, this option has not been available to students enrolled in thesis preparation (799) or dissertation preparation (899). The complication has been that either instructors do not submit any grade if there is incomplete work; they submit a “T” grade (not accurately indicating satisfactory progress); or, they submit a “U” grade to indicate that the student did not make satisfactory progress. These options present problems by communicating incorrect information to students, or unfairly penalizing students when there are valid reasons for delays in productivity.

In communication with the Office of the Registrar, they have identified a possible solution. It is possible to change the grade mode to allow a grade of incomplete that is not punitive—meaning this is a different grade mode from courses that are graded S/U. A back-up grade is required and for S/U courses, and a U is punitive to the cumulative GPA. In contrast, a U in a 799/899 course is not punitive to the GPA—the result is simply that the credit hours for that course may not be used toward earning the degree.

They believe that making this adjustment will be helpful for increasing the probability that academic records accurately reflect student progress to degree, and in a timely fashion. Dr. Mitchell’s hope is that this change will also reduce the amount of contact with the Office of the Registrar and then he must prompt instructors to submit a grade for every course, every semester.

2. Method for Graduate Council nomination. Preliminary discussion item to be offered for future consideration and a possible charge to the Academic Policies and Practices Committee.

According to the Faculty Manual:

The council shall be composed of 20 regular and associate graduate faculty members and one student member:

- Nine members selected by the graduate faculty;
- Nine members appointed by the provost of the university upon recommendation of the Graduate School;
- One student member representing the Graduate Student Association;

- The dean of the Graduate School (ex officio); and
- The senior associate dean of the Graduate School (ex officio), who serves as secretary.

No more than six members may have associate graduate faculty membership.

Across time, this process has evolved somewhat. We currently include the important input of additional members of the Graduate School. More importantly, the process of locating qualified, available, and willing representatives of the full Graduate Council and reporting committees, has become more of a challenge than it may have been in years gone by. In conversation with associate deans of graduate schools at other SEC schools, there are some alternative ways of constructing this representative body that warrant consideration.

One alternative example is somewhat similar to how the Faculty Senate is constructed. More specifically, a formula for numbers of students in degree programs is used to calculate a comparably representative number of senators. The responsibility for identifying qualified, available, and willing representatives then rests with the respective programs.

What Dr. Mitchell would like to propose is that the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee explore the viability of an alternative approach to Graduate Council Membership. Included in such a charge would be proposing at least the following:

- Is an alternative approach to membership on Graduate Council worthy of consideration?
- If not, no further action would be required. If so, what might be an alternative worthy of such a change?
- What might be the plan, including timeline and logistics for implementation (e.g., total number of members, formula for representation, term of service, duties, etc.)?

3. We have two nominees for membership on the Graduate Council open spaces:

**Sriram Venkataraman**, Management Science (expiration 2023)

Sriram will be finishing the term of a previous member who was not able to complete the 3-year term. Sriram will be eligible to serve his own full 3-year term if desired.

**Wendy Regoeczi**, Criminology and Criminal Justice (expiration 2025)

Wendy was not able to join us today, due to a double-booking of meetings and late notice. She has agreed to serve as chair of one of our curriculum committees if elected.

**Both nominees were unanimously confirmed by vote.**

#### **19. Good of the Order**

None.

#### **20. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00p.m.

Murray Mitchell, Secretary

CC: Michael Amiridis, President  
Donna Arnett, Provost  
Cheryl Addy, Interim 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  
Tara Wright, Office of the Registrar