

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 27, 2025, 3:00 pm
3105 Gardner Commons

Chaired by: Darryl Butt, Graduate School Dean

Council Members Present: Darryl Butt, Codrina Rada, Julie Valentine, Kaylee Alexander, Kody Powell, Paul Stout, Sharlene Kiuvara, Fan-Chi Lin, Glen Schmidt, James Keddington, Janet Lindsley, Jim Agutter, Jay Jordan, Kuby Balagurunathan, Robert Keiter, Patrick Panos

Student Representatives Present: Steven Valdez, Corey Bois

Ex Officio Members Present: Katrina Green, Helene Shugart, Anthony Jones

Excused Members: David Symons, Ramón Barthelmy, Harleen Saini, Karen Paisley

Graduate School Staff Present: Paula Spencer

Welcome: Darryl Butt, Graduate School Dean

New Program Proposals: Certificate/Emphases in Writing and Rhetoric Studies programs:

- PhD Emphasis in Teaching Reading & Writing at Access-Oriented Institutions
- MS/MA Emphasis in Teaching Reading & Writing at Access-Oriented Institutions
- Graduate Certificate in Teaching Reading & Writing at Access-Oriented Institutions

Presenters: Jay Jordan, Christie Toth, Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies

Discussion took place about the following:

- Types of Access Oriented Institutions (AOIs)– community colleges, open enrollment universities and HBCUs
- Curriculum consists of mostly existing courses
- Consultations with other USHE institutions
- Use of AI is integrated into courses
- Future possibility for online
- Demand for program, particularly among other USHE institutions
- Potential student populations:
 - Faculty at AOIs seeking professional development opportunities
 - Graduate students at other USHE institutions enrolling concurrently
 - Graduate students in other UU programs seeking additional teaching credentials
 - Writing and Rhetoric Studies graduate students planning on teaching careers

The Graduate Council determined that the proposals should include a support letter from the College of Education.

Motion: Approve pending letter from the College of Education – Patrick Panos

Second: Codrina Rada

Vote: Yes-17; No-0; Abstain-0

Action: Request letter of support from College of Education. Approve proposals upon completion.

New Program Proposal: Graduate Certificate in Student Financial Aid Administration

Presenters: Anthony Jones, Enrollment Management, Chris Linder, Educational Leadership & Policy

Discussion took place about the following:

- Enthusiasm from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- NASFAA potential collaborations
- Market analysis shows demand – high number of job postings
- First of its kind program
- Expected enrollment 35-75

Graduate Council deliberations focused on the following:

- Letters of support needed from the College of Law and Eccles School of Business
- Assessment plan needs more details on responsible parties – use titles rather than names

Motion: Approve proposal pending letters of support and an updated assessment plan – Jim Agutter

Second: Patrick Panos

Vote: Yes-18; No-0; Abstain-0

Action: Request update to proposal: provide more detail on the assessment plan and upload additional letters of support. Approve proposal upon completion.

Information item: Committee Chair Darryl Butt announced the creation of a teaching and learning working group that will give expert consultation on responsible use of AI. Council member Jim Agutter is on this committee and confirmed that this group will review proposals for new programs that have an AI component. Katrina Green noted that this step will be incorporated into the Coursedog workflow.

Seven Year Review: Department of Oncological Sciences

Presenter: Jay Jordan, Review Committee Chair

The department was commended for its collegiality, excellent facilities, large and diversified grant portfolio, and supportive academic training that has significantly shortened the time to completion for a Ph.D. It faces challenges with growth management and uncertainty in long term funding.

Recommendations focus on diversification of funding, hiring strategies, and communication around service obligations.

Motion to ratify the report: Kody Powell

Second: Janet Lindsley

Vote: Yes-18; No-0; Abstain-0

New Program Proposal: Spatial Data Science over 25% revisions and name change

Presenter: Phil Dennison, of Environment, Society & Sustainability

Discussion took place about the following:

- Revisions needed to align with evolving technology
- Updates to learning outcomes
- Updated market analysis
- Collaboration with the College of Architecture + Planning

The Graduate Council discussed impact and relevance to other units on campus and suggested the proposal include a support letter from the College of Architecture + Planning.

Motion: Approve proposal - Kuby Balagurunathan

Second: Codrina Rada

Vote: Yes-18; No-0; Abstain-0

Action: Approve the proposal and suggest seeking a letter from the College of Architecture + Planning

New Program Proposal: MA/MS in Professional Writing & Emerging Technologies

Presenter: Maureen Mathison and Rachel Bryson, Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies

Discussion took place about the following:

- Program's unique emphasis on AI – is responsive to current conditions
- Focus on upgrading skills for currently employed
- Enrollment projection
- Consultation with U Online

The Graduate Council suggested consultation with the newly formed teaching & learning AI working group to gain helpful feedback.

Motion: Approve proposal - Robert Keiter

Second: Patrick Panos

Vote: Yes-17; No-0; Abstain-1

Action: Approve the proposal and suggest consultation with AI working group.

New Program Proposals: Financial Technology MS and Graduate Certificate in Fintech

Presenter: Gene Levinson, Department of Finance

Discussion took place about the following:

- Alumni identifying need for the program
- Campus is already set up for fintech - faculty are in place
- The Kem Gardner Policy Institute demonstrated there is a demand for fintech programs
- This would be the first fintech master's program in Utah
- Certificate could be an added credential for any MS program or taken as a stand-alone for working professionals

Graduate Council deliberations focused on the following:

- Lack of details in assessment plan
- Missing faculty vote count

Motion: Approve the proposal pending updates on assessment plan and faculty vote – Janet Lindsley

Second: Jay Jordan

Vote: Yes-18; No-0; Abstain-0

Action: Request update to proposals: provide more detail to assessment plan and add faculty vote. Approve proposals upon completion.

New Program Proposal: Graduate Certificate in STEM Leadership and Management

Presenter: Meghan Dovick, PSM Program

Discussion took place about the following:

- Certificate qualifies students to earn industry certification
- Curriculum uses only existing courses
- Provides elective opportunities for other programs
- Serves as an onramp to graduate study or a milestone along with masters
- The Graduate Council determined that the proposals should include a support letter from the School of Business.

The Council discussed possible overlap with noncredit programs in the School of Business and requested a letter from the dean of the school.

Motion: Approve pending letter from the School of Business – Glen Schmidt

Second: Steven Valdez

Vote: Yes-18; No-0; Abstain-0

Action: Request letter of support from the School of Business. Approve proposal upon completion.

Adjourn