



Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) Meeting Agenda  
3:00 to 5:00 – Wednesday, March 22nd, 2023  
Virtual meeting via WebEx

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> of March 2023, 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

Location: [Virtual meeting via WebEx](#)

Subject: Graduate Faculty Council of The Graduate School (GFC) meeting minutes

Attendees: Mary Anne Amalaradjou, Marina Astitha, David Atkin, Fakhreddin Azimi, Talia Bar, Mary Bernstein (*Ex-Officio*), Christopher Blesso, Deborah Bolnick, Karen Bresciano (*Ex-Officio*), Preston Britner, Kelly Burke, Yongku Cho, Jack Corcoran (*Ex-Officio, Recording Secretary*), Kirstie Cope-Ferrar, Thomas Craemer, Jose Cruz, Moustapha Diaby, Valerie Duffy, David Embrick, Meg Feely, Victoria Ford Smith, Alexandra Freidus, David Gregorio, Travis Grossner, Thomas Hayes, Ashley Helton, Kent Holsinger (*Ex-Officio*), Magdalena Kaufmann, Todd Kravet, Barbara Kream (*Ex-Officio*), Nicole Landi, Jacqueline Loss, Elizabeth Mayerson, D. Betsy McCoach, Ovidiu Munteanu, Gianna Raimondi (*Ex-Officio*), Diana Rios, Alexander Russell, Archana Sanjay, Kurt Schwenk, Helena Silva, Christine Tocchi, Penny Vlahos, Randall Walikonis, Alexander Woodward, Ping Zhang, Yuping Zhang

Absent: Heather Battaly, Zeljko Boskovic, Hannah Dostal, Niloy Dutta, Monty Escabi, Nathan Fiala, Neal Glaviano, Louis Hanzlik, Heejoo Kim, Julia Kuzovkina, Julian Norato, Michael J. O'Neill, William Ouimet, Dan Pejril, Eugene Pinkhassik, Guillermo Risatti, Leslie Shor (*Ex-Officio*), Prabhakar Singh, Tammie Spaulding, Aditya Tadinada, Judith Thorpe, Nathaniel Trumbull, Andrew Wiemer, Suzanne Wilson, Xinyu Zhao

Guests: Chen Chen, Megan Petsa

---

1. The meeting is called to order at 3:02 pm.
2. Presented for voting: Approval of the Minutes from the February 22, 2023, meeting.
  - a. The minutes are approved unanimously by the Graduate Faculty Council.

3. Report from Graduate Student Senate
  - a. Gianna Raimondi discussed a previous meeting held with a forum of graduate students, Dean Holsinger, and Vice Provost Anne D'Alleva. After polling both senators and their constituents, it was found that the top three concerns of graduate students all relate to finances: their stipends, their student fees, and their lack of summer pay. At their meeting tonight, the Senate will be inviting a guest speaker who will help further conversations about these financial needs, and the Senate are aiming to restructure their executive board after the next cycle of elections to help implement a proper feedback system accessible to all graduate students at the university.

4. Old Business:

- a. Proposed Bylaws Revision Re. Offers for Financial Support
  - i. **Current Bylaws (Section IX A. c)**

*Section IX A.c. An acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer.*

- ii. **Proposed change in by-laws language:**

*Section IX A.c. An acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student ~~not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer.~~ to first inform the program that they are withdrawing or resigning from the offer of financial support that they had previously accepted.*

- iii. **Proposed new (clean) by-laws language:**

*Section IX A.c. Section IX A.c. An acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student to first inform the program that they are withdrawing or resigning from the offer of financial support that they had previously accepted.*

After the last council meeting, where multiple members expressed concerns relating to the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, Dean Holsinger and Associate Dean Bernstein met with them to discuss concerns in more detail. Additionally, Dean Holsinger discussed options with the Provost's Office, who stated they are not inclined to withdraw from the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, as a vast majority of graduate schools are part of the Council of Graduate Schools.

After some more commentary and opinions about the deadline, Dean Holsinger emphasized that other schools may be organized such that certain programs such as Fine Arts are not under the purview of CGS and will investigate whether or not this is the case.

A vote is held for members of the Graduate Faculty Council, who approve the motion with a majority of the vote.

5. Discussion Item: Best Practice and Mentoring Guide for Graduate Faculty (draft)
  - a. Associate Dean Bernstein highlighted that, since that last meeting, this document has been heavily edited with feedback from members of the GFC, their constituents, and beyond. Specifically, the language has been clarified to reflect that this is intended to be a guide to best practices.
  - b. Dean Holsinger discussed some restructuring that occurred in the document. More explicitly, the first section now discusses supporting the progress of a student towards their degree, as that is the top priority of faculty advisors.
  - c. Meg Feely asked how this guide would apply to departments that have more professional-based programs, with students who aren't with them for more than a year or so. Mary Anne Amalaradjou stated that there is language listed in the document that states that this is a baseline that departments and programs can customize to their liking. Feely followed up with asking if language could be included clarifying that these guidelines are specific to faculty who have a mentor-type relationship with their students, which was approved by Dean Holsinger.
  - d. Alexander Woodward vocalized that the use of the word "best" may be off-putting and makes it hard to convey the flexibility of the document as it is intended to have. Woodward stated it would be nice to have a few sentences that highlight this is a guide and not a set of rules, and to remove the word "best."
  
6. Announcements
  - a. Husky Spirit Award
    - i. At the previous day's Spirit Awards, The Graduate School's GSPA Team was awarded with a Husky Spirit Award in the "Team Award" category.
  - b. Network for Enriched (Graduate) Mentorship – NEM; Chen Chen
    - i. Chen Chen visited the Graduate Faculty Council to announce the new Network for Enriched (Graduate) Mentorship program that is intended to start this fall. The core focus of this new initiative is to help and aid graduate students on issues outside of their dissertation and their research. Students will be matched with faculty members to gain perspective from someone who has been through the same process as them, and, hopefully, make the students who decide to participate feel more supported in all aspects of their lives at the university.
    - ii. Currently, there are three topical areas the mentorship network will look to explore: "Navigating Academic as...", "Academic Culture and Pathways," and "Life Beyond Academia."
  - c. New Faculty Onboarding – Megan Petsa

- i. Megan Petsa from The Graduate School presented on a new faculty onboarding page that will be used to highlight the significance of being a graduate faculty member, and to present members with tools and resources in one, cohesive place. This is designed specifically for new members as an introduction to their role and all it will encompass. However, this page can also be utilized by existing members of the faculty as a place they can frequently return to in order to seek guidance on how to mentor their students and provide them with appropriate resources and assistance.
7. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Diana Rios and seconded by Thomas Craemer. The Graduate Faculty Council meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.