

Graduate Council
GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES

Friday, September 29, 2023 • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Faculty Center

Members of the Graduate Council Present:

Selima Sultana, Chair	Aileen Reid
Diane Gill	Gwen Schug
Lakshmi Iyer	Johnette Walser
Brad Johnson	Wanda Williams
Dennis LaJeunesse	Robert Wells
Douglas Levine	Melody Patterson Zoch
Christian Moraru	Terry Chavis
Salih Rakap	

Graduate School Faculty Fellows Present:

Sarah Daynes	Hewan Girma
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Members of the Graduate Council Absent:

Diane Gill	Aileen Reid
Lakshmi Iyer	Johnette Walser
Salih Rakap	Wanda Williams

Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Present:

Greg Bell	Graduate School
Lisa Henline	University Registrar's Office

Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Absent:

Rachel Olsen	University Libraries
Jodi Pettazzoni	Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Academic Program Planning

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>
11:00 a.m.	I. Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2023 Motion to approve September 8, 2023 minutes (Johnson, Wells). Minutes approved.
11:03	II. Report of the Chair – Selima Sultana Chair Sultana reported the Graduate Faculty Forum was held on September 14. She stated that she would like to see greater numbers of graduate faculty attend the next forum and encouraged the Council to think of topics for future forums that would be of interest. Council members suggested that alternating the times that the forums are held and offering virtual options may result in increased attendance. They also noted that academic portfolio rubrics may be a good topic for discussion.

III. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School – Greg Bell

Dean Bell stated that he is speaking with the associate deans to get feedback on how the tuition waiver reallocation process went last year. He stated that his goal is to distribute waivers no later than February 1. The state provides waiver funding and designates certain amounts for in-state and certain amounts for out-of-state students while the waiver funding that comes from the Provost's Office is more flexible. The UNC System requires that out-of-state students who receive tuition waivers must receive at least a \$2000 stipend for an assistantship. Assistantship stipends are awarded by academic units/departments.

Dean Bell also reported that some programs are interested in piloting an enrollment deposit (four programs already use enrollment deposits ranging from \$25-3000). When students commit to a program with an enrollment deposit, they will be prompted to either register at that time or pay the enrollment deposit. The Graduate School wants to encourage earlier registration (such as in April or May) so that students can be advised by faculty. Students registering in April or May would receive their bills earlier but would not have to pay them until August. Receiving earlier bills would also give the students more time to prepare and address any issues such as incorrect residency status or documentation of private insurance. Earlier registration would be challenging for international students and they would not be required to pay an enrollment deposit.

The Graduate School is also reviewing the process of allowing students to defer admission. Many students defer admission and change their mind about when they want to enroll. One suggested process is that students could be given a credit to reapply and use their prior application when they are ready to enroll. Council members commented that one reason students commit without being sure if they will enroll is so they can view non-academic assistantships in Spartan Talent (they may not want to enroll if they cannot get an assistantship). Dean Bell stated that moving the assistantship process to Slate would address these concerns but that they are still working on that process.

Dean Bell also reported that the Graduate School is looking into how to implement the Fresh Start Policy, which was previously paused due to implementation concerns. The Graduate School will be able to look at program GPAs and not just overall GPA.

Dean Bell informed the Council that he is looking to make a change to the policy regarding dissertation chairs due to an issue that has arisen with the Joint Social Work PhD program. The program is jointly delivered with NC A&T State University, and students that are admitted are randomly assigned to either UNCG or A&T (they take classes on both campuses). Sometimes UNCG students want an A&T faculty member to chair their dissertation committee (or vice versa), which goes against the policy that dissertation chairs must be graduate faculty at the student's institution. A&T has handled this issue by making all Social Work program faculty full graduate faculty, but Dean Bell is concerned that doing this at UNCG may have unintended consequences. His proposed solution is to amend the policy to indicate that A&T Social Work faculty may serve as

thesis/dissertation chairs (since the master's program is shared as well). The Social Work program also requires that at least one UNCG and one A&T faculty member serve on each dissertation committee.

- 11:28 **IV. Report of the Graduate Student Association – Alexander Grindstaff**
- Alexander reported that the GSA has been educating new student senators and that they are seeing the highest level of engagement they have seen in the past few years. Alexander inquired of the Council the best way to share student concerns and stated that he is following up with the GSA regarding how they wish to share concerns also.
- Terry stated there is a 3% increase in fees across the board. Tuition will not be increased for in-state students but out-of-state and international students are concerned. Dean Bell is working with the GSA to hold student forums regarding tuition and fees.
- 11:38 **V. Report of the Graduate Curriculum Committee – Robert Wells**
- *GCC Information Item (from September 22, 2023 meeting)*
- Chair Wells reported that three program revision proposals were approved at the last meeting. The committee also discussed that some departments may need to request online delivery for some courses in online programs due to the new CLSS system implemented by the University Registrar's Office.
- 11:48 **VI. Report of the Policies & Procedures Committee – Dennis LaJeuensee**
- *Certificates/independent study courses*
 - After discussion, the Council proposed the following policy: With the approval of the Graduate Program Director, students may count up to 3 hours of independent study toward a graduate certificate. Thesis/capstone/dissertation courses cannot count toward a certificate (Wells, Levine). Approved with 1 recusal.
 - *School of Education visiting student program*
 - The Policies and Procedures committee has discussed the School of Education's request to submit screenshots of NC teaching licenses in lieu of unofficial transcripts for admission to a visiting student program. Holt Wilson will be attending the next Policies and Procedures committee meeting to address concerns.
 - *GPA requirement for graduation*
 - Graduate students are required to have a 3.00 GPA to graduate but there is discussion regarding whether only courses on the plan of study should be included in calculating this GPA or all of the graduate courses a student has taken. Dean Bell will bring more information to a future Policies and Procedures committee meeting for

continued discussion. The concern is related to a student who had a low GPA from a certificate program, was dismissed from a degree program, and is seeking to return.

- *Upcoming topics for the Policies and Procedures committee*
 - International students
 - Allow Validential degree evaluations in addition to NACES evaluations
 - Request to return to conditional admission
 - Tighten up language around students required to take an hour of coursework in their final semester
 - Request to lower the standards for admission to an accelerated program

11:58 **VII. Report of the Student Appeals Committee—No Report**

12:00 pm **VIII. Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee – Selima Sultana**

Chair Sultana reported that the Faculty Senate recently held a forum and that trainings for rubrics, academic dashboards, and revenue/expenditure financial spreadsheets are ongoing as well. The UNC System is reviewing post-tenure review processes for the system institutions. The Provost plans to provide safety procedures that faculty can share in the classroom. Revisions to the faculty workload policy are ongoing and a draft is due to the Provost in December. The Faculty Senate Budget Committee is reviewing criteria for the funding provided by the UNC System to incentivize faculty retirement.

12:30 **IX. Adjournment**