

Graduate Council
GRADUATE COUNCIL
MINUTES

Friday, April 12, 2024 • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Faculty Center

Members of the Graduate Council Present:

Selima Sultana, Chair	Gwen Schug
Diane Gill	Robert Wells
Brad Johnson	Wanda Williams
Dennis LaJeunesse	Melody Patterson Zoch
Doug Levine	Terry Chavis
Christian Moraru	Alexander Grindstaff
Salih Rakap	

Graduate School Faculty Fellows Present:

Sarah Daynes Hewan Girma

Guest

Catherine Scot-Little

Members of the Graduate Council Absent:

Lakshmi Iyer (excused) Aileen Reid (excused)
Johnette Walser

Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Present:

Greg Bell	Graduate School
Lisa Henline	University Registrar's Office
Anna Craft (on behalf of Rachel Olsen)	University Libraries
Jodi Pettazzoni	Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Academic Program Planning

Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Absent:

Lisa Henline University Registrar's Office

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>
11:00 a.m.	I. Approval of Minutes from February 23, 2024 Motion to approve February 23, 2024 (Johnson, Wells). Minutes approved.
11:03	II. Strategic Plan Update: Giant Steps 2.0—Wade Maki Graduate School Faculty Fellows, Hewan Girma and Sarah Daynes, presented on behalf of Wade Maki. They stated that the Strategic Plan will build on the existing plan and will be understood as a 2.0 version. The current plan will be tweaked to focus on what UNCG does best and to accommodate the changing landscape in North Carolina and in higher education in general. The UNC System Strategic Plan “Higher Expectations” is also being updated. The UNC System Funding Model now contains performance-based metrics. The Strategic Advisory

Committee, composed of faculty and staff, will hold listening sessions, including two open online forums on 4/22 and 4/23 (both at 3 pm). The committee will create a draft over the summer and have it ready by the fall. The plan will be presented to the Chancellor in December 2024.

11:18 **III. Report of the Chair – Selima Sultana**

Chair Sultana encouraged the Council to take part in the strategic planning process and to attend the open online forums if possible. She reported that the Graduate Faculty Meeting took place on 4/8 and was an opportunity to share the work of the Graduate Council with the graduate faculty. At the meeting, Dean Bell stated that an APR focused on graduate programs may take place in the next year. Faculty expressed a desire for greater involvement in the APR process.

Chair Sultana reflected on her time as chair of the Graduate Council and expressed the purpose it gave her. She thanked the Council members for their service. Chair Sultana thanked Dean Bell for his collaboration and thanked Jodi Pettazzoni for her insight regarding accreditation and related matters. She also thanked Kate Humphries, Lynn Wyrick, and Ian Draves for their support of the Council.

11:28 **IV. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School – Greg Bell**

Dean Bell thanked Chair Sultana for her leadership and good ideas. He also thanked Salih Rakap, Wanda Williams, and Doug Levine, who are rolling off the Council. He congratulated Terry Chavis on his election as President of the Graduate Student Association and reported that Alexander Grindstaff will be holding a different role in leadership next year. Dean Bell stated that the first week of April is considered Graduate Student Appreciation week and provided an update on the Graduate Student Showcase that was held recently. Seventy-five students and approximately 25 judges participated. The showcase was an opportunity for the community to see the work of the graduate students, and the judges found it to be inspiring. Three graduate students were selected to accompany Dean Bell to the General Assembly on Graduate Education Day and advocate for graduate education and its impact on the state.

Dean Bell thanked Dennis LaJeunesse for agreeing to chair the Graduate Council and stated that the Graduate Curriculum Committee will meet next week to review APR discontinuations. Teachout plans have been received for the discontinued programs and Dean Bell provided the following update:

- PBCs have a sunset date of Spring 2026
- Master's programs* will cease instruction by the end of Spring 2026 and have a sunset date of May 2027. The time between the end of instruction and the sunset date allows students to complete the necessary clinical, studio, internship, and/or thesis work.
- *The MSN/MBA program has a sunset date of May 2028 to accommodate student needs.

- Doctoral programs will cease instruction by May 2028 with a sunset date of May 2030 to allow time for research and dissertation work.

Dean Bell also reported that graduate fellowships have mostly been distributed and that a second round will be sent out following student responses. April 15 is the date when students can be required to commit to financial offers. Some departments have expressed challenges regarding this date, and Dean Bell will share this feedback with the Council of Graduate Schools.

Dean Bell shared that at the Graduate Faculty Meeting there was discussion of what to consider when reviewing the graduate portfolio. He has also discussed this in other meetings and received the following feedback:

- Need to determine the vision/purpose for graduate education
- Emphasize strengths such as diversity and interdisciplinarity instead of downsizing
- Need guidance on overall vision/direction of UNCG

Dean Bell explained that the next APR process will not involve an external company. He acknowledged the need for UNCG to better support graduate students. The Council requested clarity regarding how the budget is changing and how funds can best be utilized. Dean Bell stated that this has been the first year on the new funding model and that more information should be available in the fiscal year beginning in July.

11:43 **V. Report of the Graduate Student Association – Alexander Grindstaff**

Alexander Grindstaff thanked the Graduate Council for allowing him to serve and also for letting him speak at the Graduate Faculty meeting. He urged the Council to consider the human element of students in the strategic planning process and to make graduate students a priority at UNCG. Alexander shared that he was recently approached by a graduate student who has been delayed in graduating due to a concern with a faculty member. Because the student indicated that the department and dean did not satisfactorily address the issue, the Council recommended that the student meet with Dean Bell. Terry Chavis spoke as well and emphasized that it can be challenging for graduate students to raise concerns because of the impact it may have on their funding and future prospects.

11:53 **VI. Report of the Graduate Curriculum Committee – Robert Wells**

- *GCC Information Item (from March electronic vote)*

Chair Wells reported that 8 curriculum proposals were approved electronically in March. The GCC had a meeting scheduled for April 5 but it was moved to April 19 to allow extra time for APR discontinuations to be ready for GCC review.

12:03 pm **VII. Report of the Policies & Procedures Committee – Dennis LaJeunesse**

- *Policy revision*
 - *Academic Standing*
 - The Council put forth a motion to approve the revised Academic Standing policy (with the recent revision that graduate students will be academically dismissed if they earn 3 grades of B-, C+, F, or U or any combination thereof OR if they earn 2 grades of F or U) (Wells, Williams). The motion was approved with 1 abstention.
- *Proposed policies*
 - *Academic Recovery Appeal*
 - *Graduate Student Academic Renewal*
 - The Council reviewed the proposed policies and will discuss them further and vote on the policies at a future date.

12:13 pm **VIII. Report of the Student Appeals Committee**

There were no appeals to report upon, but the Council briefly discussed graduate students can appeal grades and also decisions made by UNCG officials. The formal appeal process begins in the academic unit and then goes to the Student Appeals Committee.

12:15 **IX. Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee – Selima Sultana**

Chair Sultana provided an overview of the role of the Graduate Council representative to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. She indicated that the representative mostly has a listening role but can provide feedback. Chair Sultana recommended that the incoming Graduate Council chair, Dennis LaJeunesse serve in this role for the next year, and he agreed. Chair Sultana also reported that the Faculty Senate is going to review the UNCG Constitution and that more inclusive practices were discussed for the Faculty Marshal policy. The Faculty Senate has also convened an Academic Program Planning task force to make recommendations as to what future program portfolio review should look like.

12:30 **X. Adjournment**