

*Graduate Council*  
**GRADUATE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**

Friday, January 30, 2026 • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Virtual

**Members of the Graduate Council Present:**

Ben Dyson, Chair	Salih Rakap
Rick Barton	Gwen Schug
Dora Gicheva	Jin Su
Brad Johnson	Robert Wells
Dennis LaJeunesse	Wanda Williams
Jocelyn Smith Lee	Melody Patterson Zoch
Marianne LeGreco	Nooshin KianvashRad
Vladislav Maksimov	Sarah Posidis-Kowalski

**Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Present:**

Greg Bell	Graduate School
Jodi Pettazzoni	Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Academic Program Planning

**Ex Officio & Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Lisa Henline	University Registrar's Office
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<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>
11:00 a.m.	<p><b>I. Approval of Minutes from October 31, 2025</b></p> <p>Motion to approve October 31, 2025 minutes (Johnson, Rakap). Minutes approved.</p>
11:03	<p><b>II. Report of the Chair—Ben Dyson</b></p> <p>Chair Dyson welcomed the council with a Maori greeting and indicated he would provide remarks later regarding the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and other concerns.</p>
11:13	<p><b>III. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School—Greg Bell</b></p> <p>Dean Bell distributed a report from the Council of Graduate Schools prior to the meeting and shared highlights from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large land grant and R1 institutions have seen increases in enrollment</li><li>• Smaller institutions have seen decreases in enrollment</li><li>• UNCG is in between these two categories but is doing well</li></ul>

compared to national trends

- Education and health sciences are up nationally
  - Nursing enrollments are up at UNCG and education enrollments are flat
- Mathematics and computer science programs have seen declines across the board
  - Partially impacted by decreases in international student enrollment

Dean Bell also stated that as of census the Graduate School is up by about 270 students. The growth is particularly driven by part-time master's students.

Dean Bell reported that tuition waiver funds were distributed to academic units at the end of 2025. A 3% tuition increase has been requested, but a decision will not be made by the Board of Governors until later in the spring.

Dean Bell discussed that the fellowship process is open and that students must be nominated by faculty. The first round of evaluation for the most prestigious fellowships is going on now, and additional rounds are due in February and March. Dean Bell confirmed that graduate programs can continue to abide by the April 15 deadline and just need to make funding offers before then (they do not need to be confirmed as communicated by Enrollment Management).

Dean Bell shared that the Graduate School was able to provide financial assistance to 10 students to prevent their registration from being cancelled. A lower number of students needed this assistance than in recent years. Other initiatives that the Graduate School is providing for student success include subsidizing tuition for students in accelerated master's programs so they pay undergraduate rates and a new initiative for doctoral candidates and MFA students completing their theses. Instead of just paying a small subsidy for health insurance, the Graduate School will pay the entire health insurance bill at the lower level for these students.

11:28      **IV. Report of the Graduate Student Association – Nooshin KianvashRad**

Nooshin discussed that she has been trying to make connections with alumni to invite them to campus for the upcoming event planned for April 6. More details will be forthcoming, and Career Professional Development is participating as well. GSA is still seeking additional companies to attend.

11:38      **V. Report of the Graduate Curriculum Committee – Salih Rakap**

- *GCC Information Items (from meetings on November 21, 2025, December 5, 2025, and January 23, 2026)*

Chair Rakap stated that this has been a busy time of the year for the GCC. In November 91 proposals were reviewed, 61 proposals were reviewed in December, and 26 proposals were reviewed in January. Most of the proposals have been approved with just a few that need revisions or further review. In March or April the committee will review the CIM

process and the new syllabus policy.

11:48 **VI. Report of the Policies & Procedures Committee – Brad Johnson**

- *Updates from January 16, 2026 meeting*
  - New policy on curriculum changes and graduate admissions
    - The committee discussed that the timeline for program changes does not align with the admissions timeline, and students may enroll in a program that is different from how it is when they applied. The committee discussed having a longer timeline to implement program changes or an earlier deadline for program changes to help the timelines line up better. The committee is looking into updating CIM so that programs can describe the impact of program changes on current/admitted students and provide a teachout plan.
  - Incomplete Grades
    - Chair Johnson is working on a formalized incomplete grade contract/agreement that would provide a timeline and list of expectations for resolving incomplete grades. The form would be routed through graduate program directors and filed with the Graduate School in order for the incomplete grade to be awarded (not just awarded through UNCGenie).
  - Withdrawal Due to Extenuating Circumstances
    - Maria has provided a new draft of the withdrawal policy and the committee discussed if students be prohibited from using it continue the next semester if placed on probation or dismissal. The committee acknowledged there may be some students who are ready to continue and also noted it may be difficult to obtain instructor feedback between semesters. They also discussed the Graduate School sending a midterm communication to encourage faculty to address concerns early.
  - Annual Reviews of Doctoral Students
    - The Graduate School is interested in setting up a dashboard like the one utilized by NC State that displays outstanding student milestones but has run into some challenges since NC State uses a different platform. The Graduate School is working with ITS on reports that may be helpful.

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

12:00 pm      **VIII. Report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee – Ben Dyson**

Chair Dyson stated that Wade Maki and Randy Penfield discussed a resolution to denounce ICE at the last Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting, and the resolution was tabled until the next meeting. Faculty Senate has been discussing these issues as well.

Chair Dyson thanked Dean Bell for continuing to support non-NC resident students in the distribution of tuition waivers.

Chair Dyson discussed the updates from Financial Aid regarding changes to amounts of funding available for students, such as Grad Plus loans. Dean Bell shared the slides from the Financial Aid presentation and reported that a relatively small number of students (150-200) utilize Grad Plus loans. Chair Dyson stated that with reduced financial aid available it may be a good idea for UNCG to market itself as a more cost-effective institution. He also suggested that public lectures may be a good avenue for promotion.

12:30      **IX. Adjournment**