

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 16, 2025 – Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Annette Barnes (DNP/MSN), Jennifer Bergner (MSME), Joshua Bolton (PUBCOM), Melissa Bugdal (At-Large Perdue School Rep), Ryan Conrath (ENGL), Yvonne Downie-Hanley (MBA), Clifton Griffin (Dean of Graduate School), Allen Koehler (AVP Enrollment Management), Elizabeth Kressin, (Registrar), Art Lembo (GIS), Eric Liebgold (BIO), Scott Mazzetti (HHPF), Stephen Oby (MSW), Heather Porter (Seidel Rep), Jessica Scott (OGS), Mark Shaffer (CHHS Rep), Ignaciyas Soosaipillai (CADR), Christine Spillson (Fulton School Rep), Brian Stiegler (MED Higher Ed), Holly Thompson (GSC), Star Weaver (MAT)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Maida Finch (EDD), James Fox (EDLD), Aston Gonzalez (HIST), Ruth Malone (CURRMED),

I. Call to Order – 3:30pm.

II. Good News

- C. Spillson – The Creative Writing M.A. has official started.
- A. Lembo – The GIS Accelerated Masters is with the Henson Curriculum Committee
- S. Weaver – MAT had 1 application for 2025. There are 6 for 2026.

III. Minutes

- September minutes were submitted and unanimously approved without corrections.

IV. GA Contract Issue – E. Liebgold

- Continue to have issues related to GA Contracts
 - HR claims there are administrative errors
 - Students are not getting paid for months
 - Students are not aware of mandatory fees
 - Bursar won't remove late fees
- C. Griffin – The Grad School is fielding many of these complaints. Prior to WorkDay, all GA contracts flowed through Jessica Scott. All aspects of the contract could be reviewed before getting to HR eliminating many concerns. Jessica does not have full WorkDay access to GA contracts at this time.
 - C. Griffin has shared concerns with Aurora Edenhard-Pepe and Jessica Clark.
 - C. Griffin and J. Scott is meeting with Princely Muro and HR to come up with solution.
 - If efforts stall, a motion may need to happen from Grad Council.
- A. Lembo – Wanted to reiterate that WorkDay contract issues are happening with adjuncts as well.
- Fees
 - H. Thompson – Can due dates for GA fees be moved back?
 - C. Griffin – Would encourage GSC to make a request keeping in mind that there are many non-GA grad students that are also feeling financial distress
 - J. Bergner – Fee amounts are very high. Can they be due at the end of semester? Grades would be withheld until fees are paid.
 - C. Griffin – Students should be aware that they can register for classes in early summer and fall bills aren't due until August.

V. Grad Commencement – M. Shaffer

- Challenges with holding ceremony in Maggs
 - Limited space to line up.
 - Very hot in gymnasium
 - Floor coverings did not look good for such an important event
- C. Griffin – May ceremony staying on campus. Group is aware of these challenges and are working on them. Overall, still supportive of a separate graduate ceremony where students can be hooded.
- H. Thompson – GSC did a survey and received 48 responses which have been shared with Commencement Committee
- Staffing
 - Very important that staff are trained and are comfortable with roles.

VI. GSC Update – Holly Thompson

- Assembly held their first meeting and has 10 members. Still trying to get representation from different programs.
- Social Events
 - Had booth at Flock Fest
 - Scheduling social for end of the month
- Working on some professional development opportunities

VII. Dean's Remarks – C. Griffin

- Finalizing first direct admission program with HHPF. Have had meetings with Perdue to discuss MBA utilizing direct admission.
- There are 120-175 grad students using Grad Plus program.
 - Some discussion about grandfathering in students and seeing what other programs are available.
 - Mike Elliott is going to a conference and hoping to get more information.
- Graduate Strategic Plan
 - Sent out SWOT analysis.
 - Follow-up meeting is scheduled. M. Diriker will lead initiative to make sure our plan is aligned with campus plan.
 - They are still looking for people to participate in the SU overall strategic plan. Please consider participating and representing graduate education.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

Submitted by Jessica Scott