

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 16, 2026 – Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Annette Barnes, DNP, MSN
Amy Benjamin, Grad School
Jennifer Bergner, MSME
Stephanie Bernhard, ENG
Rachel Buchanan, MSW
Melissa Bugdal, At-Large Perdue School Rep
Yvonne Downie-Hanley, MBA
Maida Finch, EDD
James Fox, EDLD
Aston Gonzalez, HIST
Clifton Griffin, Dean of Graduate School
Allen Koehler, AVP Enrollment Management
Elizabeth Kressin, Registrar
Ruth Malone, CURRMED
Scott Mazzetti, HHPF
Stephen Oby, MSW
Mineoseok Park, At-Large Henson School Rep
Jessica Scott, Grad School

Ignaciyas Soosaipillai, CADR
Christine Spillson, Fulton School Rep
Brian Stiegler, MED Higher ED
Holly Thompson, GSC President

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joshua Bolton, PUBCOM
Lauren McDermott, GIS
Eric Liebgold, BIO
Heather Porter, Seidel Rep
Mark Shaffer, CHHS Rep
Star Weaver, MAT

GUEST:

Farren Christ, Incoming GSC President

I. Call to Order – 3:31pm.

II. Good News

- A. Gonzalez – Charles Reigle has received a Fulbright.
- R. Malone – Dr. Chelsea Taylor was selected as the Wicomico County Teacher of the Year. Chelsea was in the Ed.D. program.
- C. Griffin – We had a successful Graduate Student Appreciation Week. J. Scott worked with the GSC and there were a lot of great events scheduled for grad students.
- H. Thompson – GSC has several events coming up.
- J. Bergner – Congratulations to H. Thompson for graduating.

III. Minutes

- March minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

IV. Curriculum – A. Barnes

- GCC presented a list of graduate curriculum that was approved at the 4/15/26 GCC meeting. The following were approved:
 - HIST 560 – Course change – “Modern China”
 - NURS 526 – Course change – “Supervision to Improve Instruction” – Put on Hold

- B.A./M.A.T. – New Accelerated Program – History
- GCC reviewed the new curriculum guide. Several changes were needed as the information was not applicable to grad curriculum. Those changes were sent back to Faculty Senate.

V. AI Task Force Update – M. Bugdal

- Charge of task force was to make sure SU was caught up with policies and procedures for how faculty and staff would use AI
 - APC is concerned with misuse of AI in classrooms.
 - ID&D is concerned with security issues.
 - Some departments are pushing back on AI usage.
 - University is seeking funding sources for AI literacy.
 - Grad Council was not on the distribution list for the AI Task Force information.
 M. Bugdal provided those documents to the committee and encouraged them to send any questions to her.

VI. Credit Language – J. Scott

- There has been confusion from students regarding our policy on how many credits can be transferred from other universities.
- Current policy that minimum of 21 semester hours must be completed at SU is based on a 30-credit degree completion. Our programs range from 30-80.
- Registrar and Grad School would like to make this language clearer.
- J. Scott and L. Kressin will draft language and send to GC

VII. Chair's Remarks – Maida Finch

- The survey regarding the Provost Search was sent to Faculty Senate President.
- Anita Brown will add Grad Council meeting dates to the Faculty Senate website.
- We are moving forward with advocating for Grad Assistants (COLA increase and number of positions)
 - C. Griffin – Memo should be sent to Jessica Clark and Aurora Edenhart-Pepe. It should be co-sponsored by Grad Council and GSC.
 - Need to be timely as budgets are being developed.
 - Would like a consideration of a 5% increase now and that all GA's should be considered for future COLA's.
 - Student Health requirements for online students – will schedule a meeting with Lindsey Parker when she returns from maternity leave.
 - Elections – Both Chair and Vice-Chair will be available at Sept. meeting.

VIII. GSC Remarks – H. Thompson

- Thanks to Jessica and Clifton for all the activities scheduled during Graduate Student Appreciation Week
- Welcome to Farren Christ, the incoming GSC President.
- Please help us by promoting our events in the upcoming week.

IX. Dean's Remarks

- Strategic Enrollment – Will follow the strategic plan and determine a reasonable enrollment plan for graduate programs.
- Summer Research – Have received requests for research money to support thesis writing efforts. Still believe that students finishing their thesis or dissertation should be enrolled.
- Make sure you encourage graduate faculty to apply to serve on the Provost search committee.

X. Other Remarks

- J. Scott – With new accessibility guidelines going into effect, the Grad School will work to make sure all academic manuscripts are in accessible form for ProQuest and SOAR.
- S. Bernhard – Creative Writing students are reading poetry at Buzz Word in Ocean City

Meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Submitted by Jessica Scott