

**The University of Alabama in Huntsville  
Graduate Council Meeting  
Minutes**

**Friday / November 18, 2022  
2:00 p.m. in SSB 201**

- Members Present:** Maria Pour, COE  
Yu Lei, COE  
Nicholas Loyd, COE  
Sophia Marinova, COB  
Xiaotong Li, COB  
Joe Conway, CAHS  
Jodi Price, CAHS  
Tim Newman, COS  
John Mecikalski, COS  
Tanya Sysoeva, COS  
Angela Hollingsworth, CON  
Tracy Lakin, CON  
Hamsa Mahafza, CoED  
Paul Whitehead, CoED  
Jon Hakkila, Chair\*  
David Moore, Library\*  
Janet Waller, Registrar\*
- Members Absent:** Michael Anderson, COE\*  
Wafa Hakim-Orman, COB\*  
Dylan Baun, CAHS (Proxy: Joe Conway)  
Robert Griffin, COS\*  
Louise O’Keefe, CON\* (Proxy: Pam O’Neal)  
Lenora Smith, CON (Proxy: Angela Hollingsworth)
- Visitors:** Suzanne Simpson, IR  
Judith Schneider, Materials Science  
Larry Carey, COS  
Audrey Jupiter, Graduate School  
Gracie Lester, Graduate School  
Simone Frazier, Graduate School  
Susan Knight, Graduate School

---

*\*Non-Voting Member*

**1. Roll Call**

*A record of attendance was recorded as noted above.*

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

*Motion was made by Dr. Sophia Marinova to approve the graduate council meeting agenda.*

*Motion was seconded by Dr. Angela Hollingsworth. Motion carried.*

### 3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of October 21, 2022

*Motion was made by Dr. Angela Hollingsworth to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 21, 2022. Motion was seconded by Dr. Tim Newman. Motion carried.*

### 4. Announcements

- a. Graduate Resource Coordinator – Simone Frazier
- b. Graduate Records Coordinator – TBD
- c. 3-Minute Thesis Competition – November 2, 2022

*Dr. Hakkila provided updates about graduate-focused events and topics, as listed above. He also announced the following winners for the recent 3-Minute Thesis Competition, all of whom are enrolled in the College of Science: First Place – Todd McKinney, Second Place – Boshra Rezvanian, Third Place – Shahid Khan.*

### 5. Curricular Items

- a. College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
  - i. New Course: CM 591/491

*Dr. Joe Conway provided commentary on item 5.a.i., emphasizing that two additional learning outcomes and assignments are included in CM 591 to demonstrate graduate rigor. Council approved.*

- b. College of Nursing
  - i. Course Change: NUS 784
  - ii. Course Change: NUS 785

*Dr. Pam O'Neal provided commentary on items 5.b.i. and ii, explaining that the courses are open to all students. Council approved both items.*

- iii. Course Change (delete): NUR 608
- iv. Course Change (delete): NUR 609
- v. Course Change (delete): NUR 624
- vi. Course Change (delete): NUR 625
- vii. Course Change (delete): NUR 626
- viii. Course Change (delete): NUR 627
- ix. Course Change (delete): NUR 628

*Dr. Pam O'Neal provided commentary on items 5.b.iii. through ix., explaining that the reason for the course deletions is because the courses are no longer offered and that deleting them will help clean-up the course catalog. Council approved all items.*

- x. New Course: NUS 710 – Independent Study
- xi. New Course: NUS 713 – Special Topics

*Dr. Pam O'Neal provided commentary on items 5.b.x. and xi., explaining that both courses are for Joint Ph.D. Nursing Science Program students. Council approved both items.*

- c. Materials Science
  - i. Program Change – MS in Material Science

*Dr. Judith Schneider provided commentary on item 5.c.i., reminding council that this was a resubmission due to the request at the October 21, 2022, graduate council meeting to remove all 400-level courses from the paperwork. Council approved.*

## **6. Graduate Faculty Nominations – For Membership Consideration**

- a. College of Engineering
  - i. Langendorf, Samuel – *Council approved.*
  
- b. College of Science
  - i. Bacon, Gregory – *Council conditionally approved with the stipulation that his term would be shortened to two years.*
  - ii. Chang, Hongrok – *After a discussion of pertinent information from the Graduate Handbook that stipulates research faculty members’ contracts must be reviewed annually, council conditionally approved as a full (not full & indefinite) member with a one-year term, and his appointment must be renewed annually.*
  - iii. Fix, John – *Council approved.*
  - iv. Jenkins, Neal – *Council did not approve since he holds only a Master’s degree and lacks the best practice of having at least 10 years’ industry experience to make up for the lack of a terminal degree. Dr. Paul Whitehead made motion to reject; Dr. Angela Hollingsworth seconded motion; Dr. Tim Newman abstained from voting.*
  - v. Mendenhall, Eric – *Council approved.*
  - vi. Ober, Karen – *Council approved.*
  - vii. Pittman, Shannon – *Council approved.*
  - viii. Porter, Megan – *Council approved.*
  - ix. Read, Evan – *Council did not approve since he holds only a Master’s degree and lacks the best practice of having at least 10 years’ industry experience to make up for the lack of a terminal degree. Dr. Paul Whitehead made motion to reject; Dr. Angela Hollingsworth seconded motion; Dr. Tim Newman abstained from voting.*
  - x. Stough, Sarah – *Council approved.*

## **7. SACSCOC Fifth-Year Review: 400/500 Level Course Syllabi and Graduate Rigor**

In preparation for the university’s next SACSCOC review, Dr. Suzanne Simpson explained that what we provided them previously were examples of the policies that determine the credits, but what we didn’t show was the process of actually following the policies; we provided evidence of the policies but we didn’t show enough follow through. We did provide many different types of documentation, including courses, programs, new programs, and deleted programs but it was still not enough. So, now we feel like we must provide a description of the actual process, such as the assigning of the credits, the course types and levels, and then show evidence of that process like the graduate council minutes during which the courses were approved, the difference between the course approval forms, the corresponding syllabi, and then the program approval forms – basically, we show all evidence of the program process, development of the courses, approval of all of the rigor based on the syllabi – the entire process of how the paper trail is formed to get curricular items into the catalog. Once we develop these things, we will

have the evidence but we must find good evidence. For example, we could go back to 2019 and pull different types of courses in every college from across the institution to show the different ways we are actually following these policies and implementing the rigor, at least at the graduate level.

Dr. Hakkila added that going forward, we need to demonstrate to SACSCOC that we are aware of our policies and are doing our best to adhere to them. The obvious place to demonstrate this is to compare cross-listed syllabi to show two different levels of rigor. Another way would be to evaluate some type of program that demonstrates rigor in course sequence. The deadline for collecting this data is the end of March 2023; we will start by gathering cross-listed syllabi.

Dr. Simpson said the biggest thing to remember about our accreditor is that they don't want us to go back and make up something but to show that we have identified we have a problem, we are addressing the problem in graduate council, and that we demonstrate that we analyze these problem courses to ensure we have evidence that we are improving our process. In order to do this, we will have to provide multiple types of documentation for them to review. One thing that we, in Institutional Research, can do is collect evidence for a random sample of cross-listed courses and then send the results to the departments to see where we currently stand.

In closing this topic, Dr. Hakkila told council that the most important thing they can do is to let other faculty know now that the syllabi needs to be revised to reflect graduate rigor, so that the next time cross-listed courses are taught the syllabi reflects different assignments that result in the assessment of different outcomes.

Dr. Tim Newman made a motion to begin implementing the steps discussed. Dr. Paul Whitehead seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **8. JUMP: Form Sub-Committee**

Since the last discussion on this topic, which occurred at the October 21, 2022, graduate council meeting, the Dean's Council met and decided that both faculty and administrators should serve on this committee when formed. This combination will better ensure that different viewpoints are shared rather than the committee being comprised of faculty only. Dr. Hamsa Mahafza made the suggestion to also consider having representatives from the Registrar's office and advisor pool.

#### **9. Continued Discussion of Probation/Dismissal: What Happens to "C" Grades for Graduate Students?**

*To address the continued need to finalize the Probation and Dismissal procedures, Dr. Hakkila presented a document titled, "What happens when a UAH graduate student receives a grade of C or lower?" Dr. Hakkila led a discussion that addressed numerous scenarios and different approaches on how to handle such situations.*

#### **10. Zero Credit Thesis/Dissertation Option**

*Currently at UAH, most programs have a one-credit hour option for students who have completed all aspects of their theses/dissertations/DNP papers, including submission and copyediting, after the published deadlines but prior to commencement. To further assist with the financial burden placed on students who find themselves in this situation, the decision was made at a recent Dean's Council meeting to allow academic programs to create a zero-credit variable*

*research course; however, students will have only one term to take the zero-credit course. The implementation date of this zero-credit course option will occur sometime after the Spring 2023 term.*

**11. For the Good of the Order**

*Dr. Paul Whitehead made the observation that the scheduled date of the December meeting was after commencement. As a result, it was decided that the December meeting would be moved up, to occur sometime during the week of finals.*

**12. Adjourn**

*The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.*