
**GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL
Minutes of 20 November 2025**

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:06 on 20 November 2025 in Walwood Hall Bertha Davis Room 111W by Marcellis Zondag, Chair.

Members Present: Upul Attanayake, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Micky Carignano, Krithyna Fermin, Jennifer Fiore, Lori Gray, Michael Harnar, Michelle Hrivnyak, Larry Simon, Marcellis Zondag

Members Absent: Claire Binford, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Peter Gustafson, Cindy Linn

Advisory Members Present: Carrie Cumming

Ex Officio: Laura Teichert

Guests: Tycho Fredericks, Chair, Industrial and Entrepreneurial Engineering and Engineering Management; Malia Roberts, Graduate College; Kelly McDonnell, Counselor, Education Counseling Psychology

Quorum

A quorum was present with 11 members in attendance, of the nine members needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Byrd-Jacobs, seconded by Zondag, to accept the amended agenda with the addition of the Memorandum of Action (MOA) Drop/Withdrawal Extension. The motion carried.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Carignano, seconded by Simon, to approve the 23 October 2025 minutes as presented. The motion carried.

Action Items

[MOTION] It was moved by Gray, seconded by Simon to approve the Engineering Management (Accelerated) (ENMQ) curriculum proposal. The motion carried.

[MOTION] It was moved by Fiore, seconded by Zondag to approve the Doctor of Philosophy in Organizational Change Leadership (OCLD) program proposal. The motion carried.

Reports of Officers

Chair Zondag did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Teichert reported that not all Faculty Senate councils are familiar with 2023 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Ad Hoc Committee Report. The report will be distributed via email to the GSC members. Ex Officio Teichert inquired about GSC process for developing MOAs in the past. Chair Zondag responded that those involved with the topic, draft the MOA outside of the meeting before bringing it to GSC, with MOAs typically addressed during the spring semester.

Reports of University Representatives

Byrd-Jacobs reported the results of the Graduate Student Research and Travel Grants. There were 51 applications for travel, with 35 funded (69%), and 21 applications for research, with 14 funded (67%). The Graduate College anticipates a similar number of applications for the spring awards. The Graduate College held a Dissertation Writing Workshop with 27 students in attendance. The Three-Minute Thesis was hosted this week, with nine students competing. The winners were Madisyn Slater, Master, Psychology; Rosemarie Davidson, Doctoral, Psychology; Jana Vuckovic, Doctoral, Biology; and the People's Choice was Bincy Binny, Doctoral, Chemistry. There will be another 3Three-Minute Thesis competition in the spring. One of the first-place winners will go on to regionals in Kansas City, Missouri.

Students from WMU have attended regionals for eight years, with a finalist in 2020, and the Midwest regional winner in 2022.

Fermin reported that 12,565 items were collected for the Montgomery Essential Needs Drive. Additionally, Graduate Student Association hosted “Pie the Presidents” event on 5 November. GSA has disseminated over \$15,000 in student support so far this year. There were 11 proposals for conference attendance, three for certifications, and nine Registered Student Organization (RSO) events and operations project applications. For spring 2026, the GSA Gala will be an off-campus formal event. GSA is also standardizing policies and procedures and undergoing an evaluation.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Byrd-Jacobs mentioned that Diana Hearit needs to be scheduled for the All-University Awards process at the GSC January meeting.

Announcements

MOA 23/02: *Drop/Withdrawal* Extension will occur in the December GSC meeting.

With Fiore’s absence, Ex Officio Teichert will take minutes at GSC December meeting.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Fermin, seconded by Simon, to adjourn the meeting at 3:42 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Graduate Studies Council will meet next on 11 December 2025 via Webex at 3 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Jennifer Fiore, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 11 December 2025.