
Graduate Studies Council

Minutes of 20 April 2023

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:03 p.m. on 20 April 2023 via Webex videoconferencing by Dawn Anderson, chair.

Members in Attendance: Dawn Anderson, Julie Apker, Upul Attanayake, Louann Bierlein Palmer, Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Carrie Cumming, Jennifer Fiore, Dianna Sachs, Marcellis Zondag

Members Absent: Regina Garza Mitchell, James Palmitessa, Nicolas Witschi

Advisory Member Absent: Edwin Martini

Ex Officio: William Rantz

Guests: Malia Roberts, Associate Director, Graduate Enrollment Services, Graduate College

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Acceptance of the Agenda

An amendment was made to add two items to the New Business for the 2023-24 meeting modality and election of GSC officers for 2023-24.

[MOTION] It was moved by Palmer, seconded by Sachs, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Bierlein Palmer, seconded by Fiore, to approve the 23 March 2023 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Anderson announced that her role as department chair does not allow her to remain as chair of GSC for the 2023-24 academic year.

Ex Officio Rantz noted that GSC 2023-24 meetings may be a combination of virtual and in-person, if it is clearly scheduled by the start of the academic year.

Reports of University Representatives

Byrd-Jacobs reported on various graduate student events and activities, commenting that several in-person events were held for the first time since COVID-19.

Due to Martini's absence, there was no report for Merze Tate College.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

GSC discussed and decided that Charge #4 has been completed and does not need to be carried over to 2023-24.

GSC discussed and agreed that Charge #6 should be carried over next year. Zondag agreed to work with the Graduate College over the summer to bring examples to GSC in the fall for review.

On Charge #9, with the goal of better supporting graduate students, the following ideas were presented and recommended to be made charges for 2023-24:

1. Consider extending the withdrawal deadlines for students (also make this a charge for the Undergraduate Studies Council, so any policy changes will be aligned)
2. Consider enacting a repeated course policy for graduate students in which any repeated course grade replaces a previous course grade
3. Examine summer and short-term housing issues for graduate students.

Bierlein Palmer agreed to work with others on the first two issues over the summer and bring back draft language in the fall.

GSC members suggested that the modality for 2023-24 be alternating.

[MOTION] It was moved by Zondag, seconded by Sachs, to approve alternating 2023-24 meeting format every other month, to be held in Walwood Hall, and then virtual. The motion carried.

Ex Officio Rantz facilitated the election of officers for the 2023-24 academic year:

1. Ex Officio Rantz nominated Zondag as chair.
[MOTION] It was moved by Bierlein Palmer, seconded by Fiore, to elect Zondag as chair. The motion carried.
2. Ex Officio Rantz nominated Bierlein Palmer as secretary for Fall 2023 and Sachs for Spring 2024.
[MOTION] It was moved by Zondag, seconded by Fiore, to elect Bierlein Palmer as secretary for Fall 2023, and Sachs as secretary for Spring 2024. The motion carried.
3. There were no nominations for the position of vice chair.

Announcements

Given that all charges were addressed at this meeting, the May meeting is being canceled.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Sachs, seconded by Fiore, to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Graduate Studies Council's next meeting date will be determined over the summer.

Approval

Submitted by Louann Bierlein Palmer, Secretary

Minutes approved on 28 September 2023.