
**GRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL
Minutes of 25 September 2025****Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Graduate Studies Council was called to order at 3 p.m. on 25 September 2025 in the Bertha Davis Room of Walwood Hall by Laura Teichert, Ex Officio.

Members Present: Upul Attanayake, Claire Bindord, Micky Carignano, Deirdre Courtney (substitute for Michelle Hrivnyak), Lisa DeChano-Cook, Krsthyna Fermin, Jennifer Fiore, Lori Gray, Cindy Linn, Melia Roberts (substitute for Christine Byrd-Jacobs)

Members Absent: Peter Gustafson, Michael Harnar, Larry Simon, Marcellis Zondag

Advisory Members Absent: Carrie Cumming

Ex Officio: Luara Teichert

Quorum

A quorum was present with 10 members in attendance, of the nine needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Fermin, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Gray, to accept the minutes from 24 April as presented. With six abstentions, the motion carried.

Election of the Vice Chair was postponed to the next meeting due to several absences within the eligible Graduate Studies Council membership.

Reports of Officers

President Naugle charged for the Graduate Studies Council.

Attanayake joined the meeting at 3:11 p.m.

Due to his absence, Chair Zondag did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Teichert did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Roberts reported on the Graduate Student Welcome Event held in September, and that the Graduate College is continuing to hold the Graduate Writing Circle on Wednesday afternoons. External funding opportunities were shared with all enrolled graduate students in a bulletin. The Graduate Research Grant and Travel Grant are available until 5 p.m. on 7 October. The Graduate College will hold a grad student meetup on 7 October for a historic walking tour of campus.

Curriculum Manager DeChano-Cook did not provide a report.

Binford and Fermin provided the Graduate Student Association report, which included 40 attendees at the first mixer and at the first meeting, where it was voted to approve a new constitution. Over the summer an informal survey about Graduate Student Association was conducted. Social connection and essential needs were the biggest need, and that the Grand Rapids campus wants to be more connected. Gull Meadow Farms hosted 60 graduate students at a fall event. The Montgomery Essential Needs drive will be collecting canned foods, personal care items, and regalia the week of 6-10 October. Graduate Student Association offers four different types of awards for certification, conference attendance, data collection and Registered Student Organization (RSO) funding. The three-Minute Thesis competition will be in November, with submissions accepted until 17 October.

New Business

DeChano-Cook provided background context on charges six and seven and recommended sub-groups be created to work on these charges. It was discussed that charge two could include Graduate Studies Council for exploring grant options for graduate students, and that charge three could involve a review of other institutions' Artificial Intelligence policies. Charges six and seven are most likely to result in Memoranda of Action,

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Fiore, to adjourn the meeting at 3:43 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Graduate Studies Council will meet next on 23 October 2025 via Webex at 3 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Jennifer Fiore, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 23 October 2025.