Graduate Faculty Senate
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday January 27th 2026 at 3:30pm
111F Townsend Hall

Attending in person: Amy Rhea, Suchi Rajendran (ISE), Julie Miller, Erin Robinson, Paul Ladehoff, Enid Schatz, jeni hart, Ashley Siebenaler, Erika Boerman, Phillip Wood, Rose Osnaya, Maria Fidalgo, Leslie Lyons, Rocio Rivera, Jacqueline Limberg, Laura Zangori.

Attending via Zoom: Andrew Zumwalt for Abed Rabbani, Cristine Mislan, David Beversdorf.

1. Call to order at 3:33pm by Fidalgo

2. Approval of minutes of December 2, 2025 (for November 2025 business)

   a. Motion to approve by Robinson

   b. Second by Boerman

   c. No discussion

   d. Disposition – approved unanimously

3. Acceptance of the agenda

   a. Motion to accept by Rivera

   b. Second by Boerman

   c. No discussion

   d. Disposition – approved unamimously

4. Committee Reports:

   a. **Academic Affairs Committee – Prof. Julie Miller, Chair**

      i. New program presentations

      • New program Graduate Certificate in Decision and Operations Analytics, Industrial and Systems Engineering, presented by Dr Suchi Rajendran.

         • AI-integrated decision science, not just handling data

         • 12 cr hr, open to degree- and non-degree-seeking students, already existing courses

         • Market is grad students in industrial engr, data science, computer science, transportation engr, and related STEM fields, and also working professionals seeking this sort of training.

         • Addresses Missouri workforce needs, no duplication at MU or UM System, strong industry advisory input.

         • How does someone in industry fulfill requirement? Right now

we have in-person to start off and then down the line plan to offer online as curriculum is revised and expanded.
- Might be beneficial to cross-network with other machine-learning researchers.
- Easy to swap out requirements to stack this program onto existing degree requirements.

ii. New Program Approvals:
- PhD in Architectural Studies, presented by Janna Lancaster and Lyria Bartlett
  - Motion comes from AAC, no second needed.
  - Disposition approved unanimously.
- Approvals on edits of existing programs **GFS Pres Programs 2026-01-20.xlsx** (5 programs edited: MA in Defense and Strategic Studies, BA in Public Administration and Policy, MEd in Educational, School and Counseling Psychology, Emphasis in Counseling Psychology, MEd in Learning, Teaching and Curriculum with Emphasis in Mathematics Education Certification, MEd in Learning, Teaching and Curriculum with Emphasis in Science Education Certification)
  - Motion comes from AAC, no second needed.
  - Disposition approved unanimously.

iii. Course Approvals : **GFS Pres Courses 2026-01-20** (22 courses added, 29 edited)
- Motion comes from AAC, no second needed.
- Disposition approved unanimously.

iv. Committee is working hard to keep up with the queue, as of last week before executive committee meeting there were 50+ courses in the queue so thanks to the committee for their work. If there are notes, please double-check for resubmitted syllabi, etc. and update your votes if you can so we can continue to move forward. If we need to roll back the workflow for a missing element, we will do so.

b. **Fellowships and Awards Committee – Prof. Abed Rabbani, Chair**
   i. Review of nominations for Distinguished Dissertation Award (13), Distinguished Thesis Award (9) and, Grad Faculty Mentor award (13).
   ii. All of the winners will be recognized at the Graduate School Awards Reception (April 30th). Senators will be invited.
   iii. On the spring review docket are the Anderson Teaching and Research Awards.
   iv. FYI: Categories come from CGS and CSGS categories so when we have a winner, we can put them up for regional/national awards.

     v. Reminder that there are awards and fellowships that are available right now so please apply for them!

    c. **Policy Committee – Prof. Rocio Rivera, Chair**
       i. Paid Sick Leave policy: Policy change suggestion – see language in Canvas
         i. Task was to clarify whether 10 days was 10 days total or 10 days at an individual stretch. 10 working days = 40 working hours for 0.5FTE assistantship.
         ii. Should policy apply just to students in assistantships? Or to hourly students? Or to all enrolled students? We do have the ability to extend insurance through a COBRA-like process even if students are not enrolled. There are also policies for missing courses, etc. at the faculty council level, so conflating the policies is problematic. Coursework is handled separately from employee stuff.
         iii. Remove coursework and research language, add 40 working hours for a 0.5FTE assistantship with proration language, add language regarding funding agency leave policy (from pregnant/parenting policy).
       ii. Course Credits and Graduate Credentials – see language in Canvas
         i. Can only use for 2 credentials (Masters, Specialist, Doctoral), or a 3rd if the 3rd credential is a GCert or a GMinor.
         ii. Policy to go back to units for additional context/feedback then vote next time.

5. Faculty Council Information Sharing – Member at large – **Prof. Erika Boerman**

    a. No committee reports because they hadn't met for this semester yet. Only lost $9M in Athletics this year. Spent $181M dollars, made $172M dollars.

6. Report: Graduate Professional Council – **Mr. Felix Oguche**, GPC Representative

    a. No report. Felix is back in the USA!

7. Report: Graduate School – **Dean Jeni Hart**

    a. We are encouraging people to continue to admit people because we don't know if international students are actually already in the USA. But yes, make informed decisions and maybe have a longer waitlist.

    b. Big Beautiful Bill – people who have GradPlus loans will continue to get GradPlus loans for duration of program or 3 years whichever comes first, however part-time students can no longer get full-time loans. Office of Financial Aid is going to talk to GADs and DGSs to do some additional education because new rules go into effect July 1.

  c. Nothing new about duration-of-status changes or OPT/PPT going away.

8. Other new business

  a. None

9. Resolutions

  a. None

10. Announcements

  a. None

11. Motion to adjourn at 4:59pm by Maria Fidalgo.