

GRADUATE COUNCIL

Faculty Senate

MINUTES

Thursday, September 10, 2026, 1:00 PM
Graduate School Conference Room, RH 2215

PRESENT: Ramana Madupalli (chair), Liz Cali, Chin-Chuan Wei, Eunyoe Ro, Jill Smucker, James Monahan, Chris Slaten, Jennifer Hookstra, Beidi Qiang, Kyong-Sup Yoon, Nicholas Young, Mindy Dilley, Joe Kohlburn, Amy Nusser

EXCUSED: Mary Frazier, Cinnamon VanPutte

ABSENT: Andrea Keller

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

I. Guest: Provost Denise Cobb

Provost Denise Cobb met with the Council and discussed enrollment trends, retention efforts, graduate enrollment growth, international enrollment challenges, strategic planning, program review improvements, and the University's anticipated R2 Carnegie classification. She highlighted recent enrollment successes, investments in graduate program marketing, opportunities to strengthen program review through shared governance, and upcoming strategic planning initiatives.

II. Announcements

A. Course Review Committee (CRC) Report- On Teams

B. Graduate Committee on Assessment (GCOA) Report- On Teams

C. Enrollment Management Report

Jim Monahan reported that his role in graduate and international admissions has been reorganized to include the staff from what was ISSS. The new role is in the new Office of Global Engagement, and he will primarily be over international students. Domestic graduate enrollment is up slightly, particularly in undergraduate-to-graduate pathways, while international enrollment continues to decline. Graduate Admissions will continue classroom visits, host an in-person open house on October 20, and offer webinars for prospective domestic and international students.

D. Student Affairs Announcements

Mindy Dilley reported expanded student facility access and increased utilization of student support services. Care reports and requests for emergency assistance have increased significantly compared to the same period last year. Updates were also provided regarding emergency funding, basic-needs initiatives, support for students from Nepal, classroom disruption resources, and the campus threat assessment process.

E. International Affairs Announcements

Amy Nusser provided updates regarding federal regulatory changes affecting international students. Discussion included upcoming informational webinars that are published in the E today, internship requirements, OPT processing delays, extension-of-stay procedures, and visa processing concerns affecting international enrollment.

F. Graduate School Announcements

Chris Slaten reported on Graduate School personnel changes, the upcoming search for a Director of Graduate Admissions, and changes to admissions reporting relationships. He also discussed adding broader discussion topics to future Graduate Council meetings to encourage engagement and feedback from Council representatives. One of the items he would like to discuss soon is the terms for the Graduate Council Chair and other shared governance committee members.

G. Other Announcements

Liz Cali announced that Faculty Fellow Jeff Manuel will visit Graduate Council on October 15 and encouraged attendance at the Illinois Innovation Conference.

III. Approval of Minutes of May 7, 2026

The minutes of the May 7, 2026 meeting were approved. Nicolas Young motioned to approve and Beidi Qiang seconded the motion.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

V. Report of the Educational and Research Policies (ERP) Committee

Beidi Qiang reported that the ERP Committee reviewed and approved GR2627-01, Policy on Graduate Student Matriculation, Advisement, Instruction, Evaluation and Assistantships (Policy 1L6), and GR2627-02, Emeritus Faculty in Graduate Education and Research. The committee had approved both items.

VI. Report of the Programs Committee

Jill Smucker reported on behalf of Cinnamon VanPutte on the 91A proposals from Integrative Studies and CMIS and the 91B proposal from Higher Education and Student Affairs. All forms were approved by the committee.

VII. Continuing Business

Election of the Graduate Council Chair-Elect was postponed until the next meeting. The Council also discussed the need for an Open Meetings Act representative. Eunyoe Roe volunteered to serve and will complete the required training.

VIII. New Business

Jill Smucker reviewed the Graduate Dean evaluation process and reminded members that instructions and supporting materials are available on the Graduate Council Teams site. Liz Cali discussed current membership vacancies and efforts to secure additional representatives. Discussion also included the importance of Council members communicating Graduate School information and student concerns within their units.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made at 2:27 PM by Kyong-Sup Yoon. Beidi Qiang seconded the motion.