

**MINUTES  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
COUNCIL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

MEETING: August 26, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: P. Alcalde, T. Brewster, S. Brown, A. Daily, E. Delavega, D. Downey, W. Duffy, S. George, M. Kaelberer, J. McCutcheon, A. Mickelson, E. Nelson, M. Perez, G. Peterson, H. Sable, C. Santo, X. Shen, D. Smith, D. Venugopal

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Choi (CERI), V. Rus (DATA)

PROXIES: V. Levin (CERI)

GUESTS: Ron Serino (INTD)

PRESIDING: R. Kreuz (via Teams)

**1. Introduction of new Council members**

The six new members to the Council were introduced and welcomed:

ANTH: Michael Perez, who is replacing Ted Maclin  
MATH: Olúṣégún George, who is replacing Bentuo Zheng  
PHIL: Daniel Smith, who is replacing Kas Saghafi  
POLS: Matthias Kaelberer, who is replacing Eric Groenendyk  
SOC: Gretchen Peterson, who is replacing Joseph Lariscy  
WLL: Pilar Alcalde, who is replacing Francisco Vivar

The returning members were invited to introduce themselves:

BIOL: Shawn Brown	HIST: Andy Daily
CERI: Eunseo Choi	PADM: Erin Nelson
CHEM: Tim Brewster	PHYS: Xiao Shen
CJUS: Jame McCutcheon	PLAN: Charlie Santo
COMP: Deepak Venugopal	PSYC: Helen Sable
ENGL: Will Duffy	SWRK: Elena Delavega
ESCI: Andrew Mickelson	UAPP: Davia Downey

**2. Approval of the minutes from the April 29, 2024 Council meeting**

H. Sable motioned to approve the minutes. T. Brewster seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

R. Kreuz requested that the council review the upcoming deadlines and events on the agenda. Graduation candidacy forms are due by August 30th. The deadline for

curriculum changes this year is about three weeks away; everything should be on the College step of Curriculog by September 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. Review of the Council's purpose, schedule, and procedures**

R. Kreuz explained that the CAS Graduate Council serves as the liaison between the College's departments and the Graduate School. It also serves as a conduit between the departments and the Dean's office. As the associate dean who serves as the director of graduate studies, he chairs the monthly Council meetings.

R. Kreuz also represents the College at monthly College Directors meetings. These are meetings with the Graduate School and the other eleven college directors during which policies and procedures are discussed as they relate to the Graduate School.

Finally, he also represents the College at monthly University Council for Graduate Studies, or UCGS, meetings. The voting members of the UCGS are the 12 college directors, 14 other faculty elected by their colleges, and the president of the Graduate Student Association.

As the largest College, CAS has three elected voting members (one from each division) who serve three-year terms. CAS ran an election in the spring, and Andrei Znamenski (HIST) was chosen to represent the humanities. Helen Sable (PSYC), elected in 2023, will continue as the social sciences representative. Bernie Daigle (BIOL), elected in 2022, will be serving his final year.

### **4. CAS Personnel Changes**

R. Kreuz announced that Ladrica Menson-Furr continuing as the assistant dean overseeing the undergraduate program. Keri Brondo is continuing as the associate dean for research initiatives.

CAS now has four new pre-award coordinators joining Emilie Bowman, and two post-award grant coordinators working for the College, which will help in obtaining external funding. They are housed in Scates or out in the departments. These positions will be overseen by Latica Jones in her new role of Director of Research Administration. The other Business Officer III, Kendra Lambert, took a job with the University High School this summer, and Cheryl Hayes is joining the leadership team as the new Business Officer III.

CAS has also hired a Manager of Marketing and Communications, Kira McNeil, a new position for the college. Debra Porter, the College's long-time web specialist, has retired, and her replacement is Heather Witt. Kira and Heather will be working with the departments on marketing and maintaining the College's websites.

## 5. Council Meeting Procedure

R. Kreuz announced that the monthly Council meetings will always start promptly at 1:30 so they can end by 2:30. Meetings are held monthly (usually the last Monday of the month) when there is new business or significant announcements. The primary purpose of the August meeting is to appoint members to the Council's subcommittees. He noted the meeting will start a half hour earlier on October 28 to allow time to discuss and approve curriculum revisions.

The agenda for each meeting is distributed electronically, along with any documents, the Wednesday before each meeting, following the previous week's Graduate School's meeting with the college directors. A call for new business is made at that time, although members can send R. Kreuz new agenda items at any time. The minutes for each meeting will be taken by S. Warren and checked against a recording of the meeting. These minutes are edited by R. Kreuz and then distributed for approval before the next meeting.

In terms of parliamentary procedure, the meetings mostly follow Robert's Rules of Order. As chair, R. Kreuz will make decisions about whether appropriate procedure is being followed, but the following are the primary rules:

- A quorum is required for all votes. A quorum is defined as two-thirds, or 14 of the 20 voting Council members present.
- Members must be recognized by the chair before they can speak to an issue.
- Motions require a second before they can be debated.
  - No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has had a chance to do so.
- In the interest of time, the chair reserves the right to postpone, limit or cut off debate, or to table motions.
- Contentious or complex issues may be referred to a subcommittee appointed by the chair.
- Motions pass by simple majority.
- As the chair, R. Kreuz is an *ex officio* member of the Council, which means that he does not vote except to break ties.

Because of the quorum requirements, R. Kreuz emphasized how important it is that a department send a proxy if the representative cannot attend a meeting. If a Council member is absent from three meetings during an academic year, that member will be "excused" from the Council, and the department forfeits representation for the remainder of the academic year. Proxies can serve in place of absent members and can vote. Council members should alert S. Warren and R. Kreuz about any proxies before the meeting.

## 6. Formation of 2024-25 Council subcommittees

Each Council member serves on one subcommittee (sometimes two). Subcommittee meetings are always held at 1:30 on Mondays, which is the same as the monthly Council meetings.

The Graduate Council members used to staff the research awards that Keri Brondo oversaw, but the College now has its own Research Council. It consists of a mix of elected members that were chosen over the spring, along with members appointed by the dean. There are nine altogether, three from each division.

The Research Council will select the recipients for:

- the professional development (PDA) assignments
- the distinguished research and engaged scholarship (AADRCA, CASDRA) awards
- the early career research (ECRA) awards

The Graduate Council will select recipients for:

- the travel enrichment awards
- the graduate student awards (GAMTA, Morton thesis/dissertation, and part-time master's awards)

Travel Enrichment will have three subcommittees, one for each award cycle (summer, fall, spring) which will be composed of one member from the humanities, one from the natural sciences, and two from the social sciences, plus R. Kreuz.

The GAMTA and thesis/dissertation subcommittees will be composed of one member from the humanities, and two members each from the natural sciences and social sciences, for a subcommittee of five members, plus R. Kreuz.

The part-time master's subcommittee will have the same composition as the GAMTA and thesis/dissertation subcommittee, with five members.

After the overview, members selected which committee on which to serve. The list was distributed via email by S. Warren after the meeting.

## 7. New Business

R. Kreuz announced that he dean has identified three major issues for this year that will affect graduate programs:

- a) Reallocation of graduate assistantships.** The amounts going to each department haven't been changed since 2013, while the department have. For example, program sizes have changed, as well as the contributions that GAs make to each department's needs, such as research and instruction.

At last week's retreat with the chairs and directors, the dean asked the attendees to brainstorm about this, and several issues were raised.

No decisions have been made yet; the dean is still soliciting input and will conferring with her leadership team. R. Kreuz will share details once received.

**b) Minimum GA stipend levels.** Last year, the Graduate School recommended that GAs receive at least \$15/hour (which is about \$1,300/month, or nearly \$12,000 for a nine-month assistantship. While this is a step in the right direction, Dean Parrill feels that this is far too low to be competitive. She wants to set a new minimum that is both mandatory and high enough to be at least somewhat competitive with our peer programs.

**c) Rolling admissions for master's students.** The dean wants all the College's programs to begin accepting tuition-paying master's students on a rolling basis. The issue is that by considering applicants just once per semester or year, programs are losing out on these students to competing programs who do this more quickly.

This would not affect the admission process for students being accepted with assistantship support; this would be for tuition-paying master's students only. R. Kreuz asked the Council members to discuss this with their colleagues and start putting together a plan that will allow this.

**d) Recruitment fairs.** R. Kreuz has been forwarding requests from the Graduate School to staff tables at regional recruitment events this fall. The Graduate School is paying for a table and two seats at each of these. Volunteers will be responsible for providing information about all the programs in their division.

**e) Student ambassadors.** Dean Parrill would like the departments to identify graduate student ambassadors. These would be students who agree to follow up with emails or video calls with prospects who identify themselves at these recruitment fairs. R. Kreuz urged the Council members to go back to their departments and identify 2-3 students who would represent the units well.

**f) Requests from Tennessee teachers to enroll in 18 credits of graduate study.** A. Daily asked if any other departments were receiving inquiries from Tennessee teachers about enrolling in 18 hours of graduate study. History has received about half a dozen over the last several months. He shared a couple of concerns with allowing this: graduate students should only take 12 hours as non-degree, and it would increase the number of non-completers. No one else knew of any similar inquires to their departments.

**8. Adjournment** G. Peterson motioned to adjourn. J. McCutcheon seconded the motion, and all were in favor. It was announced that the September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held in the Rose Theatre South Lobby.

*Minutes prepared by S. Warren based on notes from R. Kreuz and a recording of the meeting;  
edited by R. Kreuz.*