

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL
August 20, 2025

The Graduate Council met on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. in 327 Brooks Hall.

Members present: Mary Ager, Alex Anderson, Vivian Appler, Matthew Bilskie, Melinda Brindley, Jennifer Brown, Ted Christensen, Jim Conklin, Kerstin Emerson, Jennifer Graff, Janette Hill, Jack Huang, Rebecca Matthew, Sheba Mohankumar, Jeff Mullen, Priya Narayanan, Ginger Orton, Craig Osenberg, Geoffrey Sheagley, Alison Smith, Amy Stich, Bart Wojdyski. Graduate Student Association: Aina Aishat, Eben Boakye, Emerson Moon. Graduate School: Ron Walcott, Anne Shaffer, Cheri Bliss, Robin Bingham, Chazz Jordan.

Members absent: Luis Correa-Diaz, Kelly Dyer, Andrew Grundstein, Alexa Lamm, Laura and Rider.

VP/Dean Ron Walcott called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Dr. Walcott began by having Council members introduce themselves, indicating their school/college, program, length of time at UGA, and new/returning member. He continued with an orientation to Graduate Council to clarify the role of members with clear expectations and how to execute those responsibilities.

See accompanying PPT document.

Graduate Council Committee Chairs:

- A. Administrative Committee
Ron Walcott, Ex Officio Member

- B. Appeals Committee
Craig Osenberg, Chair

- C. Policy and Planning Committee
Bart Wojdyski, Chair

- D. Program Committee
Jeff Mullen, Chair

Information Items

- A. Next meeting: Wednesday, September 17, 3:30pm, 327 Brooks Hall.

Overall meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m., and members went into breakout groups by committee.

Graduate Council Orientation



Graduate School
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Role of Graduate Council

- ❑ Represent the Graduate Program Faculty (GPF) in all policy and procedure matters pertaining to graduate education at UGA.
- ❑ Policies adopted by the Graduate Council are administered by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- ❑ The Graduate Council functions on behalf of GPF in all matters within the authority of the GPF.
- ❑ The GPF may supersede any action of the Graduate Council.
- ❑ ***All members of the Graduate Council represent the entire GPF, not only the GPF of the department/program/college/school from which they come.***
- ❑ Graduate School Dean chairs the Graduate Council but only votes to break ties.
- ❑ Graduate Student Association President and two GSA members serve as voting members on Graduate Council.



Graduate Council Operation

- ❑ Graduate Council is comprised of 30 members. One representative from each college/school (totaling 15); one at large member representing the McBee Institute of Higher Education, Institute of Bioinformatics, and Biomedical and Translational Sciences Institute; 11 additional GPF based on college/school GPF/graduate student numbers; and three Graduate Student Association members (GSA President and two elected members).
- ❑ Each GPF member serves a three-year term; GSA members serve one-year terms.
- ❑ The agenda for each meeting with supporting documentation will be available at least 10 days prior to scheduled meetings and posted on the Graduate School website.
- ❑ The agenda will be set by the Administrative Committee. Additional items may be placed on the agenda by the Graduate School Dean, the Administrative Committee, or by a two-thirds vote of members present at Graduate Council meetings. Suggestions can be submitted to the Administrative Committee for discussion and future inclusion on the agenda by members of Graduate Council, GPF, or graduate students.
- ❑ Graduate Council meetings may be cancelled if there are no agenda items.



Responsibilities of Graduate Council Members

- Attend Graduate Council meetings (proxies are not allowed).
- Review materials and be prepared to discuss and vote on motions.
- Remember that you are representing **all GPF** and not just those in your academic units.
- Communicate changes in Graduate School policies and procedures back to your units and the UGA graduate education community.
- Bring agenda items and concerns from the UGA graduate education community back to Graduate Council.
- Actively participate in the committees to which you have been assigned.



Graduate Council Committees

Administrative Committee

- ❑ Review Graduate Council processes and recommend modifications as needed.
- ❑ Hear petitions for exceptions to Graduate School rules **other than those relating to admission and retention.**
- ❑ Hear appeals of administrative decisions relating to any aspect of the graduate program **other than admission and retention.**
- ❑ Advance Graduate Council agenda items.
- ❑ Make recommendations to the Dean and report its activities to the Council.

Members

Jeff Mullen (Program Chair)

Craig Osenberg (Appeals Chair)

Bart Wojdyski (PPC Chair)

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Odum School of Ecology

Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication



Graduate Council Committees

Appeals Committee

Hear appeals from:

- applicants denied admission to graduate study.
- students denied a change of degree objective by the Graduate School.
- students dismissed by the academic unit and/or the Graduate School.
- students denied an extension of time requests.
- students who have violated the Continuous Enrollment Policy.
- students contesting a course grade.
- faculty whose membership in the Graduate Program Faculty has been removed or revoked.

The committee shall make recommendations to the Dean and report its activities to the Graduate Council.



Graduate Council Committees

Members

Alex Anderson	College of Family and Consumer Sciences
Vivian Appler	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Melinda Brindley	College of Veterinary Medicine
Jenny Brown	Mary Frances Early College of Education
Ted Christensen	Terry College of Business
Luis Correa-Diaz	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Kerstin Emerson	College of Public Health
Craig Osenberg (chair)	Odum School of Ecology
Alison Smith	College of Environment and Design
Eben Boakye	Graduate Student Association – Grad Representative



Graduate Council Committees

Policy and Planning Committee

Work with the Dean to:

- ❑ Develop strategic initiatives to enhance and re-envision graduate education at UGA.
- ❑ Recommend to the *Graduate* Council new Graduate School policies and policy revisions for consideration.

Members

Mary Ager

Mathew Bilskie

Jim Conklin

Kelly Dyer

Jennifer Graff

Alexa Lamm

Geoff Sheagley

Amy Stich

Bart Wojdynski (chair)

Emerson Moon

School of Social Work

College of Engineering

Terry College of Business

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Mary Frances Early College of Education

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

School of Public and International Affairs

Higher Education

Grady College of Journalism

Graduate Student Association – President



Graduate Council Committees

Program Committee

- ❑ Review proposals for new degree programs and changes to existing programs.
- ❑ Make recommendations to the Council concerning the approval, revision, continuation, or termination of all graduate programs.

Members

Andrew Grundstein

Janette Hill

Jack Huang

Rebecca Matthew

Sheba Mohankumar

Jeff Mullen (chair)

Priya Narayanan

Ginger Orton

Laura Rider

Aina Aishat

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Mary Frances Early College of Education

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

School of Social Work

College of Veterinary Medicine

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

School of Pharmacy

Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences

Graduate Student Association – Vice President



Graduate School Staff

- ❑ Ron Walcott (Vice Provost/Dean)
- ❑ Anne Shaffer (Associate Dean)
- ❑ Cheri Bliss (Director of Graduate Admissions)
- ❑ Robin Bingham (Executive Assistant to the Dean)
- ❑ Chazz Jordan (Administrative Specialist to the Associate Dean)

