

## Graduate Council



Topic: Graduate Council

Date: Thursday, April 10, 2025

Time/Location: 3:00 p.m./WAB 227

Members present: Kirk Atkinson, Whitley Stone, Jeremy Logsdon, Tonya Bragg-Underwood, Jessi Thomsen, Dan Strunk, Phillip Gunter, Leslee Tarbett, Erin Warfel, Jonathan Ross, Wes Cottingham, Ray Blankenship, Catherine Wilson, Angie Jerome (proxy: Jieyoung Kong) Birhanu Gessese, Elnad Jasarevic, Madalynn Alt

Past Chair: Sarah Bonis; New Members: Jason Bergner, Jerry Brotzge, Daniel Keller

Guests: Jennifer Hammonds, Cathleen Webb, Danita Kelley, Merrell Price, Beth Laves, Alex Lebedinsky

1. Call to Order at 3:00pm
2. Consideration of March 13, 2025 Minutes (APPENDIX A)  
Motion to consider - Strunk. Approved unanimously with friendly amendment.
3. Reports from standing committees
  - a. Graduate Council Executive Committee
    - i. Introduction of New Members  
Jerry Brotzge, Jason Bergner, Daniel Keller, Leslee Tarbett (returning member), Whitley Stone (returning member)
    - ii. Vice Chair and Secretary for AY26 election  
Logsdon nominated Stone for Vice Chair, nomination accepted; no other nominations were made. Approved unanimously  
  
Logsdon nominated Bragg-Underwood for a second term of secretary, nomination accepted; no other nominations were made. Approved unanimously
  - b. Graduate Council Policy Committee (No report)
  - c. Graduate Council Curriculum Committee (APPENDIX B)  
Motion to approve minutes – Stone. Approved unanimously.
  - d. Graduate Council Research Committee (No report)
  - e. Ad Hoc R2 Committee (APPENDIX C)  
Motion to approve minutes – Thomsen. Approved unanimously.
4. Reports from Graduate Studies

Hammonds – Reviewing applications for the first-gen research fellowship in collaboration with ORCA. Ten will be awarded – aiming for five 1st year and five 2nd year students.

Nine graduate programs were ranked by U.S. News. Article is available for

review from the WKU website: [U.S. News ranks 9 WKU graduate programs among nation's best | Western Kentucky University](#)

Graduate applications continue to be sent to programs for decisions.

5. Announcements

None

6. Informational Items

TBD Graduate Council meeting will need to occur this month prior to 4/25/25 due to late curricular items that GC Curriculum Committee have agreed to meet and review. Meeting will most likely be via email vote for approval (could also be Zoom or in-person)

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Atkinson/Cottingham at 3:18pm

**APPENDIX A**  
**CONSIDERATION OF GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**



**Graduate Council Meeting Minutes**  
March 13, 2025, 2:30 p.m.  
Zoom

Members present: Whitley Stone, Jessi Thomsen, Jeremy Logsdon, Dan Strunk, Phillip Gunter, Tonya Bragg-Underwood, Mikhail Khenner, Leslee Tarbett, Shannon Sales (proxy: Erin Warfel), Lance Hahn, Jonathan Ross, Wes Cottingham, Sarah Bonis, Birhanu Gessese, Elnad Jasarevic, Madalynn Alt

Guests: Scott Gordon, Cathleen Webb, Jennifer Klemm, Danita Kelley, Merrell Price

1. Call to Order at 2:30pm via Zoom
2. Consideration of February 13, 2025 Minutes (APPENDIX A)  
Motion to consider Hahn. Approved unanimously with friendly amendment.
3. Reports from standing committees
  - a. Graduate Council Executive Committee
    - i. Upcoming Elections
      1. Student Reps for Next AY?
    - ii. Vice Chair and Secretary for AY26 election in April GC
  - b. Graduate Council Policy Committee (No report)
  - c. Graduate Council Curriculum Committee (APPENDIX B)  
Motion to approve minutes – Stone. Approved unanimously.
  - d. Graduate Council Research Committee (APPENDIX C)  
Motion to approve minutes – Hahn. Approved unanimously.
  - e. Ad Hoc R2 Committee (No report)  
No report. The committee now has members from all departments five colleges and will meet immediately following today's Graduate Council meeting.
4. Reports from Graduate Studies
  - a. Outstanding Graduate Student Winners Announced Soon
  - b. Committee reviewing Minton Nominations  
Gordon – Enrollment for Sp25 is down 9 students from last year, essentially flat. Will begin looking at Su/Fa25 enrollment soon.
5. Announcements  
None
6. Informational Items

None

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Hahn/Bragg-Underwood at 2:45pm.

## APPENDIX B

### Graduate Council Curriculum Committee

#### Minutes – April 3, 2025, 2:30 PM (CT)

**Voting Members:** Whitley Stone, Erin Warfel, Phillip Gunter (voting for himself and proxy for Dan Strunk – counts as 2 votes), Jessi Thomsen, Elnad Jasarevic, and Leslie Tarbett

**Advisory Members:** Danita Kelley, Merrall Price, Cate Webb, Jennifer Klemm, Jamie DeYoung, Beth Laves, Jennifer Hammonds, and Jessica Dorris

**Guests:** Gregory Ellis-Griffith, Andrea Paganelli, Jeremy Logsdon, Katherine Lennard, Melanie Eaton, Alex Olson, and Angie Jerome

**Approval of Minutes, March 6, 2025 - 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:** Stone/Thomsen, **Vote:** Approved (7/7)

#### Course Administration:

Graduate Curriculum Committee (12)				
Code	Title	Status	Initiator	Received
<a href="#">EDU 501</a>	<a href="#">EDU 501: Designing Learning through Artificial Intelligence</a>	Edited	and85146	3/4/2025

#### Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>: Stone/Warfel

**Discussion:** Logsdon gave a brief description, just an old class bringing back. Hammonds shared that it should be a new course instead of trying to bring it back. The course learning outcomes are very different; also stating it's more than 50% changed. Paganelli responded that the goals are very much the same but maybe the language should change. More discussion about the learning outcomes.

Old learning outcomes are: Identify what experienced teachers do in authentic teaching situations and those teaching behaviors and processes that are most critical to student learning. · Assess your present level of professional development in relationship to each of the ten Teacher Standards, other relevant national standards/core content, and relevant school/district improvement plan/s. · Identify your professional strengths and priorities for professional growth. · Initiate the EDU 596 Portfolio process.

Paganelli explained the reasoning. Laves asked if we could they change to a new course, Yes. Price asked if it was going to be taught in fall, to see if we could hold for more review. Stone asked the group how we should move forward. Mentioned that if it is a capstone maybe we should add that wording somewhere. Thomsen agreed with Stone about the language. Dorris asked about the course description including the course title.

*Friendly Amendment – Within the Course Description to: In this capstone experience, students will address AI-driven tools and methodologies to personalize learning experiences, enhance student engagement, and optimize educational outcomes. By the end of this course, participants will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to harness the power of AI to inspire and facilitate effective learning in diverse educational settings.*

Graduate Curriculum Committee (12)				
Code	Title	Status	Initiator	Received
<p><i>Also changing the Schedule type back to seminar instead of lecture.</i></p> <p><b>Vote:</b> Approved (5-Yes &amp; 1 abstain)</p>				
<p><b>Motion to Bundle all HIST Classes – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Tarbett</p> <p><b>Vote to Bundle:</b> Approved 7/7</p> <p><b>Discussion on Courses.</b></p> <p>Lennard and Price gave brief descriptions of all three courses. No questions.</p> <p><b>Vote to Approve Bundle:</b> Approved (7/7)</p>				
<a href="#">HIST 588</a>	<a href="#">HIST 588: History and Material Culture</a>	Added	alx81987	3/27/2025
<a href="#">HIST 627</a>	<a href="#">HIST 627: Seminar in Family History</a>	Added	adr86607	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HIST 628</a>	<a href="#">HIST 628: Seminar in Disability History</a>	Added	adr86607	3/25/2025
<p><b>Motion to Bundle all HCA Classes – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Warfel</p> <p><b>Vote to Bundle:</b> Approved 7/7</p> <p><b>Discussion on Courses:</b></p> <p>Ellis-Griffith gave brief descriptions. Stone stated that all of these were minor changes. No other follow-up questions.</p> <p><b>Vote to Approve Bundle:</b> Approved (7/7)</p>				
<a href="#">HCA 530</a>	<a href="#">HCA 530: Independent Investigation in Health Care Administration</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/24/2025
<a href="#">HCA 544</a>	<a href="#">HCA 544: Health Systems Design for Sustainable Practices</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 545</a>	<a href="#">HCA 545: Managerial Finance for Health Services</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 551</a>	<a href="#">HCA 551: Healthcare Jurisprudence and Quality</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 555</a>	<a href="#">HCA 555: Healthcare Leadership and Change Management</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 556</a>	<a href="#">HCA 556: Ambulatory and Long-Term Care Management</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 559</a>	<a href="#">HCA 559: Global Health Service-Learning Practicum</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025
<a href="#">HCA 564</a>	<a href="#">HCA 564: Health Systems Informatics</a>	Edited	mln43600	3/25/2025

**Program Administration:**

Graduate Curriculum Committee (4)				
Code	Title	Status	Initiator	Received
<a href="#">157</a>	<a href="#">157: Social Work</a>	Edited	ern67287	3/25/2025
<b>Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Tarbett <b>Discussion:</b> Warfel gave a brief description. <b>Vote:</b> Approved (6 yes, 1 abstain)				
<a href="/programadmin/407/index.html">/programadmin/407/index.html</a>	<a href="#">: Artificial Intelligence and Educational Technology Leader Certificate</a>	Added	and85146	3/4/2025
<b>Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Warfel <b>Discussion:</b> Logsdon gave a brief description. No additional questions. <i>Friendly Amendment on SLO's (double barreled, just want to simplify the language).</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Apply artificial intelligence as a leader to the educational environment</li><li>2. Apply educational technology as a leader to the educational environment</li><li>3. Apply cybersecurity as a leader to the educational environment – Also on the measurement plan change one course LITE 737 and EDU 501.</li></ol> <i>A new ASL plan was also attached.</i> <b>Vote:</b> Approved 7/7				
<a href="#">1735</a>	<a href="#">1735: Global Health Administration</a>	Edited	mIn43600	3/25/2025
<b>Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Tarbett <b>Discussion:</b> Griffith gave a brief description. <b>Vote:</b> Approved 7/7				
<a href="#">153</a>	<a href="#">153: Health Administration</a>	Edited	mIn43600	3/25/2025
<b>Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Stone/Tarbett <b>Discussion:</b> Griffith gave a brief description. <b>Vote:</b> Approved 7/7				

**Program Change Request came in late but needed to get it added due to Fall Implementation.**

**Motion to Add/Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:** Stone/Warfel

**Vote to add to the agenda for today:** Approved (7/7)

**Motion to Approve – 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>:** Stone/Thomsen

**Discussion:** Had certificate for a long time and it was 12 hours forever. Dropping it to 9 hours and doing other updates. Laves said the ASL plan is not in the template, please update.

**Vote:** Approved (7/7)

**Informational Item(s):** none

**Other Business:** none

**Adjourn** at 3:25pm - 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> –Warfel/Stone

Respectfully submitted,  
GCCC Recorder  
Jessica Steenbergen



## **APPENDIX C**

### **Graduate Council Ad Hoc R2 Committee**

#### **Committee Members:**

Lance Hahn, Ogden  
Jessi Thomsen, PCAL  
Jonathan Ross, GFCB  
Ritchie Taylor, CHHS  
Sara Pickett, CEBS

Questions posed by the Ad Hoc R2 subcommittee of Graduate Council to be answered in the pursuit of R2 status.

### **Identifying New Doctoral Programs**

1. How have putative doctoral programs be identified, and how might possible doctoral programs be identified going forward?
2. The original list of putative PhD programs (Data Sciences, Disaster Sciences, Neuroscience, and Learning Science; see [https://cpe.ky.gov/aboutus/records/cpe\\_meetings/agenda-2024-11-21-ws.pdf](https://cpe.ky.gov/aboutus/records/cpe_meetings/agenda-2024-11-21-ws.pdf)) was generated with limited faculty involvement. How might we continue to revise this list to align the selection with existing research strengths, funding, and workforce needs?
3. Will there be a competitive process to evaluate the need for the putative PhD programs?
4. How might we identify doctoral programs that are unique in our region?

### **Developing New Doctoral Programs - Faculty**

5. PhD programs (and R2 status) require research-focused faculty. What changes will be implemented to support faculty in creative and scholarly work (i.e. reduced teaching loads, increased access to research/travel funds, support for lab/tech/specialized resources and equipment)?
6. How would faculty collaborations be facilitated and supported for this interdisciplinary work that serves as the foundation for these doctoral programs? Who in the faculty has a depth of knowledge in interdisciplinary expertise/methodologies and conducts interdisciplinary research.
7. How will faculty lines and resources be funded to support new PhD programs? If PhD programs will be supported with existing faculty lines and resources, how will this impact the programs the faculty currently support?
8. How would committee chairs and members be compensated for this work?
9. What mentoring and advising responsibilities would be required of faculty? How is this

- equitably distributed across disciplines and departments for an interdisciplinary PhD?
10. How might R2 status and PhD program responsibilities influence faculty tenure and promotion processes? Will junior faculty be expected to lead these programs? Will junior faculty have reduced expectations initially with respect to doctoral student supervision?

### **Developing New Doctoral Programs - Curriculum**

11. What would be the positive and negative consequences to our existing graduate programs with the introduction of new PhD programs?
12. What would be the source of financial support for students and research activities? Would support for these students take away existing graduate assistance funding, graduate research grants and graduate travel grants? If not, where are the new funds coming from?
13. The proposed PhD programs have been described as “interdisciplinary.” A PhD necessarily requires a depth of expertise in a particular area. How might this development of expertise be supported for students? Departmental funds? a new interdisciplinary PhD fund?
14. What would be the process for developing interdisciplinary dissertation committees? What mentoring and advising support would be provided to doctoral candidates in development of their projects?
15. To what extent does WKU have existing MA/MS programs that would prepare students for the proposed doctoral programs? Would MA/MS programs be developed in the same areas as the proposed PhD programs? If not, who would we anticipate applying to the PhD programs?
16. What ongoing research, projects, and faculty members at WKU would assist in attracting and recruiting students to an interdisciplinary PhD program?
17. How might these doctoral programs recruit non-WKU applicants?

### **Benefits and Concerns of Pursuing R2 status**

18. What should the role of the Graduate Council be in pursuing R2 status?
19. To what extent was the decision to pursue R2 status influenced by the perceived increased probability of getting more money from the state each year for our budget? (for provost to answer)
20. Will achieving R2 status lead to WKU likely receiving more proportionate (relative to the other public institutions in KY) funding from the state government for our budget? (for provost to answer)
21. As a (currently) teaching-focused institution, how might R2 status, increased research, and PhD programs affect teaching-focused work—and the value of that work—with graduate and undergraduate students?

22. What value might a shift to R2 status have for the students we currently serve? How do we ensure that existing student programs aren't compromised?
23. PhD programs and students are expensive. What models and data are at the basis of the decision to pursue R2 status and doctoral programs that suggest these programs could be sustainable, and how do these programs fit into the budget?
24. How might the pursuit of R2 status be influenced by changing funding for research at the federal level (e.g., NSF, NIH grant funding and overhead cuts)?