



GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

September 22nd, 2025

The Graduate Council met in person on Monday, September 22nd, 2025, at 2:20 pm in Room #351, Close-Hipp Building.

Graduate Council members present: Dr. Bill Hauk, Chair; Drs. Rachel Bush, Ashley Gess, Andrew Graciano, Daniel Kilpatrick, David Mott, Kirk Randazzo, Jill Stewart, Ari Streisfeld, Sriram Venkataraman, Nick Watanabe, Kristen Weaver-Toedtmann, Rachel Williams, Jing Wen, Mark Yancey, and Arunav Das (GSA).

Graduate Council members absent: Drs. Sourav Banerjee, John Doering-White, Lorie Donelle, Carolyn Harmon, Kevin Lu, Terrance McAdoo (excused), and Sanjib Sur.

Graduate School Representatives: Dr. Ann Vail, Dr. Lingyu (Lucy) Yu, Dr. Angelina Sylvain, Dr. Matt Klopfenstein, Dale Moore, Barbara Foster, Heidi Conte, and Wanda Barr

Provost Office Representatives: Trena Houpp and Dr. LaTrice Ratcliff-Small

Guests: Harlan Smith (ISSS)

NOTE: These minutes will become final on October 27, 2025, if not challenged.

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda (Bill Hauk, Chair)

The meeting was called to order at 2:23p.m., and the Agenda was approved.

2. Approval of the Minutes from August 25, 2025. Approved actions by Graduate Council become effective 30 days after posting. A copy is available on the Graduate School website at: <https://bit.ly/3SvPO0E>.

The minutes from August were unanimously approved.

3. Report of the Chair (Bill Hauk)

Dr. Hauk asked that we continue to monitor the H1B visa situation for our graduate students until we know more information.

4. Report of the Dean of the Graduate School (Ann Vail)

Dean Vail shared at the direction of the Provost that the Graduate School has announced the following changes for applicants to graduate education programs at the University of South Carolina. The graduate application fee will be reinstated effective August 1, 2026. The Graduate School application fee is \$50 and was temporarily waived in Fall 2023. The Graduate School is working with CollegeNet and TouchNet to finalize activation of the reinstated fee. An announcement will be made when the system is updated. Once that occurs, applicants will be required to submit the fee with their application.

As with prior application cycles, programs/departments may purchase fee waivers for applicants to their programs. The Molinaroli College of Engineering and Computing has purchased fee waivers for all applicants to their college.

International applicants submitting international academic credentials must have their credentials evaluated for equivalency to U.S. accredited coursework on a course-by-course basis by a member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). A list of NACES members can be found at this website: [Members – NACES](#). The evaluation and proof of degree should preferably be submitted with the USC graduate application and is required prior to admitted students registering for courses.

The Element1801 project remains on schedule in both scope and resources. The project is currently in its Discovery Phase, where the team is gathering requirements in three key areas:

- Operations: Thirty-nine representatives from twenty-four departments across thirteen colleges are meeting with our implementation partner, Kennedy & Company, over the next two weeks. Their task is to document current practices and challenges that will guide new system configuration.
- Data and System Integrations: The Division of IT has completed future-state confirmations. Existing data exchange channels and data element listings are now serving as the foundation for system mapping and integration.
- Application Configuration: Our vendor, Element451, is preparing what is called Captain's Track training. This will equip our project leadership team with baseline knowledge needed for system configuration.

Recent accomplishments of Element1801:

- Security assessment was successfully completed, and a Data Sharing Agreement between Element451 and the Banner system has been approved.
- Members of the Element1801 Guiding Coalition have been confirmed, and their briefing schedule has been set.
- Element1801 website is operational and should be a great source for on-going status and resources. [Element1801 - Graduate School | University of South Carolina](#)
- Immediate next steps include the Division of IT presenting a project proposal to the Student Systems Council on September 23rd.
- Department-level discovery sessions will take place with colleges between September 22nd and October 3rd.
- The Discovery Phase is on track to conclude by October 12th, with key deliverables including the initial product backlog and a finalized statement of work.

The Ethical and Responsible Use of GenAI Task Force, led by Dr. Lingyu (Lucy) Yu, has met twice with work continuing in sub-committees. Currently, they are focused on recommending policies related to 1) degree milestones—dissertation, thesis, comprehensive exam, and general exam; 2) original and independent scholarly work while engaged in graduate study; and 3) recommendations for discipline/program related policies and guidelines.

The Program of Study Automated form has been live for almost one month. To date, 37 Programs of Study are in process and 10 more have been completely approved through the system. We are completing the final changes to the Program of Study Change Automated Form and these changes

will be automated by the end of the month.

The Big Beautiful Bill has impacted graduate education greatly. The Grad PLUS loans have been eliminated effective July 1, 2026, for new borrowers. Last year, we had 27 million dollars' worth of Grad PLUS Loans on this campus. In addition, the yearly cap of \$45,000 per year has been reduced. Graduate students will be pushed to private lending institutions. This will put a lot of pressure on them to make good decisions, and it will put pressure on us to help them make good decisions without promoting certain institutions. Financial Aid is looking into this right now and trying to do a little bit of coordination with South Carolina institutions to structure something beneficial to students.

Dean Vail reviewed the Guidelines for Special Enrollment Status Under-Enrollment Exception (Z-status) according to Graduate School policy pertain to students nearing completion of a graduate degree and may be granted special enrollment status and certified as full-time if the student meets the following eligibility requirements: 1) all course work on the program of study has been completed except for thesis or dissertation preparation (799 or 899), internship or other capstone course; 2) the student is working on the dissertation or thesis full-time; and 3) the student is not employed outside their graduate assistantship or, if applicable, employed no more than half-time if not on a graduate assistantship.

A Z-status request for under-enrollment privilege must be term-specific and is limited to three terms. Z-status for under-enrollment privilege may be extended beyond three terms with the approval of and justification from the academic unit and with the approval of the dean of the Graduate School. She hopes to get the units and students back in line with the policy with the maximum number of 6 semesters of Z-Status approval.

Almost 900 students registered for this year's Graduate Expo that included 46 campus organizations exhibiting and nine concurrent breakout sessions throughout the morning:

- **Veterans Higher Education Brief**, *Veterans Affairs*
- **First-Gen Graduate Students**, *First-Generation Center*
- **Leadership & Service Center Opportunities**, *Leadership & Service Center*
- **Defining Success as a Graduate Student**, *Counseling & Psychiatric Services*
- **Office of Student Advocacy: The Office You Didn't Know You Needed**, *Office of Student Advocacy*
- **Secondhand, First Choice**, *Gamecock CommUnity Shop*
- **Managing Your Financial Stress & Your Well-Being**, *Student Success Center & Counseling & Psychiatric Services*
- **Research Support for Graduate Students at USC**, *University Libraries*
- **International Student Employment – the Do's and Don'ts**, *International Scholar & Student Support*

5. Report of the Graduate Student Association (Arunav Das)

Mr. Das reported that there are 19 Cabinet Secretaries with an even distribution of domestic and international students. GSA held its Cabinet Orientation on September 12th at the Anne Frank Center where Dean Ann Vail and Associate Dean Lingyu (Lucy) Yu presented the *State of the Graduate School*. They also heard from several other University leaders during the first half of the program. The second half focused on the GSA's internal organization and goals.

GSA's Cabinet-Executive Meeting took place on September 19th where they provided updates and brainstormed regarding Imagine Carolina, Advocacy 101, Fall Social and other luncheons/events for the Fall and Spring semester.

The Graduate Student Association executives attended Imagine Carolina. The program focused on four major issues for graduate students during the breakout session discussions.

1. Graduate Student Life and Community

- Graduate students are connected from one school to another via GSA and other organizations
- Need graduate/international student specific orientations
- Spring intakes may be overlooked for orientations
- Graduate student fairs help fill gaps of knowledge for resources and available accommodations
- Desire for more events targeted towards graduate students
- Expand Student Disability Resource Center accommodations to be relevant to graduate/PhD programs
- Navigate 360 access for graduates
- Housing solutions are necessary for graduate students and international students
- Temporary housing accommodations necessary for the 2–3-week gap between property leasing agreement terms (especially helpful for international students)
- Student body town halls could be held to voice student concerns
- Graduate students are forced to weigh the opportunity costs of seeking resources vs addressing their own needs

2. Access to Support and Resources

- Campus safety and the community shop are great resources for underserved/international students
- Law student was told that she would not pass the BAR exam after performing poorly on exams after experiencing a family emergency
- Lack of accountability for faculty and staff who do not understand Title IX, hardship accommodation letters not being transparent
- Conflicts between professors' actions and dean's intent
- Lack of support for those with childcare needs
- Faculty advisors pressure students to research topics aligned with personal interests
- Resources available to undergraduates are no longer a source of support for returning graduate students
- Student Disability Resource Center advisors are difficult to access by phone or email
- Resources are strained by admitting more students than UofSC has capacity for (healthcare, housing, parking, and mental health)
- "Return-to-work" initiative implemented in blanket format made offices far less productive as there is not enough space for faculty/staff, nor computers/supplies/bandwidth to accommodate them, forcing people into repurposed closets and other areas other than offices or cubicles
- Study spaces are being taken up to force more students into cramped living quarters which were not the space's original intent or best use.

3. Preparing for the Job Market

- The Career Center is a great resource with resumes, job searches, interviews.
- Job fairs are more centered for undergraduate co-op programs.
- Statistics Department has a good program where faculty or individuals in their domain come in from different departments to give talks/seminars.
- Students overlook lots of emails or opportunities, a suggestion to have a dedicated notification format was discussed.
- Handshake, the University of South Carolina's custom online recruiting program, is another resource that was discussed.
- Opportunity Bulletin Board needs to be updated on regular basis to reflect on the opportunities.
- Cabinet Advisor is a good resource in the public health department. Enhancing or updating them directly with the resources available will help the information reach students better.
- Scope for improving academic job opportunities. The job fairs are more industrially oriented.

4. Research and Scholarship

- The Free Journal paper has access to resources but does not provide enough guidance.
- High Performance Computing (HPC) is an excellent resource and a positive experience so far.
- Support to Promote Advancement of Research and Creativity (SPARC) is a good opportunity for a research grant, but not enough if it is a collaboration.
- Skills, Habits, and Research Program for Graduate Students (SHARPGrads Program) is a good resource that has some modules to handle research data.
- Stipends are always being considered; the cost of living is increasing (inflation), but there is no increase in the stipend.
- There is no uniformity across the departments--every department has its own stipend policy and amounts.
- Fewer research grants lead us to get unpaid--specifically in the summer.
- Increases in the travel grants for students going to conferences are necessary as one international trip is enough to exhaust the \$1,000 travel grant from the department.
- Need to increase the research opportunities.

6. Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee (Kirk Randazzo)

No report.

7. Report of the 500/600 Level Courses (Angelina Sylvain)

This report is presented to Council for informational purposes only; no action is necessary.

500/600 Courses for September 2025 Grad Council

(CCP = Course Change Proposal; NCP=New Course Proposal). Total: 12

ANTH 512 (3) Gender Issues in China, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 525 (3) Elementary Methods for K-12 Art Certification, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 540 (3) The School Art Program, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 540P (1) Practicum in Art Education, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 560 (3) Secondary Methods for K-12 Art Certification, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 565 (3) Field Experience Seminar, (CCP: Fall 2026)

ARTE 571 (12) Directed Teaching in Art, (CCP: Fall 2026)
ECIV 530 (3) Foundation Analysis and Design, (CCP: Fall 2026)
FAMS 598 (3) Special Topics in Global Film and Media, (CCP: Fall 2026)
HTMT 574 (3) The Global Business of Beverage Distribution, (CCP: Spring 2026)
LATN 550 (3) Latin Seminar, (NCP: Spring 2026)
AFAM503 (3) Miscarriages of Justice, (NCP: Spring 2026)

8. Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations. Total: 7 (Ann Vail)

Name: **Augustus Way Fountain III, PhD**
 Program: Chemistry and Biochemistry
 Term: Fall 2025 – Spring 2031

Name: **Clark Hampton, PhD**
 Program: Darla Moore School of Business
 Term: Fall 2025 – Spring 2031

Name: **Derek Henrichs, PhD**
 Program: Darla Moore School of Business
 Term: Fall 2025 – Spring 2031

Name: **Lee Britt Wilson, PhD**
 Program: School of Medicine--Pharmacology, Physiology & Neuroscience
 Term: Fall 2025 – Fall 2031

Name: **Gerardo Piroli, PhD**
 Program: School of Medicine--Pharmacology, Physiology & Neuroscience
 Term: Fall 2025 – Fall 2031

Name: **Claudia Grillo, PhD**
 Program: School of Medicine--Pharmacology, Physiology & Neuroscience
 Term: Fall 2025 – Fall 2031

Name: **Janel Hagar, PhD**
 Program: School of Medicine--Pharmacology, Physiology & Neuroscience
 Term: Fall 2025 – Fall 2031

These nominations were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

9. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee (Daniel Kilpatrick)
 No report.

10. Report of the Graduate Curriculum Committee (Andrew Graciano)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Total: 22

- **Mathematics, M.S.** (Program Change Request): Fall 2026)
- **Public Safety Executive Leadership, M.S.L.** (Program Change Request: Fall 2026)
- **Nursing Informatics, M.S.N.** (Program Change Request: Fall 2026)
- **Healthcare Leadership, M.S.N.** (Program Change Request: Fall 2026)
- **ASNR 710** (6) Statistical and Research Methods for the DNAP (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)

- **HPEB 700**, Concepts and Methods in Health Promotion (Course Inactivation Proposal: Fall 2026)
- **ITEC 743** (3) Health Information Privacy and Security (Course Change Request: Spring 2026)
- **ITEC 749** (3) Principles of Informatics (Course Change Request: Spring 2026)
- **ITEC 849** (3) Information Technology Research Literature (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 712** (3) Media, Ethics, and Social Change (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 724** (3) Teaching Media Literacy (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 726** (3) Advising Student Media Organizations (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 727** (3) Content Creation for Mass Communication (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 778** (3) Teaching Practicum in Mass Communication (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 820** (3) Communication Leadership & Instructional Communication (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 821** (3) Foundations of Instructional Communication (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 824** (3) Instructional Communication and Technology (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 825** (3) Communication Training and Consulting (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 826** (3) Communication Leadership Studies (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **JOUR 828** (3) Special Topics in Communication and Leadership (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)
- **LAWG 773** (3) Environmental Justice Seminar (Course Change Proposal: Fall 2026)
- **MCBA 744** (3) Biological Microscopic Imaging III (New Course Proposal: Spring 2026)

These proposals were unanimously approved by Graduate Council.

11. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee (Sriram Venkataraman)

Grade Change Petition Case review.

- Dr. Venkataraman moved for the Graduate Council to go into closed session.
- Upon returning to open session, the motion from the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee to support this student's petition was unanimously approved.

12. Other Committee Reports

None.

13. Old Business

Mr. Harlan Smith, Director of ISSS, shared that there were 455 new international students for the Fall 2025 semester, approximately down 140 from Fall 2024. We will possibly have a larger intake in Spring 2026 since many had to defer from Fall 2025 to Spring 2026. The breakdown for Fall 2025 is as follows:

Columbia Campus: 1401
 Undergraduate: 271
 Graduate: 211
 Doctorate: 774
 IAP: 17
 Exchange: 119
 Graduate non-Degree: 9
 EPI: 16
 Regional Campuses: 135

Matriculated students, including exchange students: 1,552 total
 Non-matriculated OPT/STEM OPT students: 352 total

GRAND TOTAL: 1,904 international students for whom USC Main Campus is responsible.

Please Note: The grand total number does not include international students who are enrolled at the four USC comprehensive campuses. The ISSS does not have access to that SEVIS data.

14. New Business

Dean Vail shared that some programs do not use faculty to approve Programs of Studies for their students. As students are starting to use the new Program of Study Automated Form, it has been designed for faculty member approval only. She would like the Academic Policy and Practices Committee to investigate this policy and update it. This discussion will be continued.

15. Good of the Order

Reminder Dates:

October 24:	Three (3) MT Competition Training, Friday, October 24, 1:00pm to 3:00pm, with Dr. Jon Edwards, Room #583, Close-Hipp Building
October 27:	Next Graduate Council meeting on Monday, October 27 at 2:00pm, Close-Hipp, Room #583.
November 7:	Three (3) MT Competition--Preliminaries and Finals, Locations TBA

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21p.m.

Ann Vail, Dean

CC: Michael Amiridis, President
Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, Provost
Ann Vail, Dean of the Graduate School
Deans
Department Chairs
Graduate Directors
Aaron Marterer, University Registrar
Elaine Belesky, Office of the Registrar
Malia Kiehl, Office of the Registrar
Ed Short, Office of the Registrar