



# Graduate Council Meeting Summary

April 8, 2021  
2:00 – 3:30 pm  
[Zoom](#)

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## **I. Welcome**

Mr. John Burgess, Interim Dean, welcomed everyone attending the meeting. During the welcome, members were asked to please remind their Graduate Assistants to get a COVID vaccine.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

The February 11, 2021, Graduate Program Director Assembly meeting minutes were unanimously approved via a voice vote.

## **III. Brief Items**

### **A. Three Minute Thesis Heat Winner**

Dominique Lockwood, the JMU participant in the Council of Southern Graduate Schools Regional Three-Minute Thesis Competition placed first in her heat. While Ms. Lockwood did not win the competition, she is the first JMU student to advance to the finals.

### **B. Graduate Awards**

There was a good number of recommendations received for the Graduate Awards. A committee was formed to evaluate the nominations. The names of the recipients will be read at Commencement and a slide will run recognizing the recipients of the different awards.

### **C. Commencement**

The university plans to hold in-person Spring Commencement ceremonies. All academic colleges and The Graduate School (TGS) will have in-person ceremonies, so that all graduates can be individually recognized. The university-wide main ceremony will be presented virtually. Students will be allowed to have up to four guests at their college ceremony. The Graduate Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m., at Bridgeforth Stadium/Zane Showker Field. More details will be forthcoming. Faculty will not be required to attend, but if faculty would like to attend, they will need to sign-up. Faculty are also needed to volunteer with the ceremony. If you are interested in volunteering at The Graduate Ceremony, please contact Ms. Kathryn Brown in The Graduate School ([wendelkt@jmu.edu](mailto:wendelkt@jmu.edu)).

#### D. Graduate Showcase

The Showcase will be held asynchronously beginning April 19, 2021. There are approximately 30 submissions. The judging will be held the first week the Showcase is live, and the winners will be announced the week of April 26, 2021.

#### E. Graduate Student Association (GSA) Recruiting for 2021-22 Leadership Team

Graduate Council members were asked to please help in recruiting new members to the Graduate Student Association for 2021-2022. Students interested in joining the GSA should contact The Graduate School.

TGS, GSA and THRIVE will be holding a promotional event on Wednesday, April 14, in the Graduate Lounge. Pizza, snacks non-perishable food and THRIVE promotional items will be available.

#### F. THRIVE Updates

Ms. Abir Maryam joined The Graduate School, in January, as a Graduate Assistant. She comes to JMU from Beirut, Lebanon. Ms. Maryam is working with THRIVE and is focusing on providing support for international students. She teamed up with ISSS to host several infinity focus groups for international students.

There are eight Graduate Ambassadors who are also helping to conduct the infinity groups. Focus Group meetings have been held for International Students to learn about their needs. One issue on the forefront for international graduate students, is graduate housing. Conversations about affordable graduate student housing have been going on for several years.

Starting in the fall of 2021, housing will be available to graduate students. JMU owns an apartment complex across from the Madison Hotel that has been designed for graduate student housing. The complex has 18 units which are fully furnished, and each unit include utilities, internet and kitchen utensils. Each unit has three bedrooms, with one bedroom having a full bath, one with a half bath, and one bedroom without a private bathroom. Units have a common full bathroom. Monthly rents are prorated based on the private bathrooms, and would be \$450, \$410, and \$360 respectively. Given the limited number of units available, a plan is being developed as to how TGS will handle who gets priority, or eligibility criteria. The logistics of the graduate student housing is still being finalized. TGS is hopeful that all the beds will be filled, which would demonstrate to the university that this is a popular option for graduate students.

THRIVE, in collaboration with TGS, awarded four Advancing Intelligent Minds (AIM) Developmental Grants this year. The purpose of the AIM Grants is to provide funding to assist graduate students in gaining practical experiences or conduct scholarship related to their field of study.

Mr. John Burgess, Ms. Briana Gaines and Dr. David Owusu-Ansah have built a partnership with the Preparing Future Faculty Program (PFFP). At the beginning of next semester, there will be a meeting for the incoming doctoral students, current doctoral students and PFFP members to meet with staff from Libraries, Research and Scholarship and the Center for Faculty Innovation to

discuss resources that are available. Faculty members are needed to serve as mentors this important Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiative.

## G. Admission Process

The graduate admission process was reviewed and the first step is that a prospective student submits their application in CollegeNET where the Admissions Team in TGS collects application materials. Programs may contact applicants for additional information or to conduct an interview. While the program may evaluate applicants and enter their recommendations into Admit, they should not communicate decisions to candidates. Program recommendations should be made as soon as possible, so that TGS Admissions staff may take the necessary actions (check documentation, reviews program's admission recommendations, and if applicable the conditions of admission, residency, creates official letter and reviews program letter). TGS then notifies the prospective student of the university decision and only after that, may a program contact an admitted applicant to encourage them to accept their offer.

TGS will collect the applicant's decision and the decision is emailed to the graduate director. TGS will also matriculate the student into the system where the student receives a student identification and may register for classes. The program is responsible for advising the student and is encouraged to communicate regularly with students.

Program Directors were reminded that when entering their recommendations into Admit, that the admissions staff does not work on weekends or holidays. Program recommendations that are entered in the afternoon will not be processed until the next business day. While the TGS Admissions team has been extraordinary in their response time previously, with increased applications to process, please now allow two business days for TGS to review recommendations and generate the admission letters.

Programs must make an admission recommendation for every applicant that applies. Applicants may be admitted for the term requested or a future term. Every applicant should receive a decision. Applications cannot be held to future terms. Once Program Directors make an admission recommendation, they should not make any other changes within Admit.

Other important notes to remember about the graduate admissions process:

- Program Directors who waitlist applications need to go back into Admit to change those who have been waitlisted to either a *deny* or an *admit* once a final decision has been made.
- A program recommendation may be for unconditional admission, but TGS will change this to conditional when we need an applicant to submit final transcripts or other official documentation.
- A program recommendation may be for unconditional admission, a Program Director may recommend someone unconditionally but TGS may need to make them conditional based on needing official transcripts with degree conferral or other documentation.
- If an applicant withdraws, before/after the decision has been made the applicant or program director should email TGS, so that Admissions can make the necessary adjustment to the applicant's record.

Discussion ensued. An informational email will be sent following today's meeting outlining the process.

## IV. Discussion Items

### A. Policies

#### 1. Incomplete Grades

The use of “I” as a grade indicates incomplete work. After a certain period of time, if the course work is not completed, the “I” changes to an F. However, the change does not automatically happen. Often the “I” is left hanging. The policy change recommends that the course in which a student received a grade of “I” must be completed by the end of the next regular semester or the grade is reported permanently as “WF” (withdrawal failing). The use of “WF” would clean up the “I” which doesn’t automatically change.

The incomplete grade policy will now read that “an extension will be granted upon the request of the faculty member for no more than one academic year.”

Discussion ensued.

The Graduate Council members were in favor of the *Incomplete Grades* policy and unanimously approved the policy.

#### 2. Leave from Study/Continuous Enrollment

The policy has been revised to limit a student from enrolling in GRAD 597 as their first class and to limit enrollment in GRAD 597 for a maximum of two consecutive (including summer) semesters. GRAD 597 is really for students who genuinely started their programs and need to take a leave. It was never intended to be used as an alternative to deferring a student’s first semester. Instead of allowing students to start their program with GRAD 597, they should defer admission up to one year. Students will also now need permission from The Graduate School to enroll in GRAD 597.

A suggestion was made to link the deferral policy within this policy, and members supported this suggestion.

Members were in favor of the changes made to the *Leave from Study/Continuous Enrollment* policy with an insertion of the deferral link and this was unanimously approved.

#### 3. Policy Review Timeline

To maintain policy relevance, policies will be substantively reviewed by the Graduate Council Executive Committee every five years. The next policy review will occur during the 2024-25 academic year.

Members were in favor of the *Policy Review Timeline* as written and unanimously approved.

#### 4. Graduate Application Deadlines and Admission Deferrals.

If a student applies for a specific term, a program needs to make a decision (admit, conditionally admit, provisionally admit, admit for a future term, deny admission, etc.) in a timely manner. Program Directors cannot defer their decision until a future term, when a student applies for admission for a specific term.

Currently, programs vary with respect to whether they have application deadlines, preferred dates for applications, or rolling admission. TGS wants all applicants who submit an application, and pay an application fee, to receive a decision. But if students apply just before or after a semester begins, it is unlikely that all steps can be completed to allow them to enroll that semester. Given this, the *Graduate Application Deadlines and Admission Deferrals* policy was created that outlines that programs may have application deadlines, a preferred date for receipt of applications, or rolling admission.

Discussion ensued.

Members were in favor of the *Graduate Application Deadlines and Admission Deferrals* as written and unanimously approved.

## B. Appointments for 2021-2022

Prior to today's meeting, two attached spreadsheets were shared with Graduate Council members to review related to the selection process of both the Graduate Council Executive Committee and the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee. In April each year, the Graduate Council is expected to choose individuals who will serve on the following year's Graduate Council Executive Committee and Graduate Council Curriculum Committee.

### 1. Graduate Council

Academic Unit Heads recently received an email regarding the formation of the 2021-2022 Graduate Council (GC) membership. The By-laws stipulate that membership shall include a representative from each academic unit that currently offers one or more graduate programs or certificates. There are no term limits and Graduate Council members assume their responsibilities on the first day of the Fall semester. Please see By-laws guidelines below:

“Faculty who serve as Graduate Council Members are selected by Academic Units from among the Graduate Faculty of their Academic Units. Representatives are selected annually and serve starting on the first day of classes during the fall semester. Academic Units establish their own representative-selection procedures and are encouraged to develop an agreed-upon written protocol for selection. Academic Unit Heads will inform the Graduate Council Secretary of the individual who will represent their unit the following academic year by the last day of the prior spring semester (see page 2).”

Academic Unit Heads were asked to forward their representatives name by Monday, April 19, 2021, via email to [gradcouncil@jmu.edu](mailto:gradcouncil@jmu.edu).

### 2. Graduate Council Executive Committee

Membership of the Executive Committee consists of the Interim Dean of The Graduate School, who serves as chair, the Associate Dean, who serves as co-chair and one graduate faculty member representing each college. Members of the committee may be called on, in between full Council meetings and during the summer months, to provide advice to the Interim Dean and to aid in urgent decision-making when the full Graduate Council cannot be gathered. The Interim Dean and Associate Dean of The Graduate School serve as ex-officio, non-voting members.

For the Executive Committee, the Graduate Council must choose one representative for each college from among the members of next year's Graduate Council. During the college's break-out sessions the following members were appointed to the 2021-2022 Graduate Council Executive Committee:

College of Business – Dr. Matt Rutherford

College of Arts and Letters – Dr. Jen Almjeld

College of Education – Dr. Angela Webb and the alternate being Dr. Stephanie Wasta.

The other colleges opted to take the discussion back to their college and forward the name of their representative to serve on the Graduate Council Executive Committee.

### 3. Graduate Council Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee is responsible for making all curriculum decisions on behalf of the Graduate Council. This committee is composed of one graduate faculty member representing each college, one at-large graduate faculty member representing all doctoral programs and one at-large graduate faculty member representing all master's programs. Curriculum Committee members can, but are not required to be members of the Graduate Council.

For the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Council must choose one representative for each college from among the Graduate Faculty of each college. Members do not have to be Graduate Council members or Program Directors, but these individuals are eligible for this committee. In addition, the Graduate Council must choose one at-large graduate faculty member to represent all master's programs and another who will represent all doctoral programs.

During the college's break-out sessions the following member was appointed to the 2021-2022 Graduate Council Curriculum Committee:

College of Arts and Letters – Dr. Corey Hickerson and the alternate being Dr. Jen Almjeld

The other colleges opted to take the discussion back to their college and forward the name of their representative to serve on the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee.

## V. Announcements

A. Graduate Zoom Retreat, is scheduled for May 14, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Mr. John Burgess and Dr. Linda Thomas have been having conversations about the Graduate Zoom Retreat scheduled for May 14. Please watch your emails for information about the retreat.

## IV. Conclusion

Interim Dean Burgess thanked members for their participation in the meeting. With no further business, the Graduate Council Meeting ended at 3:29 p.m.



## Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting Graduate Council Voting Members

### Sign-in Sheet

April 8, 2021

2:00 - 3:30 pm

Zoom

Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Almjeld	Jennifer	Writing, Rhetoric, & Technical Communication (WRTC)	Yes
Bandalos	Deborah	Psychology - Graduate	Yes
Carr	Ben and Julie	Hart School	Yes
Coates	Tabitha	Learning, Technology, & Leadership Education	Yes
Dabback	William	Music	Yes
Dorne	Rachelle	Occupational Therapy	Yes
Dyche	Jeff	Psychology - Undergraduate	Yes
Hefner	Brooks	English	Yes
Heydari	Hossain	Computer Science	YES
Hickerson	Corey	Communication & Advocacy	yes
Knopp	Andrea	Nursing	Yes
Mayhew	Fred	Political Science	
McCartney	Holly	Early, Elementary & Reading Education	
Nichols	Nancy	Accounting	Yes
Nye	Susan	Kinesiology	
Rout	Ayasakanta	Communication Sciences & Disorders (CSD)	
Rutherford	Matthew	Business Administration	Yes
Sloan	Margaret	School of Leadership	Yes



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Stevens	Alexis	Mathematics	YES
Van Norman	William (Bill)	History	Yes
Wasta	Stephanie	Educational Foundations & Exceptionalities	yes
Webb	Angela	Middle, Secondary and Mathematics Education	Yes
Wightman	Bill	School of Art & Design History	Yes
Wunderlich	Roshna	Biology	

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**Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting**  
**Graduate Council Guests**

**Sign-in Sheet**

April 8, 2021

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The Graduate School Representatives Non-Voting Members		
Full Name	Title	Joined Zoom Meeting
John Burgess	Interim Dean	Yes
Michael Stoloff	Associate Dean, Admissions and Recruitment	Yes
Laura Ryman	Interim Assistant Dean and Director of Graduate Student Services	Yes

Guests			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Anderson	Robin	Graduate Psychology	Yes
Apple	Kevin	Associate Dean, College of Sciences & Mathematics	Yes
Arndt	Chris	Dean's Office, College of Arts and Letters	Yes
Bell	Pamela	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Bourne	Mary Lou	Research and Scholarship	
Davis	Marcus	Dean's Office, College of Science & Mathematics	
Doss	Cheryl	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Escalona Berbetty	Boris	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Gaines	Briana	Coordinator, THRIVE, Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Gallagher	Scott	Associate Dean, College of Business	yes
Gully	Sarah	Graduate Student Association, Vice President	



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Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Holloway	Steven	Libraries & Educational Technologies	Yes
Kiely	Michelle	School Counseling Program	
Klein	Michael	Associate Professor, WRTC	
MacDonald	Sarah	Dean's Office, Professional & Continuing Education	Yes
Maxwell	Paula	Dean's Office, College of Health & Behavioral Studies	
Michael	Lynette	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Miller	Yvonne	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Shackelford	Kristi	Office of Vice Provost for Academic Development	
Stevens	Wren	Interim Associate Dean, College of Visual & Performing Arts	Yes
Tang	Jeff	Dean's Office, College of Integrated Science and Engineering	
Wang	Felix	Center for Global Engagement, International Programs	
Way	Henry	Interim Associate Dean, CISE, ISAT	
Zugelder	Bryan	Associate Dean, College of Education	



**Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting**  
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<b>Program Directors</b>			
<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Academic Unit</b>	<b>Joined Zoom Meeting</b>
Blake	Charles	Program Director, Political Science-European Union Policy Studies	
Brown	Kathryn	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Collins	Roger	Program Director, Educational Leadership	
Diop	Corinne	Program Director, Art History, Studio Art (MA and MFA)	
Dredger	Katie	Program Director, Middle Education & 5 <sup>th</sup> year Middle Education MAT	
DePaolis	Rory	Program Director, Communication Sciences & Disorders	
Evans	Amanda	Program Director, Clinical Mental Health Counseling	
Frye	Jamie	Program Director, Athletic Training	
Gilligan	Tammy	Program Director, School Psychology	
Luden	Nick	Program Director, Kinesiology-Exercise Physiology and Kinesiology-Physical and Health Education.	Yes
Weniger	Gerald	Physician's Assistant Studies	



Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting

Graduate Council Guests

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Name of Guest Not Included on List Above			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Argenbright	Christine	Nursing Department, Associate Professor	Yes

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