

# MINUTES

**The Graduate Council**  
**University of Oregon Senate Committee**  
**May 5, 2025, 10:00 pm – 12:00 pm, Zoom**

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**Graduate Council Charge:** The Graduate Council shall advise the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies on matters pertaining to graduate study at the University of Oregon.

Specifically, and in addition to its advisory role, the Graduate Council:

- (1) Establishes policies and regulations governing graduate study at the University of Oregon, and reviews and votes to approve changes or additions to such policies.
  - (2) Reviews and votes to approve new graduate programs, revisions to degree requirements for existing graduate programs, and other changes to existing graduate programs, while ensuring highest standards for graduate education.
  - (3) Reviews and makes recommendations to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies on academic grievance appeals in accordance with the University's established grievance procedures.
  - (4) Provides input and guidance to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies on initiatives aimed at enhancing excellence, diversity, and access in graduate education.
  - (5) Provides University administration and Unit leaders across campus with opinion and counsel on university affairs affecting graduate education and graduate students, including issues of equity in service to graduate students.
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**Council Members Present:** Ron Bramhall (*ex officio*), Sandra Boone, Krista Chronister (*ex officio*), Erik Girvan, Bonnie Gutierrez (*ex officio*), Maile Hutterer, Leigh Johnson, Gabriela Martinez, Ben McMorran, Kate Mills, Barbara Muraca, Jesus Ramos-Kittrell, Denita Strietelmeier (*ex officio*), Laura Wellman

**Members Absent:** John Beckerman, Jason Brown, Beth Harn, Josh Snodgrass, Dean Walton

**Division Staff Present:** Austin Bosworth, Jered Nagel

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## AGENDA

**Call to Order**

**Approval of April minutes (10:00-10:05)**

**MA in Linguistics (10:05-10:30)**

## **Dissertation Committee Policy (10:30-11:15)**

## **Scheduling for Next Academic Year (11:15-11:45)**

## **Open Discussion as Needed (11:45-12:00)**

## **Adjourn**

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## **Call to Order**

The Graduate Council was called to order at 10:02am.

## **Approval of April minutes (10:00-10:05)**

Graduate Council was provided time to review the previous April minutes prior to approval regarding notes on international student support recorded in the minutes.

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## **MA in Linguistics (10:05-10:30)**

*The MA is currently only active as a master's-in-passing for doctoral students. Linguistics is proposing to reactivate a standalone version of the MA.*

**Guest:** Vsevolod Kapatsinski, Linguistics Department Head and Professor

Presentation from Vsevolod Kapatsinski on the steps to transform the MA in Linguistics from a masters-in-passing into a standalone program. Much of the program's structure is already built and implemented by doctoral students who are pursuing a doctoral degree in Linguistics, and would require small changes to provide a standalone MA in Linguistics. Masters-in-passing will be retained for doctoral path students, just now offering a standalone as well.

## **Questions**

### **Are there other degree programs this may compliment, interfere with, or compete with?**

- No, there are several doctoral degrees in Linguistics that would benefit from standalone Linguistics masters students to consider their degree after completing the MA
- Mention of minimum-course requirements

### **Can you talk about the relationship between the Language Teaching Skills and this proposed program?**

- The only potential overlap between the two programs is MA Linguistics students seeking out one course that is part of that program as an elective, but not other course overlap

**Is a masters in passing remaining in place, and does it have the same requirements?**

- Yes, and it will have the same requirements.

**Please describe the kinds of methods training provided as part of the program.**

- In Introduction to Phonology, students will perform phonological analysis weekly with new data sets, and design an experiment as part of the conclusion of the course.
- For doctoral students, there are three specialized methods courses that are more tailored to each student's academic path and goals.

**Does the department have capacity for advising for this new cohort of MA students?**

- The department is enthusiastic about supporting advising for MA students, and does have capacity to advise incoming masters students as their doctoral student numbers remain manageable.

The guest was thanked for their presentation and questions answered and left the session.

A short discussion was held about the details around a request to change one of the course numbers based on university policy from 507 to a different number.

The Graduate Council voted to approve the Standalone MA in Linguistics without abstentions at 10:28am.

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**Dissertation Committee Policy (10:30-11:15)**

*Continued discussion from last meeting; revised*

**Revisions to the previous draft:**

- Clarified exceptions to the 6-month rule for committee membership.
- Updated language to reflect changes in faculty classifications (e.g., TRP phase-out).
- Proposed allowing retired faculty to remain as advisors with a co-chair requirement.
- Discussed the distinction between advisor and chair roles, especially for specialized fields.
- Addressed concerns about non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) serving as chairs/advisors and the implications for workload and departmental policy.

**Discussion Points**

- Concerns about the burden of petitions and administrative complexity.

- Suggestions to allow retired faculty to continue as advisors for a limited time without petitions.
- Debate over whether the policy should include protections for NTTF or leave that to unit-level or CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement) policies.
- Proposal to clarify eligibility based on qualifications rather than employment status alone.
- Suggestion to consult with the Provost's Office and potentially revise language to reduce ambiguity and administrative burden.
- A concern was raised about the uneven enforcement of policies across schools and the tendency of some deans to avoid enforcing them to preserve internal dynamics. It was suggested that clearer guidelines could help not only protect career faculty but also define appropriate boundaries for tenure-track faculty roles. The speaker emphasized the need for clarity to prevent political tensions and ensure equitable role assignments.

The council tabled further discussion of the dissertation policy committee changes until the mentioned changes are implemented and the Office of the Provost is consulted.

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#### **Scheduling for Next Academic Year (11:15-11:45)**

*The Division of Graduate Studies would like to try and schedule Graduate Council meetings at a consistent day and time throughout the year. Discussion of feasibility of this approach given members' varied teaching schedules.*

**Council Members have incredibly varied schedules, and faculty will not know their class schedule until the upcoming term; in addition, some members serve on other committees which also affects their ability to provide consistent times of availability**

Scheduling for next Academic Year was tabled without a vote.

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The Graduate Council adjourned at 11:22am.