

1 Meeting Minutes of the Graduate Council

2  
3 December 13, 2016

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5 Members Present: D. Baker (MKHP), D. Bellar (KNES), H. Damico (CODI), P. Das  
6 (ECON), Mark DeWitt (MUS), M. Farmer-Kaiser (ex-officio member), A. Fekih (ELEE), E.  
7 Habib (CIVE), K. Hermann (COUE), R. Hernandez (CHEE), H. Hurst (NURS), J. Lemoine  
8 (NURS), M. Kightley (ENGL), A. Magidin (MATH), K. McClung (ARCH), D. Olivier  
9 (EDFL), K. Smith (ARCH), C. Ratliff (ENGL), D. Stevens (MGMT),

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11 Members Absent: J. Albert (BIOL), D. Harrington (NURS), C. Parker (HIST), C. Richter  
12 (GEOL), C. Roche-Wallace (MUS), W. Xu (CHEM), S. Gawronski (GSO), M. Young (PhD  
13 ALSS)

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15 Guests: Ombudsman

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17 The meeting was called to order by H. Hurst at 2:07 p.m.

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19 H. Hurst requested a motion to move forward in the agenda to student appeals as students,  
20 faculty representative, and the University Ombudsman were present to have grade appeals  
21 heard by the Council. Motion made to move student appeals to the outset of the agenda.  
22 Motion seconded and carried.

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24 **New Business:**

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26 H. Hurst then explained that, although appealing grades in the same course, each of the two  
27 student appeals would be heard separately, with the Ombudsman in attendance. After both the  
28 student and the faculty representative had the opportunity to present the complaint/respond,  
29 Council members would be permitted to ask questions for clarification, and then ultimately  
30 deliberate with the student, faculty representative, and Ombudsman absent from the room. In  
31 addition, guidelines for appealing unfair and capricious grades were discussed and explained.

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33 The first student appeal of an unfair or capricious grade was presented to the Council with the  
34 student, Ombudsman, student's witness, and faculty-representative present. Following  
35 presentation of the appeal, the Graduate Council requested clarification on a number of details  
36 from all three parties. Following those clarifications, all three parties left so the Council could  
37 deliberate. First, motion made to determine by secret ballot whether the student received an  
38 unfair or capricious final grade in the course in question. Motion seconded and carried. The  
39 Council voted and a member of the Council and an impartial third party (the Assistant to the  
40 Dean of the Graduate School) tallied those votes with 15 votes for "yes" and 4 for "no." The  
41 Council then discussed whether to assign a letter grade or a grade of "credit" to a course in  
42 question. Discussion centered on concern over both that the grades retained by the student and  
43 the faculty representative were incomplete and inconsistent as well as that the members of the  
44 Council have no formal training in the course. Motion made to vote by secret ballot to grant  
45 the student either a final grade of "credit" or "letter grade." Motion seconded and carried. The  
46 Council voted, with a member of the Council and an impartial third party tallying the votes,

1 16 votes for “credit” and 3 for “letter grade.” The Council ultimately determined that the  
2 student was given an unfair or capricious grade and that the student’s grade for the course  
3 should be changed to “credit.”  
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5 The second student was then invited into the room along with the Ombudsman and faculty  
6 representative; the faculty representative was no longer available. The second student appeal  
7 of an unfair or capricious grade was then presented to the Council with the student, student’s  
8 witnesses, and Ombudsman present. Following presentation of the appeal, the Graduate  
9 Council requested clarification on a number of details from all three parties. Following those  
10 clarifications, all parties left so the Council could deliberate. First, motion made to determine  
11 by secret ballot whether the student received an unfair or capricious final grade in the course  
12 in question. Motion seconded and carried. The Council voted, with a member of the Council  
13 and an impartial third party tallying the votes, with 13 votes for “yes” and 4 for “no” and 1  
14 vote was illegible. The Council then discussed again whether to assign a letter grade or  
15 “credit” for the course, with the same concerns being voiced. Motion made to vote by secret  
16 ballot to grant the student either a final grade of “credit” or “letter grade.” Motion seconded  
17 and carried. The Council voted, again with a member of the Council and an impartial third  
18 party tallying the votes, with 16 votes for “credit” and 1 for “letter grade and 1 vote that was  
19 illegible. The Council ultimately determined that the student was given an unfair or capricious  
20 grade and that the student’s grade should be changed to “credit.”  
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### 23 **Announcements:**

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25 Motion made to approve the November 8, 2016 meeting minutes. Motion seconded and  
26 carried.  
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28 The list of degree candidates was presented to the Council. Motion made to accept the list of  
29 degree candidates. Motion seconded and carried.  
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### 31 **Committee Reports:**

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33 Student Appeals Committee – No report.  
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35 Curriculum Committee – Committee report submitted by J. Lemoine. Motion made to accept  
36 the report of the Curriculum Committee. Motion seconded and carried.  
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38 Fellowship Committee – No report.  
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40 Graduate Faculty Membership Committee – No report  
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### 42 **Old Business:**

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44 Motion made to move report from the Ad Hoc Committee on International Student  
45 Admissions Policies to the February 14, 2017 Graduate Council meeting. Motion seconded  
46 and carried.

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**New Business:**

H. Hurst asked the Council to consider a request from a former UL Lafayette faculty member to extend an emergency appointment to the Graduate Faculty in order to finish one final PhD student at UL Lafayette. M. Farmer-Kaiser noted that an extension had been granted in the past to this former faculty member to finish a group of PhD students, with all but one student having finished their degree. Motion made to extend the faculty member’s graduate faculty membership until the Summer 2017 semester. Motion seconded and carried.

H. Hurst asked the Council to consider an appeal of a graduate faculty membership decision wherein a faculty member who had applied for level 2 membership, was denied, and granted level 1 membership instead. The Council reviewed the college, department, and academic dean recommendations concerning the faculty member in question. The Council also reviewed additional supporting materials provided by the appealing faculty member, comparing those materials with the faculty member’s college criteria. Upon this review, the Council determined that the faculty member still did not meet the qualifications for level 2 graduate faculty membership. Motion made to deny the appeal based on new supporting materials not meeting the college criteria while encouraging the faculty member to reapply in the Spring 2017 graduate faculty membership application cycle. Motion seconded and carried.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 4:52pm.