

**MINUTES  
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
COUNCIL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

MEETING: October 27, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: R. Adams, P. Alcalde, K. Bowers, A. Daily, E. Delavega, J. Fahey, O. George, A. Guthrie, S. Laybourn, A. Mickelson, D. Nascimento, E. Nelson, M. Perez, H. Sable, C. Santo, X. Shen, D. Smith, D. Venugopal

MEMBERS ABSENT: V. Levin, J. McCutcheon

PROXIES: Amaia Iratzoqui (CJUS), Eunseo Choi (CERI)

PRESIDING: R. Kreuz

**1. Approval of the minutes from the September 29, 2025 Council meeting**

E. Delavega made a motion to approve the minutes. M. Perez seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

**2. Presentation and approval of curriculum changes  
(full list of approvals begins on page 3)**

- a) Low Impact block vote: all were approved
- b) CJUS: Motion to approve by R. Adams and seconded by K. Bowers. All were in favor and so approved.
- c) COMP: Motion to approve by M. Perez and seconded by A. Daily. All were in favor and so approved.
- d) ENGL: Motion to approve by H. Sable and seconded by D. Venugopal. All were in favor and so approved.
- e) PHIL: Motion to approve by M. Perez and seconded by J. Fahey. All were in favor and so approved.
- f) PHYS: Motion to approve by A. Mickelson and seconded by R. Adams. All were in favor and so approved.
- g) PSYC: Motion to approve by C. Santo and seconded by A. Daily. All were in favor and so approved.

**3. Report from the October 3 University Graduate Council meeting**

- a) Change to minimum hours requirement for the PhD**
- b) Removal of graduate residence requirement**

On October 3, the UCGS approved the proposals to change the minimum hours required for the PhD, from 72 down to 60, and the removal of the doctoral residence requirement, which formerly was the last thirty hours taken.

### **c) Decrease in student funding**

There has been a 10% decrease in graduate student funding. It happened this year but was backfilled by central administration. It is Dean Tollefsen's understanding that this will not be the case next year and is a consequence of RCM.

In theory, the College could absorb the cost to prevent it from being passed on to the departments, but we've been told that the College itself should expect a \$700k budget cut next year, so we won't be able to shield the departments from this reduction. Be aware of this as you begin to admit students on assistantship for next year.

### **d) zero credit-hour comprehensive exam course**

Another issue discussed at the October 3 meeting was using a zero-credit hour course to document comprehensive exam completion. Every department has been assigned course numbers for this: 7878 and 8878. Beverly McPhail in the Graduate School can activate these for you, and they can be listed under you as graduate program director. When a "grade" is submitted, Beverly can check this off in UMDegree. It's a simple and effective way to track completion of this degree requirement.

## **6. New Business**

### **a) "Dismantling DEI": implications for handbooks and governing documents**

On May 15, the governor signed the Tennessee legislature's "Dismantling DEI Departments Act" (SB1084). To bring the UofM into compliance with this act, our legal counsel advised us to remove DEI language from our outward-face web pages. The college conducted an audit of the words "diversity," "equity," and "inclusion" and their variants on the College's and department's web pages, and a spreadsheet was sent to your chairs last week.

Please note that not all usages of these words are problematic: it's perfectly fine to retain phrases like "diversity of wildlife" or "salary equity," but not if explicitly tied to the goals of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The university's website has both outward- and inward-facing pages and information, and we began to be asked whether these inward-facing pages need to be edited as well. Two points:

- 1) If a document is historical, it can remain as is, DEI language and all.
- 2) If it is a "living document" (that is, it continues to be updated and used), it should probably be checked for such language. Living documents include but are not

necessarily limited to department governance documents and graduate student handbooks.

**7. Adjournment** M. Perez motioned to adjourn. C. Santo seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

**Low Impact CAS Graduate Curriculum for 2026-27 Catalog  
(to be voted on at the Dec 5 University Council meeting)**

**COMP**

Graduate Course Closeouts LI (5)

COMP - 6014 - Intro Java Programming

COMP - 6041 - Intro To Compilers

COMP - 6242 - Intro Computer Graphics

COMP - 6310 - Wireless Mobile Comp

COMP - 6730 - Expert Systems

**MATH**

Graduate Course Revision LI (2)

MATH - 6085 - Introduction to Combinatorics

removing undergraduate prerequisites

MATH - 6120 - Ordinary Differtl Equations

description, expanding abbreviated title, removing UG prerequisites

**PHYS**

Graduate Course Revisions LI (2)

PHYS - 6110 - Nuclear and Particle Physics – removing repeatability

PHYS - 6410 - Introduction to Quantum Theory – title change to Quantum Physics

**SOCI**

Graduate Course Revision LI (1)

SOCI - 6312 - Intermed Soc Stat - description

**SWRK**

Graduate Course Closeouts LI (2)

SWRK - 6934 - Child Welfare Policy/Services

SWRK - 6935 - Child Welfare II

Graduate Program Revision LI (1)

Play Therapy Graduate Certificate – adding electives (will adjust SWRK7823 once in Banner)

**CAS Graduate Curriculum Changes for 2026-27 Catalog  
(to be voted on at the Dec 5 University Council meeting)**

**CJUS**

Graduate New Course (1)

CJUS - 6230 - Restorative Justice: Theory, Principles, and Application

**COMP**

Graduate Program Revisions (2)

Computer Science, (MS)

Changes to admissions section

Added language in coursework requirements that specify that credits need to be earned in computer science graduate coursework.

Computer Science, (PhD)

Changes to admission section

Added language to the credit requirements that credits must be in computer science or must be approved to get counted.

**ENGL**

Graduate Program Revisions (2)

English Applied Linguistics Concentration, (MA)

Revising page to make it Applied Linguistics concentration specific.

Added course options to the core.

English Applied Linguistics Concentration, (PhD)

Adding new course options to the core.

Revising page to make it Applied Linguistics concentration specific.

Graduate New Concentration (1)

English TESOL Concentration (MA)

**This is not a new concentration.** English currently has 1 catalog page which includes all concentrations. Separating out concentrations so each has a dedicated catalog page. Included TESOL here for vote because courses have been added to the core.

**PHIL**

Graduate New Course (1)

PHIL - 6001 - AI Ethics and Risk Mitigation

Graduate Program Revision (1)

Philosophy, (PhD) - reducing required credit hours beyond the UG degree to 60

**PHYS**

Graduate Program Revision (1)

Applied Physics, (PhD)

Reduced the credit hours from 72 to 60

Clarify the qualifying exam and comprehensive exam timeline.

Remove full-time requirement. Remove redundant information.  
Revise the qualifying exam topic description.

Graduate New Concentration (1)

Physics - Health Physics Concentration (MS)

**PSYC**

Graduate Program Revision (1)

Psychology - Experimental Psychology, (PhD)

Lowering the minimum hours beyond bachelor's from 80 to 60.

*Minutes prepared by S. Warren from notes provided by R. Kreuz and a recording; edited by R. Kreuz*