

Graduate Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 31, 2025, 3:00 pm
4490 Gardner Commons

Council Members Present: Paul Stout, Donna Ziegenfuss, David Symons, José Gutiérrez, Codrina Rada, Jay Jordan, Glen Schmidt, Misty Smith, Julie Valentine, Robert Keiter, Kent Golic

Student Representative Present: Steven Valdez

Ex Officio Members Present: Helene Shugart

Excused members: Darryl Butt, Katrina Green, Anthony Jones, Karen Paisley, James Agutter, Janet Lindsley, Kuby Balagurunathan, Erin Mason

Graduate School Staff Present: Paula Spencer, Mary Anne Berzins

Welcome: Helene Shugart, Graduate School Associate Dean

7-Year Review: Department of Mechanical Engineering

Presentation by review committee chair: Glen Schmidt

Commendations:

- Strong collegiality
- Faculty work well together
- Strong culture

Recommendations:

- Develop mechanisms to bolster/develop high dollar faculty research success.
- Grow tenure-line faculty to support new master's degrees and elevate international stature.
- Review graduate program curriculum and funding levels - for Ph.D. students especially.
- Track learning outcomes.

Motion to ratify report: Robert Keiter

Second: Donna Ziegenfuss

Vote: Yes-12, No-0

7-Year Review: Department of Educational Leadership and Policy

Presentation by review committee chair: Kent Golic

Commendations:

- Faculty are dedicated.
- Faculty are producing high impact research.
- Student centered department

Recommendations:

- Staffing level needs attention (currently 1 staff member).
- Explore internships opportunities
- Greater clarity and communication around RPT and Faculty Workload
- Update graduate handbook.
- Streamline curriculum to accelerate completion.
- Implement formal onboarding for junior faculty.
- Develop a strategic plan.
- Faculty workloads must be addressed to allow for recommendations to be implemented.

Motion to ratify report: Jay Jordan

Second: Julie Valentine

Vote: Yes-12, No-0

7-Year Review: Department of Mining Engineering

Presentation by Glen Schmidt on behalf of review committee chair: Janet Lindsley

Commendations:

- The faculty community is enthusiastic and energetic.
- Relatively happy students
- New emphasis on safety and environmental impact of mining

Recommendations:

- Develop a strategic plan.
- Develop internal strategies to recruit students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Review and assess undergraduate emphases.
- Develop a vibrant graduate program.
- Review department resources – lab support and space.
- Work with industry to develop more connections.

Motion to ratify report: Robert Keiter

Second: Kent Golic

Vote: Yes-11, No-0, Abstain-1

Request for Substitution of Accreditation for 7-year Review: Division of Occupational and Environmental Health

Discussion took place about:

- Rigor of accreditation processes for multiple accreditation reviews

Motion to approve: Julie Valentine

Second: Misty Smith

Vote: Yes-12, No-0

Action: Notify Division of approval

Proposal: New Program – Transportation Infrastructure Electrification Certificate

Presenter: Cathy Liu, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Discussion took place about:

- Collaboration with Utah State University
- Funded by USHE Deep-tech Initiative Grant
- Industry collaborations
- Market analysis shows high employability and salary potential

The following concerns were discussed:

- Learning outcomes statements need to be more specific and measurable.
- Proposal should have course descriptions to demonstrate that courses align courses to program outcomes.
- Proposal lacks a description of assessments used to measure outcomes.
- There is a lack of clarity on how programmatic infrastructure and resources will be shared between USU and the U of U.

Motion to reconsider the proposal at a future meeting: Jay Jordan

Second: Misty Smith

Vote: Yes-12, No-0

Action: Provide feedback regarding Council concerns. Reconsider proposal at a future meeting.

Proposal: New Program - Professional Masters of Materials Engineering and Management

Presenter: Michael Free, Department of Materials Science and Engineering

Discussion took place about:

- Driven by industry advisory board
- Student interest
- Collaboration with Department of Mechanical Engineering and School of Business
- Online and in-person modality
- Faculty support of proposal (71%)
- Faculty concerns
- Potential enrollment
- Limited support from University Connected Learning

The following concerns were discussed:

- Proposal does not demonstrate that students enrolled in asynchronous iterations of the courses will have learning experiences and outcomes consistent with and comparable to those of their synchronous peers.
- Proposal lacks evidence-based assessments, beyond letter grades, for learning outcomes.
- Courses should be mapped to program outcomes.

Motion to reconsider the proposal at a future meeting: Jay Jordan

Second: Donna Ziegenfuss

Vote: Yes-12, No-0

Action: Provide feedback regarding Council concerns. Reconsider proposal at a future meeting.

Adjourn