

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
Thursday, February 12, 2026 – CMCT 241

PRESENT: Naheed Abdulrahim, Sharon Campbell, Ngan Chau, Bree Dority, Janet Graham, Mary Harner, Torsten Homberger, Whitney Schneider-Cline, Christopher Strickland, Erin Sweeney, Frank Tenkorang, Doug Tillman, Michelle Warren, Laurinda Weisse, Melissa Wuellner, Mariana Paredes, Megan Adkins, and Linda Johnson

ABSENT: Angela Hollman, Emily Conrad, Brenton Keese

GUESTS: Timothy Bartling, Evan Boyd, Ngan Chau, Carrie Kracl, Tiffani Luethke, Katherine Moen, Brian Peterson, Eric Tenkorang

I. Approval of the January 15, 2026, Minutes – approved via email. Motion to approve the minutes by Sweeney/Campbell.

II. Closed Session related to Human Resources

Weisse moved that the Council enter into closed session to discuss the Graduate Studies & Academic Innovation Dean search. Council entered into closed session.

III. Graduate Studies Report

Interim Dean:

A. HESA proposed deletion

A discussion was held regarding the External Review Group's comments. The review group recommended a proposed deletion of the program with a Discontinue with Degree-Completion plan. A motion to Discontinue with Degree-Completion was made by Dority and seconded by Wuellner. A request was made for the vote to be conducted by ballot. The motion to vote by ballot received a second, and ballots were distributed to the Graduate Council members. The first round of voting resulted in an evenly split vote. A second round of voting was conducted. The final vote resulted in 7 in favor, 6 abstentions, and 2 opposed. With the majority voting in favor, the motion carried.

B. Professional Programs

Discussion was held regarding NU System funding considerations, specifically the financial aid cap for students in professional programs. Prior to this new financial aid cap, accredited programs were encouraged to transition from graduate to professional designation, which allowed benefits such as greater flexibility in hiring faculty without terminal degrees but with relevant expertise.

It was noted that certain fields (e.g., law, medicine, athletic training, CDIS) are designated as professional programs and may be perceived differently from traditional graduate programs. Ongoing system-level discussions are considering alternative terminology or classifications to potentially avoid the financial aid cap, with the possibility of establishing three distinct categories: graduate, professional, and an additional designation yet to be determined. It is highly recommended that there will be a cross-collaboration on all campuses.

Assistant Dean:

No report

Associate Dean Engagement and Retention:

No Report

IV. Committee Reports

A. Policy & Planning Committee –

Reviewing the purpose of the graduate faculty status (and its role in P & T) – provide a draft in advance of the March meeting

Work with Committee III, to finalize the grade appeal policy.

Reviewing UNK Best Thesis, with a decision by February 20th to the Office of Graduate Studies.

B. Academic Programs Committee –

Program Changes

Old Business:

For Graduate Council Action – motion to approve the revisions by Campbell/Wuellner. Motion Carried

Program Name	Purpose	Recommendation
<p>CRINST-MAE: Curriculum and Instruction, Master of Arts in Education</p>	<p>This is a large overhaul of the Master's in Curriculum and Instruction Program.</p> <p>We are making these changes to streamline our degree and certification program offerings and to offer a graduate-level elementary education initial certification program with a master's degree option or a certification-online option.</p> <p>Additionally, we are updating some of the our Transitional Certification Program coursework and the Reading/SPED program based on changes initiated by those program heads to support students and newly-created coursework.</p> <p>We have some additional changes to our English as a Second Language Supplemental Endorsement, which is a concentration in our C&I Master's Program. These ESL Changes are an effort to align with our Undergraduate ESL Supplemental Endorsement offering to meet</p>	<p>Approve</p>

	<p>NDE Rule 24 requirements. It also paves the way for students to add a Dual Language Supplemental Endorsement from Modern Languages.</p> <p>Last, we are making a change to indicate that the Master's Degree in C&I Program cannot be completed until at least a B is earned in TE 816G. This is being made clear through a program change.</p>	
SPRK8-MAE: School Principalship PK-8, Master of Arts in Education	In the specialization section, adding a new course: EDAD 850 - Seminar in School Culture and Success (in workflow for approval). Moving EDAD 848 - Curriculum Planning from the specialization section to the elective section.	Approve

New Business:

For Graduate Council Action – motion to approve by Graham/ Weisse – Motion Carried

Program Name	Nature of Request	Recommendation
BUS-MBA: Business Administration, Master of Business Administration	We have replaced MGT 840P with MGT 841P, as the former will no longer be offered in the foreseeable future. A new faculty member with expertise in healthcare management is scheduled to teach MGT 841P in the coming years. We are also making this change in the 4+1 Management emphasis catalog. Expanding our data analytics offerings by adding CYBR 800 to data analytics cluster and admission changes.	Approve
INTECH-MSE: Learning Design and Technology, Master of Science in Education	Changing titles for two of the concentrations. Learning Design and Technology is becoming Learning Design. And Leadership in Learning Design and Technology is becoming Instructional Technology Leadership. These two concentrations are often muddled	Approve

	<p>and confused. Updating titles will help for recruitment purposes, as well as redistributing courses between them (TE 877, TE 860, TE 878, TE 882) which will make them more aligned with career tracks and make them stand out more on their own. Learning Design or Instructional Technology Leadership concentration students are required to take either TE 803 or TE 829 (rather than TE 891, being made dormant). Information Technology Students must also choose between 803 and 829. School Librarian concentration students are required to take TE 893. The only endorsement being changed is the Information Technology Endorsement requirements (removing TE 866P and requiring BSED 802P) due to Rule 22 changes/concerns and promotion of the program/endorsement.</p>	
<p>PE-MAE: Kinesiology and Sport Sciences, Master of Arts in Education</p>	<p>Since the Sport Management program is moving to CBT and creating their own master program, we must update our current master program to remove the Sport Administration option. We also plan to therefore create a health promotion emphasis in its place. Also note that the Core and Coaching & Sport Performance areas are being modified/updated.</p>	<p>Approve</p>
<p>PEEXSC-MAE: Exercise Science, Master of Arts in Education</p>	<p>Program Inactivation Proposal. Numbers in program not enough to maintain</p>	<p>Approve</p>
<p>SPAN-MAE: Spanish Education, Master of Arts in Education</p>	<p>The program is being revised to better clarify that MODL prefix courses are taught in English and Spanish course work ALL has the SPAN prefix. Additionally moving the professional development course to an MODL prefix will facilitate the creation of a new Graduate Certificate in Advanced Language Pedagogy open to teachers of ALL languages, allowing this coursework to serve more students. This reorganization</p>	<p>Approve</p>

	of the core courses reflects how the program currently serves students, supporting a thesis option and a non thesis option. MODL 800 is moving from the Research section to the Pedagogy section. Also, SPAN 872P is being added into the Spanish Specialization area to expand available options.	
SPR712-MAE: School Principalship 7-12, Master of Arts in Education	In the specialization section, adding a new course: EDAD 850 - Seminar in School Culture and Success (in workflow for approval). Moving EDAD 848 - Curriculum Planning from the specialization section to the elective section.	Approve

Certificates - New

For Graduate Council Action – motion to approve the new certificates by Strickland/Chau. Motion carried.

Certificate Name	Purpose	Recommendation
Leadership Communication, Graduate Certificate	The proposed 15-hour certificate, Leadership Communication, is designed to offer students a graduate qualification demonstrating their academic knowledge and practical ability to communicate effectively in the workplace. This certificate will target employed professionals as well as current UNK students graduating with business degrees or interests in securing management work. Additionally, the certificate may be of use as an additional qualification for students pursuing MBAs at UNK or sister institutions. The certificate will be offered entirely online, allowing working professionals, students pursuing other degrees, and place-bound students to fit the courses into their existing schedules. The certificate courses can all be used as required or elective courses in the MA in Public Communication, allowing students to transition into the department’s Master’s program if	Approve

	they wish to do so.	
World Language Teaching and Learning, Graduate Certificate	This graduate certificate provides relevant professional development to language instructors at all levels, allowing the SPAN MAE professional development course taught in English to serve all World Language teachers. The certificate also positions UNK to collaborate with UNO's graduate certificate in French to provide a French version of the SPAN MAE in the future.	Approve

Course Changes

For Graduate Council Information – the following courses have been approved, denied, or rolled back to the department by Committee II.

Old Business:

Course # & Name	Purpose	Recommendation
EDAD 850: Seminar in School Culture and Success	<p>We are adding this course to ensure future school leaders understand how school culture directly impacts student achievement and well-being. It equips students with the knowledge and skills to navigate policies, legal requirements, and programs that support diverse and special populations. This course prepares leaders to foster environments where all students can succeed.</p> <p>Over the past five years, our annual Advisory Council—comprised of practicing school leaders—has consistently identified behavior, special education, assessment, and social-emotional learning (SEL) as areas not adequately addressed in our current coursework. While we have attempted to embed these topics within existing classes, it has become clear that they require greater emphasis and focused preparation. A stand-alone course is necessary to address these priorities in a meaningful and comprehensive way.</p>	Approve

	Additionally, data from our exit surveys and mentor evaluations further reinforce these areas as critical needs for aspiring school leaders. This course responds directly to that feedback, ensuring our program remains aligned with the real-world demands and expectations of the field.	
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New Business:

Course # & Name	Purpose	Recommendation
CSP 906: Infant/Preschool Assessment	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards. Prerequisites updated to ensure students have department consent and taken prerequisite assessment courses.	Approve with minor changes
CSP 922: Problem Solving Assessment Practicum	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve with minor changes
CSP 960: Globalization of School Psychology	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve
CSP 990: Pre-Internship Seminar	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve with minor changes
CSP 992: Internship in School Psychology	Updated course description to align with current accreditation standards.	Approve with minor changes
ENG 868: Special Topics in Shakespeare Studies	New course proposal— Courses in Shakespeare under our regular special topics are very popular. There is a limit to how many times each focus can be offered, so we need one reserved for Shakespeare Studies.	Rollback for revisions
KSS 852P: Exercise Prescription for Special Populations	This P course has not been taught for a couple of years, so we are bringing the P-course section back and updating the needed pre-reqs and objectives of the course.	Approve
KSS 853: Research Methods in Sport Management	Sport Management will be moving to CBT and creating a new program (Sport Management MA) and	Approve

	<p>taking some of the original courses from KSS with them. The current KSS research course will stay in KSS. However before they can approve the new program, this course needs to exist for the program to be approved.</p>	
<p>KSS 892: Sport Management Internship</p>	<p>Sport Management will be moving to CBT and creating a new program and taking some courses from KSS with them. The current KSS internship course will stay in KSS. However before they can approve the new standalone Sport Management MA, this course needs to exist for the program to be approved.</p>	<p>Approve</p>
<p>TE 800: Foundations of Research: Methodologies and Practices for Educational Inquiry</p>	<p>The TE Graduate Faculty is moving to focus more explicitly on introducing graduate students -- many of whom are educators and practitioners in the field -- to the principles and practices of action research. Clarifying the focus of this course provides clarify and transparency for students and faculty. We are updating the title and course description to align with the intent of this course. Students will take this course and develop a full-fledged action research proposal to be implemented in their capstone (for many, TE 816G) course.</p>	<p>Approve with minor changes</p>
<p>TE 803: The Dynamic Relationship Between Philosophy and Education</p>	<p>The Graduate Faculty has elected to update some of our courses in the Graduate Department "Core". The graduate core has not been updated in some time and this is an effort to keep our courses updated and relevant. In this case, we are expanding upon the brief catalog description provided currently for TE 803 with an eye toward introducing a variety of educational philosophies with a focus on application in the classroom.</p>	<p>Approve with minor changes</p>
<p>TE 824: Language Development for Multilingual Learners</p>	<p>This is a revision to a course to be in compliance with Rule 24 for the ESL Supplemental Endorsement, which addresses language acquisition and language development.</p>	<p>Approve</p>

TE 825: Culture and Advocacy for Multilingual Learners	Our UG ESL Supplemental Endorsement underwent a revision last year. It is now time for the G ESL Supplemental Endorsement revision. We're working on this with the Modern Languages Department to support an additional supplemental endorsement in dual language instruction. This course is adjusting language and alignment.	Approve
TE 826: Content Methods & Strategies for Multilingual Learners	We are updating and revising our ESL Supplemental Endorsement courses to be more in line with our Rule 24 requirements for NDE and to align more appropriately with language and theories about teaching multilingual learners.	Approve
TE 827: Assessment and Evaluation of Language Learners	The course is necessitated to meet Rule 24 State of Nebraska Regulations for English as a Second Language (ESL) Supplemental Endorsement concentration of C&I MAE. An focuses courses on assessment and evaluation of language learners is appropriate for preparation of ESL teachers.	Approve with minor changes

C. Faculty & Student Affairs Committee –

The Grade Appeal process remains under review, the committee is waiting for a couple members of the committee to comment.

Evaluate and recommend criteria for the GPC compensation.

V. Announcements

It was announced that on April 23, the NU System Graduate Studies will host a showcase in Lincoln focused on AI and research. The event will include sessions for both faculty and graduate students and will offer an online viewing option. Additional information will be shared as it becomes available. Communication regarding the event will be sent from the NU System to all graduate faculty and graduate students on record.

A motion to adjournment was completed: Motion Strickland/ Abdulrahim.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Rhinehart

Addendum: February Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

The following information is being provided to the Graduate Council as a notification of changes to the February Graduate Council Meeting Minutes. If you have any questions or oppose the addition of the item to the meeting minutes, please email Heather by Wednesday, February 25 by 5:00 pm. No communication is needed if you approve of the change in the meeting minutes.

Thank you

The Graduate Council Committee II approved the following course KSS 893 and it was inadvertently left out of the February minutes.

The following course was approved by the council at the February meeting.

Course # & Name	Purpose	Recommendation
KSS 893: Sport Management Thesis	Sport Management will be moving to CBT and creating a new program and taking some courses from KSS with them. The current KSS thesis course will stay in KSS. However before they can approve the new standalone Sport Management MA, this course needs to exist for the program to be approved.	Approve