

**GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES**  
Thursday, December 11, 2025 – CMCT 241

**PRESENT:** Naheed Abdulrahim, Sharon Campbell, Ngan Chau, Bree Dority, Janet Graham, Mary Harner, Torsten Homberger, Christopher Strickland, Erin Sweeney, Frank Tenkorang, Doug Tillman, Michelle Warren, Emily Conrad, Mariana Paredes, Megan Adkins, and Linda Johnson

**ABSENT:** Angela Hollman, Whitney Schneider-Cline, Laurinda Weisse, Melissa Wuellner, Brenton Keesee

*Before the meeting commenced, the interim Dean added an agenda item regarding the proposed deletion of the Higher Education and Student Affairs Program, and the agenda was updated accordingly.*

**I. Approval of the November 13, 2025, Minutes – approved via email.** Motion to approve the minutes by Sweeney/Strickland.

**II. Graduate Studies Report**

Campus Updates

*A. Approval of December 2025 Graduates*

Unanimous approval of the slate of fall graduates (Sweeney/Warren).

*B. Graduate Council Policy*

The council was informed that a Graduate Policy regarding adding an additional form for credential evaluation for students will be added to the January council folder and will be reviewed at the January meeting. The Graduate Policy was noted by the interim Dean for members' awareness. The Council then considered the policy regarding a second master's degree. Sweeney provided an explanation of the policy and the clarification it offers for students pursuing a second master's program. A motion to approve the policy was made by Campbell/Strickland. Motion carried.

*C. Graduate Assistants*

Interim Adkins reported that Graduate Assistantships will be affected by the proposed budget cuts. As the budget currently stands, funding would be reduced to the equivalent of 4.5 GA positions for the Fall semester. Interim Adkins is actively exploring additional funding sources, and in conversations with upper administration to help with these reductions, with the goal of restoring support to approximately 10-14.5 new GA positions which would begin in the Fall, 2026.

With the proposed reductions in teaching, there is a possibility that departments may rely more heavily on GAs to assist with instructional responsibilities, which the Graduate Assistant review committee on the council is taking into consideration. It was also noted that student worker funding has been approved for the Spring, 2026 only, which may provide some help to departments unable to hire a new GA, due to departure or graduation of a current graduate assistant.

*D. Graduate Program Chair – Compensation Plan*

The Council was informed that the Senior Vice Chancellor has emphasized the need for greater equity in the Graduate Program Chair (GPC) compensation structure. The proposed plan for the Summer, 2026 provides a \$1,500 stipend for all GPCs paid equally between the months of May-August. Each GPC will complete an MOU acknowledging their agreement to perform the required duties.

The approach will be implemented for the current year, with the process of compensation (stipend/course release) during the academic year, and summer beginning Fall, 2026 to be reviewed by the Graduate Council in the spring. It was noted that department chairs or deans may determine

whether additional supplemental compensation is appropriate. The council engaged in discussion regarding the proposed plan.

*E. VisionSync – Campus Initiatives*

The interim dean provided an update on VisionSync, the systemwide initiative structured around five pillars designed to help all NU campuses become more data-driven. The office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation has been asked to develop initiatives aligned with each functional area found within the strategic plan, with initial submissions due prior to finals. Components of this work will be shared with the Graduate Council, and a more in-depth review and discussion will be scheduled at a future meeting.

*F. Commencement*

Winter Commencement is scheduled for Friday, December 19, in the Health and Sports Center. Interim Dean Adkins encouraged all faculty to attend and expressed appreciation to those who will be participating in hooding and reading during the ceremony. Modern Languages has agreed to read the names again, in which Interim Dean Adkins thanked the Graduate Council member who is a faculty member within the ML program.

*G. Additional Agenda Item: Higher Education Student Affairs*

The Council engaged in discussion regarding the proposed elimination of the Higher Education Student Affairs (HESA) program, per the request of the NU and UNK upper administration. Upper administration requested that the Graduate Council vote on the program's deletion; however, the Graduate Council noted that its bylaws outline a different required process than what had been requested. Members also expressed that they did not have sufficient information about the program to make an informed decision, nor has the final budget proposal been submitted by our campus in relation to the proposed elimination of programs. A motion was made to table the vote until additional information could be provided (Campbell/Strickland). The motion carried.

Interim Dean Adkins provided the outline of next steps in accordance to the NU system Graduate College bylaws. The Graduate Council determined the current information provided was inadequate, and have asked for an external review, as well as additional data about the proposed deleted program. A motion to request an outside review team of visiting scholars to review the program that is proposed for deletion was made. (Warren/Homberger) Motion Carried. Interim Dean Adkins will contact the Dean, Chair, and Graduate Program Chair of the proposed deleted program for assistance in forming the external review team. The team will be selected by Interim Dean Adkins and must consist of external visiting scholars. In addition, the Graduate Council will receive a report from the faculty budget committee, Graduate Studies representative, and additional data about the specific program considered for deletion will be provided to the Graduate Council to review to assist in completing a vote regarding the deletion of the UNK Higher Education and Student Affairs graduate program.

### **III. Committee Reports**

**A. Policy & Planning Committee –  
Second Master's Degree Policy**

The Council was informed that the Policy & Planning Committee had completed revisions to the Second Master's Degree Policy in preparation for a vote at this meeting.

**Nomination for Graduate Faculty Form**

The Committee reviewed the Criminal Justice Graduate Faculty nomination form and submitted their votes and letter for the nomination.

B. Academic Programs Committee –

Notifications – Admission Changes

MBA is changing their GPA requirements.

**Program Changes**

**Old Business:**

For Graduate Council Action – this program was rolled back for changes.

Program Name	Purpose	Recommendation
English-MA: English, Master of Arts	We need to add ENG 897A Topics in Film Studies to the literature focus area. We also need to add ENG 898: The Art of Adaptation to the literature focus area and to electives.	Rolled Back

**New Business:**

For Graduate Council Action – motion to table the STEM Program only, Table for Follow up for further information, by Strickland/Dority. AB Warren – Approved to Table the STEM program.

Program Name	Nature of Request	Recommendation
CRINST-MAE: Curriculum and Instruction, Master of Arts in Education	The C&I program cannot be completed until a least a B is earned in TE 816G. This is being made clear through a program change. TE 816G is also undergoing a course change, part of which is adding that B requirement into the description.	Rolled Back – Need to make further changes to this program.
SCIMTH-MSE: STEM Education, Master of Science in Education	We are reducing the total credits from 36 to 30. We are also creating more options for students. The Integrated Option will remain truly integrated, but the other options are specific to a content area while delivering the 18 hours students need for dual credit eligibility. The Technology Option is being created in Cooperation with UNO and students will be advised as to appropriate courses from UNO that will apply to this Option.	Table – Follow up with further questions
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.	HOLD

For Graduate Council Action – motion to approve the revision accelerated program by Graham/Tillman.  
Motion carried.

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
4+1 Master’s in Kinesiology and Sport Sciences	Addition of elective course KSS 852P.	Approve

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

**Old Business**

<b>Course # &amp; Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
CYBR 885: Information Systems Strategy and Management	Requested to go dormant, but is a prefix to CTBR 879P – So Lisa Neal rolled it back to department.	Approve
TE 837: Curriculum and Assessment	Updating the courses to have a co-requisite of TE 840. TE 840 is simultaneously being updated to have a co-requisite of TE 837.	Approve
TE 838: Literacy Development	Updating the course title to remove the reference to Middle Level and Secondary grade bands because the course content covers PK-12 literacy development. Updating the course objectives to reflect this change. Also adding TE 837 and TE 840 and pre requisites, and TE 838 as a co-requisite.	Approve
TE 839: Pedagogies of Culture, Community, and Inclusivity	Updating the course to include pre-requisites of TE 837 and TE 840, and a co-requisite of TE 838. Updating the course objectives to reflect Rule 30 compliance.	Approve
TE 840: Learning Environments	Updating the course title to remove the reference to Middle Level and Secondary grade bands because the course content covers classroom management skills across all PK-12 endorsement areas. Small revision to description for understanding. Adding TE 837 as a co-requisite. TE 837 is simultaneously being updated to have a co-requisite of TE 840.	Approve

## New Business

<b>Course # &amp; Name</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
CSP 800: Advanced Educational Psychology	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve
CSP 805: Child and Adolescent Development and Interventions	Course description is updated to reflect current Course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve
CSP 905: Behavioral Problem Solving Assessment	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve
CSP 908: Orientation to School Psychology	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve with minor revisions
CSP 920: Cognitive Problem Solving Assessment	Course description is updated to reflect current course content and alignment with updated accreditation standards.	Approve with minor revisions
CYBR 879P: Cyber Risk and threat Modeling	Removing CYBR 885P prerequisite due to 885P being made dormant.	Approve
EDAD 850: Seminar in School Culture and Success	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. By focusing on inclusive leadership and equity, the course prepares leaders to foster environments where all students can succeed.	Rolled Back
ENG 896: Thesis	We are changing the credits for ENG 896: Thesis from 3 credits to variable credits of 1-3 to allow for more flexibility for how students complete the thesis to conform to the options offered in other departments with a thesis as a course capstone. Students would now be able to take up to 6 semesters to finish although, in most cases, this would be 3 semesters, with credit combinations of 1-2-3 credits or 2-2-2 credits if they choose. They can also continue to take 2 semesters at 3-3 credits	Approve with minor revisions

	<p>which most thesis students will likely continue to do. Added catalog description as many thesis courses do not have descriptions, but there is an effort to have these included going forward.</p>	
HIST 813: Critical Moments in History	<p>This class is divided into 3 one credit hour sections. A student may take only one or two or all three. This system alleviates workload issues, while allowing students flexibility with scheduling and ensuring that they can still get the 5 hours needed for financial aid.</p> <p>The total number of completions needs to be changed from 3 to 9. Students enroll in this class in 1 credit hour sections. The total completions need to match the total credits allowed so that students who have already taken 3, 1 credit hour sections can enroll again when a new topic is offered for this course.</p>	Approve
KSS 815P: Athletic Injury Assessment I: Lower Extremities	Aligning name and catalog description with the undergraduate course component.	Approve
KSS 816P: Athletic Injury Assessment II: Upper Extremities	Aligning course name and description with undergraduate course component.	Approve
KSS 819P: Pathology of Sports Injury	Removing pre-reqs for this course as they are not needed for this particular course.	Approve
MODL 800: Curriculum Development and Assessment	This change responds to programmatic evolution - the SPAN MAE now teaches its own Research course, and does not need to incorporate this topic in the curriculum course (always was a poor fit) the new title reflects the real focus of the course - curriculum and assessment practices in world language teaching.	Approve with minor revisions
MODL 850: Teaching Heritage Languages in the United States	This change allows the MODL prefix to (appropriately) pertain to course that are not language-specific and will allow this course to serve a new graduate certificate and other graduate programs for language teachers of other languages. A Spanish heritage language pedagogy course is being proposed with a SPAN prefix to be taught in Spanish (SPAN 465/865P).	Approve with minor revisions

TE 866: Motivating the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Learner	We are updating course descriptions to show that our courses are all current with student needs. This is a part of maintaining and improving the marketability of our courses and program.	Approve
TE 868: Copyright, Fair Use, and Ethics	We are updating course descriptions to account for developments like AI and to show that our courses are all current with student needs. This is a part of maintaining and improving the marketability of our courses and program.	Approve
TE 869: Introduction to School Library Program	This course is an overview of selected school library topics: current trends, genres, issues, instructional and motivational strategies in children's and adolescent literature, along with an introduction to information literacy; school library and educational professional ethics including issues concerning the individual, society, and the profession are introduced.	Approve
TE 873: Reference Services and Resources	We are updating course descriptions to account for developments like AI and to show that our courses are all current with student needs. This is a part of maintaining and improving the marketability of our courses and program.	Approve
TE 875: Administration of the School Library	We are updating course descriptions to account for developments like AI and to show that our courses are all current with student needs. This is a part of maintaining and improving the marketability of our courses and program.	Approve with minor revisions
TE 893: Field Experiences in School Library	Updating description to match current programs. Previously only mentioned MSED-Instructional Technology (School Library) or School Library Endorsement programs; now also includes MAED-Curriculum & Instruction (School Library Concentration).	Approve

C. Faculty & Student Affairs Committee –

The committee will review the GA allocation process and met immediately following the Graduate Council meeting to determine next steps. The Grade Appeal process remains under review.

#### **IV. Other Business**

##### Student Research Day

The Council was informed that a committee is being established to determine the structure of Graduate Student Research Day. Members were advised that each college will need representation, and faculty willing to serve—including a committee chair and representatives from multiple academic areas—were confirmed during the meeting. The following faculty volunteered to serve on the committee: Janet Graham, Torsten Homburger, Naheed Abdulrahim, Erin Sweeney. College representative names who will serve on this committee are to be submitted to Heather in the Graduate Office by Thursday, December 18, 2025.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Rhinehart