

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday, August 20, 2026 – Ockinga Auditorium

PRESENT: Naheed Abdulrahim, Sharon Campbell, Ngan Chau, Bree Dority, Janet Graham, Jessica Hample, Angela Hollman, Philip Lai, Bryton Neck, Whitney Schneider-Cline, Christopher Strickland, Yipeng Sui, Erin Sweeney, Laurinda Weisse, Melissa Wuellner, Brenton Keesee, Megan Goeke, Linda Johnson and Megan Adkins

ABSENT: None

I. Approval of the July 16, 2026 Amended Minutes – approved via email.

II. Graduate Council Retreat

A. *Introductions of Graduate Council Members and Graduate Studies & Academic Innovations*

B. *State of Graduate Education & UNK Graduate Studies Priorities*

The Council discussed priorities for the upcoming academic year and identified areas of focus to guide its work. Members also discussed the priorities outlined in the Vision Sync initiative and considered how those priorities align with the Council's goals and future initiatives.

C. *Graduate College Bylaws*

The Council reviewed key provisions of the Graduate College Bylaws. A link to the Graduate College Bylaws was given to the council. Discussion included the proposed governance structure and the Graduate Faculty Membership Tiers. Council members were encouraged to review the bylaws.

D. *Committees & Responsibilities*

Committee FAQ & Assignments - An overview of each of the committee responsibilities was shared with the council.

1. **Committee I – Policy & Planning:** Reviews graduate faculty nominations for departments with fewer than six faculty and examines policies impacting graduate education.
2. **Committee II – Academic Programs:** All faculty council members serve on this committee; reviews courses via email and programs as a group discussion and vote.
3. **Committee III – Faculty & Student Affairs:** Handles graduate student grade appeals, thesis awards (MAGS and UNK), and competitive scholarship reviews.

Committee Assignments

<i>Committee I</i>	<i>Committee III</i>
Janet Graham	Naheed Abdulrahim
Ngan Chau	Sharon Campbell
Christopher Strickland	Bree Dority
Melissa Wuellner	Angela Hollman
Bryton Neck	Philip Lai
Jonathan Dettman	Jessica Hample
Yipeng Sui	Erin Sweeney

Committee II

B& T

Ngan Chau
Bree Dority
Bryton Neck
Angela Hollman

COE

Naheed Abdulrahim
Philip Lai
Erin Sweeney
Christopher Strickland
Whitney Schneider-Cline

CAS

Sharon Campbell
Janet Graham
Jessica Hample
Jonathan Dettman
Yipeng Sui
Melissa Wuellner

Committee I & Committee III will decide on chairs of those Committees at the next meeting.

E. Clifton Strengths

Megan Goeke gave a presentation about Clifton Strengths to the Council and there was an activity with their strengths.

III. Committee Reports

A. Policy & Planning Committee – no report

B. Academic Programs Committee -

For Graduate Council Action – motion to approve certificates by Strickland/Wuellner. Motion carried.

Program Name	Purpose	Recommendation
Graduate Certificate in Marketing & Sales Strategy	The certificate responds to the increasing demand for professionals who can drive organizational growth through integrated marketing, sales, and product strategies. The curriculum closely aligns with competencies sought in job postings. It targets mid-level managers, sales leaders, entrepreneurs, and family business successors. It combines analytical insight with leadership and execution skills.	Approve
Graduate Certificate in Workforce & Organizational Leadership	There is a growing demand for leadership and human resource competencies across industries. A review of job postings using Lightcast shows the curriculum aligns closely with in-demand skills. This certificate is designed for emerging managers, HR professionals, and supervisors transitioning into leadership roles. The program integrates core skills in decision making, team leadership, and organizational effectiveness.	Approve

C. Faculty & Student Affairs Committee –no report

IV. Other Business

none

A motion to adjournment was completed: Motion Strickland/Wuellner

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Rhinehart