

Oakland University

Graduate Council Minutes

Monday, February 23, 2026

1:30 – 3:30pm

In-person and Online

Graduate Council Member Attendees: Brandy Randall (Chair), Claire Rammel (Ex Officio), Linda Hutcheson (Secretary), John Krauss, Helen Levenson (non-voting), Joanne Lipson-Freed, Daniel Llamocca Obregon, Yaman Roumani, Thandi Sulé, Meir Shillor, Paul Weinberg

Guests: Neil Baumgartner, Nicole Boelk, Kristin Landis-Piwowar

Members Absent: Darrin Hanna, Anne Hranchook (Co-Chair), Victoria Lucia

Guests Absent: Tricia Westergaard

Presenters: Beth Dawson, Elizabeth Kattner

Report from the Chair

- 6th Annual Three Minute Thesis Competition/ Graduate Student Showcase (3MT/GSS)
 - Was held Friday, February 20, 2026
 - Many more students participated this year than in the past.
 - One of this year's first time judges commented on how great it was and that they look forward to judging again next year.
 - Next year, expect good representation from across campus and will encourage undergraduate students to attend the event.
- Giving Day
 - Wednesday, February 25, 2025
 - Council members are encouraged to be ambassadors, and to promote the Graduate School Finish Line Scholarship.
- Graduate School Staffing
 - Alicia Whittaker began today as Coordinator of Graduate Student Services.
 - The GS is now closer to being fully staffed with only one staff member currently out on leave.

Approval of Minutes

Paul Weinberg introduced a motion to approve the minutes for the February 9, 2026, meeting. John Krauss seconded. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

Continuing Business

1. 2026 Don and Jan O'Dowd Graduate Award - nominee selection process (subcommittee: Victoria Lucia, Meir Shillor, and Paul Weinberg)

There are enough funds to award two awards this year. The Graduate Council unanimously agreed on the two finalists: Red Douglas and Charles Shamoun

2. Program Review: Rubric, Subcommittee report
Subcommittee members: Joanne Lipson-Freed, Anne Hranchook, John Krauss

Members discussed and agreed on further changes to the Program Review form that is under development. The subcommittee will make the changes to the form and forward it for members to review again at the next GC meeting.

3. Graduate Coursework Not Part of a Graduate Degree, Graduate School policy revision - review of further revision done post revision approval on November 3, 2025, Graduate Council (Brandy Randall)

Joanne Lipson-Freed moved to approve the updated language in the February 8, 2026 version. Paul Weinberg seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Approved Graduate Certificates, Graduate School policy revision, Graduate Council (Brandy Randall)

The Council agreed to replace the last sentence of the first paragraph with 'At least one course must be taken for a letter grade.', and to strike the highlighted sentence.

Joanne Lipson-Freed moved to approve the February 8, 2026 revision pending changing the last sentence of the first paragraph as discussed and striking the highlighted sentence. Meir Shillor seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. K-12 Dance Education, GC, new graduate certificate, Department of Music, School of Music, Theatre, and Dance (Beth Dawson, Elizabeth Kattner)
Reviewers: Henry Aigbedo, Daniel Llamocca

Joanne Lipson-Freed moved to approve pending receipt of revised proposal with all courses having the Dance prefix, and pending Senate approval of the Graduate Course Instruction by Programs Not Authorized to Offer a Graduate Degree policy and the Approved Graduate Certificate policy. Paul Weinberg seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

New Business

1. Journalism and Media Studies, Specialization in Media and Society, B.A./Communication, M.A., Combined B.A./M.A, new combined degree, Department of Communication, Journalism and Public Relations, College of Arts and Sciences (Beth Dawson, Kathleen Battles)
Reviewers: Thandi Sulé, Paul Weinberg

Beth Dawson agreed to update the Plan of Study to show that students could start their graduate studies in the winter of their third (junior) year in order to avoid having undergraduates carry a heavier courseload than graduate students.

Joanne Lipson-Freed moved to waive the second reading and approve pending receipt of revised Plan of Study with the discussed revision. Meir Shillor seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Master of Business Administration/Master of Science in Safety Management Dual Program, new dual degree to provide students in either the MBA or MSSM program to obtain two master's

degrees in approximately 3 years and prepare graduates for careers in private, public or non-profit organizations by integrating global understanding and business fundamentals that are key for manager success as they pursue increased responsibilities and an expanded leadership role, Departments of Graduate Business Programs & Public and Environmental Wellness, School of Business Administration & School of Health Sciences (Paul Trumbull, Darryl Hill)
Reviewers: Meir Shillor, Paul Weinberg

Not discussed in order to gain clarity on final document. Will be moved to the next GC meeting agenda.

3. Mechanical Engineering, PhD, graduate program modification, Department of Mechanical Engineering, School of Engineering and Computer Science (Laila Guessous)
Reviewers: John Krauss, Victoria Lucia

John Krauss moved to waive the second reading and to approve. Paul Weinberg seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was not sufficient time to discuss New Items 4 - 6. They will be moved to the next GC meeting agenda.

4. Energy Engineering, MS, graduate program modification, Department of Mechanical Engineering, School of Engineering and Computer Science (Laila Guessous)
Reviewers: John Krauss, Victoria Lucia
5. Degree Evaluation Requirement for International Students on Agreements, Graduate School policy revision, Global Engagement (Adem Althor)
6. Secondary Education with Special Education, MAT, graduate program modification, Department of Human Development and Child Studies, School of Education and Human Services (Audra Slocum, Erica Ruegg)
Reviewers: Joanne Freed, Darrin Hanna

Discussion Items

There was not sufficient time to discuss Discussion Item 1. It will be moved to the next GC meeting's agenda.

1. Dissertation Article Format Requirements, graduate school policy revision: Subcommittee report, Graduate Council (Brandy Randall) (Subcommittee: Paul Weinberg, Thandi Sulé, and Victoria Lucia)

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm..