

ACU Graduate Council
April 14, 2026
11:45 – 1:00 p.m.
CBS Dean's Conference Room

Present: W. Carroll, K. Witemeyer, T. Baggs, L. Merchant, T. Womble, D. Walls, C. Flanagan, D. Perkins, M. Long, L. Sharp-Penya

Absent: M. Lee, A. Huddleston, R. Slaymaker

Guests: D. Kennamer, W. Crawford, E. Gumm, J. Drachenberg, T. Harmon, M. DeHart

The meeting began at 11:35 a.m.

- Prayer by T. Womble
- Announcements
- Approval of the minutes from 3/17/25

Minutes passed by consent.

GST Information Items:

1. BIBM 658 – Change Course Terms
2. CERT in Practical Ministry – Broaden Ministry Selection Options
3. MTS Theology Track – Remove BIBD 635 & 678, Add BIBD 631 & BMIS 647
4. MTS All Tracks – Remove BIBM 602
5. MACM – Add Ministry Core
6. MACM – Remove BIBM 602
7. MDiv Ministry Track – Add Ministry Core
8. MDiv Missions Track – Add Ministry Core
9. MDiv Both Tracks – Remove BIBM 602

T. Harmon - This is part of the curriculum revisions we've been working on over the last couple years. Our certificate program needed some revision. We had some students who

wanted to complete it more quickly. Keeping it as a general certificate will give them more flexibility so they don't have to wait for certain courses to be offered. The changes to the master's degrees are to remove courses that have not been taught in a long time and replace them with more current courses. We are moving elements of BIBM 602 into credit-bearing courses and removing that course to relieve the administrative burden of that zero-credit course. Contextual education aspects are now spread across multiple courses. We are giving students more flexibility within the MDiv programs. E. Gumm - Students can be encouraged to change their catalog years to help this.

Information Items:

10. COMM 515 – Change Title

11. COMM 550 – Change Title

L. Sharp-Penya - These title changes are done to more accurately reflect the content of the courses.

Action Items:

12. MAcc – Move Ethics to Undergrad, Increase Selections

D. Perkins - The Texas State Board has required 150 hours to sit for the CPA exam in the past. In an effort to allow more people to take the exam, they are now allowing undergraduates to sit for the exam. We are moving the Ethics course from the undergraduate degree plan to the undergraduate program. We will have an additional elective selection in the master's program. W. Carroll - Will we need to close the Ethics course? D. Perkins - If a student came here from a different program and needed the ethics course, it would be good to have the course available. We have current students still needing it as well. E. Gumm - It doesn't have to be closed at this point.

**Motion to approve by T. Baggs; seconded by L. Merchant; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

13. COMM 563 – New Course – Nonprofit Communication & Management

L. Sharp-Penya - This course is meant to fill a gap in our curriculum on the undergraduate side and we have a lot of graduate students interested in working in the nonprofit area, so we wanted to make sure we had an opportunity for our graduate students to take it. There is a special topics course being done now and there are seven graduate students enrolled. It is going so well, that the Zoo has invited them to come back and partner with them again. It focuses on how to encourage volunteers to be more engaged. They do a communication campaign in the class. T. Baggs - Are there differences between the undergraduate and graduate courses? L. Sharp-Penya - Yes. The graduate students have some different or more expanded assignments. L. Merchant - The nonprofit connections - Does the faculty member provide those? L. Sharp-Penya -

Yes, but she gives them the option to select their own nonprofit if they wish. C. Flanagan
- Would this be open to other graduate students? L. Sharp-Penya - Yes.

**Motion to approve by L. Merchant; seconded by T. Womble; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

14. MA COMS – Add COMM 563

L. Sharp-Penya - We would like to add this new course to the degree plan. This is a very flexible degree plan, so this will be added to a menu.

**Motion to approve by M. Long; seconded by C. Flanagan; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

15. MA CCOM – Close MA in Corporate Communication

L. Sharp-Penya - This has been on the books for a long time, but we have never actually enrolled a student in this program. It competes with our main degree, and we no longer wish to have it on the books. L. Merchant - Will any courses need to be closed? L. Sharp-Penya - No.

**Motion to approve by L. Merchant; seconded by D. Walls; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

16. OCCT 733 – Increase Hours from 2 to 3

D. Walls - This was an error when the new course application was approved. It was always designed to be a 3-hour course. We are teaching it as a 3-hour course. We just need to fix the error.

**Motion to approve by L. Merchant; seconded by L. Sharp-Penya; all in favor.
Motion passes.**

17. NSE 601 – New Course – Introduction to Nuclear Engineering

J. Drachenberg - These are the first 6 core courses for our program. Our introduction course is the program foundation. It takes basic theories and applies them to simple reactor activities. Students will also have an introduction to skills they need for working in the field. W. Carroll - Is there difference between working in the field vs. research-focused? J. Drachenberg - Yes. The MS is more for the research track where the MEng is geared more towards field-focused students.

18. NSE 602 – New Course – Nuclear Reactor Theory

J. Drachberg - This course builds on the intro foundation, going deeper into the theories and calculations. Introducing numeric techniques. Looking at how the different pieces of the puzzle work together. This would be a second-semester course.

19. NSE 603 – New Course – Reactor Thermal Hydraulics

J. Drachenberg - This talks about how heat is generated and moves through a system. Also looking at fluids and flow.

20. NSE 610 – New Course – Nuclear Science & Engineering Graduate Seminar

J. Drachenberg - This a weekly forum for graduate student presentations and guest speakers. There will be more reflection and soft skills in this course.

21. NSE 650 – New Course – Programming & Scientific Computing for Nuclear Science & Engineering

J. Drachenberg - This is a menu item in the degree plan. For students who want to get into research, this would be a good application course.

22. NSE 699 – New Course – Graduate Project or Research Hours

J. Drachenberg - This is supervised research. The SLOs are a little different. A student could cover all the SLOs in one course block. But it can also be used for students who are doing research over a longer period of time. All SLOs must be completed by graduation, but the course can be repeated. Ideally, this will happen over three semesters.

L. Merchant - Do you have a research class? J. Drachenberg - That is what 699 is. L. Merchant - Do students learn the research process prior to this? J. Drachenberg - It is built into the curriculum and there is one-on-one mentorship with a faculty advisor to train the students. T. Womble - Do you already have students for the fall? J. Drachenberg - Yes. M. DeHart - We started recruiting after SACCs approved the masters programs. We have 3-4 students coming in the fall. L. Merchant - Will it always be a fall start? M. DeHart - Yes. We don't have the faculty to offer the courses multiple semesters. If a student wants to enter the PhD and take leveling they can start earlier.

W. Carroll - Who is responsible for ensuring all the SLOs are met over time with NSE 699? J. Drachenberg - The thesis advisor.

Motion to approve items 17-22 by M. Long; C. Flanagan seconded by ; all in favor. Motion passes.

D. Perkins left early.

Meeting ended at 12:47 p.m.