

Graduate Council Minutes

<https://mtsu.zoom.us/j/82406790478>

February 27, 2026

1:00 pm

Graduate Council Chair: Dr. Frank Lambert

Members Present: Alyson Lischka, Carol Nies, Dan Morrell, Deborah Wagnon, Frank Lambert, Jaishree Ranganathan, Kate Pantelides, Kim Ward, , Patrick Richey, Hongbo Zhang, Joan Boulware, Sanjay Asthana, Rachael Oke, Kim Evert, Don Roy, Stephen Salter, Helen Binkley

Members Absent: Barbara Lancaster, Abigail Nkuah, Sally Ann Cruikshank

Visitors Present: Saleh Sbenaty, Racha El Kadiri, Christine Crisp

Call to order: Dr. Frank Lambert 1:00PM

1. Approval of Graduate Council Minutes from January 30, 2026

Motion was made to approve the Jan 2026 Graduate Council Minutes. The motion was seconded and approved.

2. New Business

A. 4xxx/5xxx Courses Workload – Dr. Saleh Sbenaty

Concern was raised regarding workload credit for undergraduate (4xxx-level) and graduate (5xxx-level) courses. It was noted that graduate sections require additional assignments, including projects, research papers, and presentations, which increase faculty workload. However, current workload guidelines assign workload units based only on the undergraduate course and do not account for these added responsibilities. It was suggested that the guidelines be reviewed and referred to Faculty Senate for consideration of possible revisions.

3. Old Business

A. Elect 2026-2027 Vice Chair– Dr. Frank Lambert

Motion was made to approve making Dr. Hongbo Zhang Vice Chair for Fall 2026-Spring 2027. The motion was seconded and approved.

4. Committee Reports

Graduate Council Minutes

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B. Curriculum Changes – Dr. Alyson Lischka

Motion was made to approve the proposals. The motion was seconded and approved.

Graduate Faculty Status – Dr. Kate Pantelides

Motion was made to approve the applications. The motion was seconded and approved.

C. Scholarship/Program Review – Dr. Helen Binkley

There was no report from the Subcommittee, as it did not meet this month.

5. Motion to Adjourn: Dr. Frank Lambert 1:56pm

Minutes
2025-2026 Graduate Council Subcommittee
February 20, 2026
ZOOM - <https://mtsu.zoom.us/j/87504291199>
9:00 a.m.

Call to Order: Alyson Lischka - 9:00am
Present: Alyson Lischka, Dan Morrell, Joan Boulware, Carol Nies, Deborah Wagnon

Absent: Barbara Lancaster

Visitors Present: Medha Sarkar, Zhijiang Dong, Tongia Key, David Nelson, Tyler Henson, Paula Calahan, Justin Miller, Christine Crisp, Mitzi Brandon, Robert Blair

Proposals

Proposal	Effective Date	Proposed Action	Detailed Explanation	Reference #
Proposal returned to department				

CSCI - 6500 - Selected Topics in Cybersecurity Systems Summer 2026 New Course 2

Prerequisites: CSCI 3110 with a grade of C or better. Topics vary by semester and may include cryptographic mechanisms, secure architectures, risk management, and regulatory frameworks.

Revised course description:

Prerequisites: CSCI 3110 with a grade of C or better. An in-depth study and application of recent research advances in cybersecurity, emphasizing secure software development, system design, implementation, and evaluation. Each offering focuses on a distinct, high-impact topic that integrates theoretical foundations with practical application. Topics may include cryptographic mechanisms, secure architectures, and methods for preserving privacy and strengthening security in cloud computing, cyber-physical systems, machine learning, web applications, and other security-sensitive environments. Repeatable up to 6 credit hours.

Discussion 1/23/26: Department representatives were available to answer questions. Information Systems and Analytics Chair Tim Greer was present and raised questions about ISA not being consulted.

Committee Action 1/23/26: After much discussion, a motion was made to approve the course. Motion was seconded. Committee failed to approve the proposal, and the course will be returned to the department.

Discussion: Following the January 23 meeting, the two departments met and worked out a solution. Department representatives were available to answer questions.

Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and approved.

Previously tabled proposal

Computer Science, Cybersecurity Systems Concentration, M.S. Summer 2026 New Program 3

To better meet local industry needs — particularly in AI and cybersecurity — we aim to align our graduate program with our undergraduate concentrations.

Discussion 1/23/26: Department representatives were available to answer questions. Information Systems and Analytics Chair Tim Greer was present and raised questions about ISA not being consulted.

Committee Action 1/23/26: A motion was made to move the proposal to February meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

Discussion: Following the January 23 meeting, the two departments met and worked out a solution. Department representatives were available to answer questions.

Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and approved.

College of Basic and Applied Sciences

Biology

BIOL - 6150 - Molecular Ecology	Summer 2026	New Course	Prerequisite: BIOL 3250/3251 (Genetics) or permission of instructor. It is strongly recommended that students have taken at least one course in ecology or evolution (e.g., BIOL 3400 or BIOL 3500 or equivalent at other institution). explores how molecular tools are used to study ecological and evolutionary processes, including gene flow, population structure, phylogeography, and conservation. Students gain hands-on experience analyzing and interpreting genetic data to address ecological questions.	1
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Discussion: Department representative was available to answer questions.

Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and approved.

MOBI - 7100 - Experimental Design and Ethics in Molecular Biosciences	Summer 2027	Course title change Course description change	Prerequisite: Admission to the MOBI doctoral program. Explores ethics, experimental design, and statistical considerations relevant to molecular biosciences. Topics include hypothesis formulation, variable control, rigor and reproducibility, and statistical analysis. Includes Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training addressing conflict of interest, authorship, peer review, data management, mentor/mentee responsibilities, human and animal research, and research integrity.	5
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Discussion: Department representative was available to answer questions.

Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and approved.

Jones College of Business

Marketing

MBAK - 6500 - Marketing Management: Theory and Application

Summer 2026 New Course

Acceptance to the MBA program is the only prerequisite. It will be a mandatory course for all students entering the MBA program. Designed to deliver the foundations of marketing theory and will use analytical approaches to design and implement firms' strategies designed to deliver value to the firm's target markets. Strategy development will focus on target marketing/segmentation and branding, pricing, promotional tools, product development, and distribution approaches. Case analysis will be a featured learning tool.

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Discussion: Department representative was available to answer questions.

Committee Action: A motion was made to approve the proposal. The motion was seconded and approved.

Adjournment:

Alyson Lischka 9:06am

Graduate Council - Faculty Status Subcommittee
February Minutes – TEAMS meeting
February 20, 2026
1:00 PM

I. Call to Order: Kate Pantelides 1:02pm

Members Present: Kate Pantelides, Kim Ujcich Ward, Kimberly Evert, Hongbo Zhang
Members Absent: Sanjay Asthana, Sally Ann Cruikshank

II. Graduate Faculty Status

Adjunct

1. Black, John - Approved
2. Cissell, Jordan - Approved
3. Singleton, Justin - Approved
4. Spry, Lana - Approved

Full

1. Benson, Sandra - Approved
2. Liu, Yeqian – Approved
3. Matthews, Lucy – The application was submitted for Teaching status; however, the Chair’s letter of recommendation supported Full status. The Subcommittee requested additional materials to support Full status, which the applicant provided, and she was approved accordingly.
4. Mordecai, Chandler - Approved
5. North, Maddison - Approved
6. Wallin, John - Approved

Teaching

1. Vickrey, William – Approved.

III. Motion to Adjourn: Kate Pantelides 1:09