

UNL Graduate Council Minutes

March 5, 2026

Location: Zoom

3:00 p.m.

Attending: Rochelle Dalla, Elizabeth Niehaus, Christopher Bilder, Michelle Harvey, Maria Marron, Dai Shizuka, Tom Kubick, Venn Jemkur, and Colten Skinner. Dean Hope presiding. Eva Bachman and Jason Carmichael from Graduate Studies.

Absent: Can Vuran

1. **Approval of Minutes (2/5/26 meeting):** motion to approve, seconded, and passed. One abstained.
2. **Proposal to create new specialization in Systems Analysis & Technology for Biological Systems Engineering PhD:** Dean Hope introduced and provided a brief overview of the proposal to create the new specialization. A motion was made to approve the specialization, seconded, and passed unanimously.
3. **English language proficiency:** Dean Hope, in collaboration with ISSO, reviewed the English Proficiency Policy in the catalog. Together they determined the policy needed clarification in wording. The most substantive change is to be clear that a degree from a university where English is the official language of instruction, regardless of where that university is located, is sufficient evidence of proficiency. This is not a policy change – just a clarification of which applicants need to demonstrate English language proficiency. However, since it is an important policy, it needs to be reviewed by Graduate Council. A motion was made to approve the clarifications in the catalog about English Language Proficiency, seconded, and unanimously approved.
4. **Any needed curriculum discussions:** None.
5. **Graduate Student Assembly Report:** President Jemkur reported that the Graduate Chancellor's Research Grant has run out of funds and forms are closed for spring. GSA has submitted a request for an additional \$15K of funds for this purpose. Vice President Skinner reported that a representative from ACLU came to the last GSA meeting to inform students rights related to immigration issues.
6. **Announcements:**
 - Dean Hope provided updates on OGS hiring a director of recruitment and admissions, on new initiatives to track graduation with an electronic process, and on the upcoming annual Graduate Recognition award ceremony.
 - Reminder that GPA is now included on graduate transcripts.

Meeting adjourned at 3:24 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Carmichael