

UNL Graduate Council Minutes
February 5, 2026
Location: Zoom
2:30 p.m.

Attending: Rochelle Dalla, Maria Marron, Dai Shizuka, Tom Kubick, Can Vuran, Venn Jemkur, and Colten Skinner. Dean Hope presiding. Eva Bachman and Jason Carmichael from Graduate Studies.

Absent: Elizabeth Niehaus, Christopher Bilder, Michelle Harvey

1. **Approval of Minutes (12/4/25 meeting):** motion to approve, seconded, and passed unanimously.
2. **Proposal to change name of MS in Biological Systems Engineering:** Dean Hope introduced and provided a brief overview of the proposal to change the name of the degree from Master of Science in Agricultural and Biological Systems Engineering to Master of Science in Biological Systems Engineering. A motion was made to approve the name change, seconded, and passed unanimously.
3. **Proposal to change name of PhD in Biological Systems Engineering:** Dean Hope introduced the proposal to change the name of the degree from Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Engineering to Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Systems Engineering. A motion was made to approve the name change, seconded, and passed unanimously.
4. **Permission for Prof. Emily Kazyak to enroll in a graduate program:** Dean Hope explained the bylaws requiring faculty to seek special permission prior to enrolling in a graduate program. Following a brief discussion, a motion was made to approve the enrollment, seconded, and passed unanimously.
5. **Any needed curriculum discussions:** None.
6. **Graduate Student Assembly Report:** President Jemkur reported that GSA hosted their first meeting of the term and welcomed Jordan Gonzalez, Chief of Staff, and T.J. McDowell, Dean of Students, to the meeting in an effort to restore optimism to students whose morale had waned during the fall term. Also, it was reported to GSA that pronouns had been removed from MyRed and Zoom without any public announcement, which was a cause of serious concern for students. Additionally, GSA is processing reimbursements for the Chancellor's Research Grant and has recently started meeting with GSA organizations from other Big Ten universities.
7. **Announcements:**
 - Deah Hope provided updates on how budget cuts have come to OGS, which eliminated two full-time positions, the conflict resolution framework sent out to programs as a model for adoption into their student handbooks by the fall term, and the progress being made by transition coordinators in eliminated programs.
 - Eva Bachman announced her upcoming retirement in May 2026.
 - It was agreed that the remaining spring term Graduate Council meetings would start at 3:00 pm to accommodate the schedules of two council members with scheduling conflicts this semester.

Meeting adjourned at 3:26 pm
Respectfully submitted,
Jason Carmichael