

**Minutes of the Graduate Council  
September 13, 2023**

**Members in Attendance:**

Ali Beskok, Kate Carté, Alan Itkin, Akihito Kamata, Anna Lovatt, Brian Molanphy, Alexandra E. Pavlakis, Anthony Petrosino, Robin Poston, Dinesh Rajan

**Members Not in Attendance:**

Elfi Kraka, Renee McDonald, Volkan Otugen, Gretchen Smith

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**Business:**

- **Minutes of the May Meeting:** Prof. Molanphy suggested an edit to the minutes to reflect that one challenge for the growth of PhD conferrals is the historically limited funding support for terminal degree programs at SMU. With this revision, approval of the minutes of the May 5 meeting was moved, seconded, and carried (see slide 3).
- **Master of Public Policy Proposal:** Michael Robertson, Assistant Provost for Global, Online and Continuing Education presented to the Graduate Council the steps SMU Global, Online and Continuing Education (GOCE) has taken to develop a new Master of Public Policy (MPP) program. As Dr. Robertson explained, the program was proposed based on GOCE's evaluation that there was a strong market for the program in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The program was developed in collaboration with a steering committee comprised of SMU faculty. The steering committee has now approved the program proposal, and it will be reviewed by the Educational Programs Committee (EPC) at their next meeting. The proposal was shared with the Graduate Council before the current meeting (see slide 4). The program will require 36 credits, and capstones and immersions will be done in conjunction with the George W. Bush Institute. Enrollment is expected to reach a steady state about 90 students within three to four years. Dr. Carte asked about students in the program who might take classes in other departments. Drs. Poston and Robertson answered that tuition for classes that students take in other departments would go to that department rather than to the MPP program. Prof. Molanphy mentioned that a "firewall" had been established between the Bush Institute and SMU academics. Dr. Rajan answered that his understanding was that the "firewall" referred to Bush Institute scholars not receiving tenure at SMU, but that collaborations between SMU and the Bush Institute are encouraged. Dr. Petrosino asked what the OPM (online program management) company was. Drs. Poston and Robertson answered, AllCampus. Dr. Beskok asked what the cost was: \$39,000 tuition for the full degree. Dr. Pavlakis suggested adding electives on qualitative research methods and social policy broadly considered. Dr. Rajan asked who the director was and who would be teaching and helping to develop the

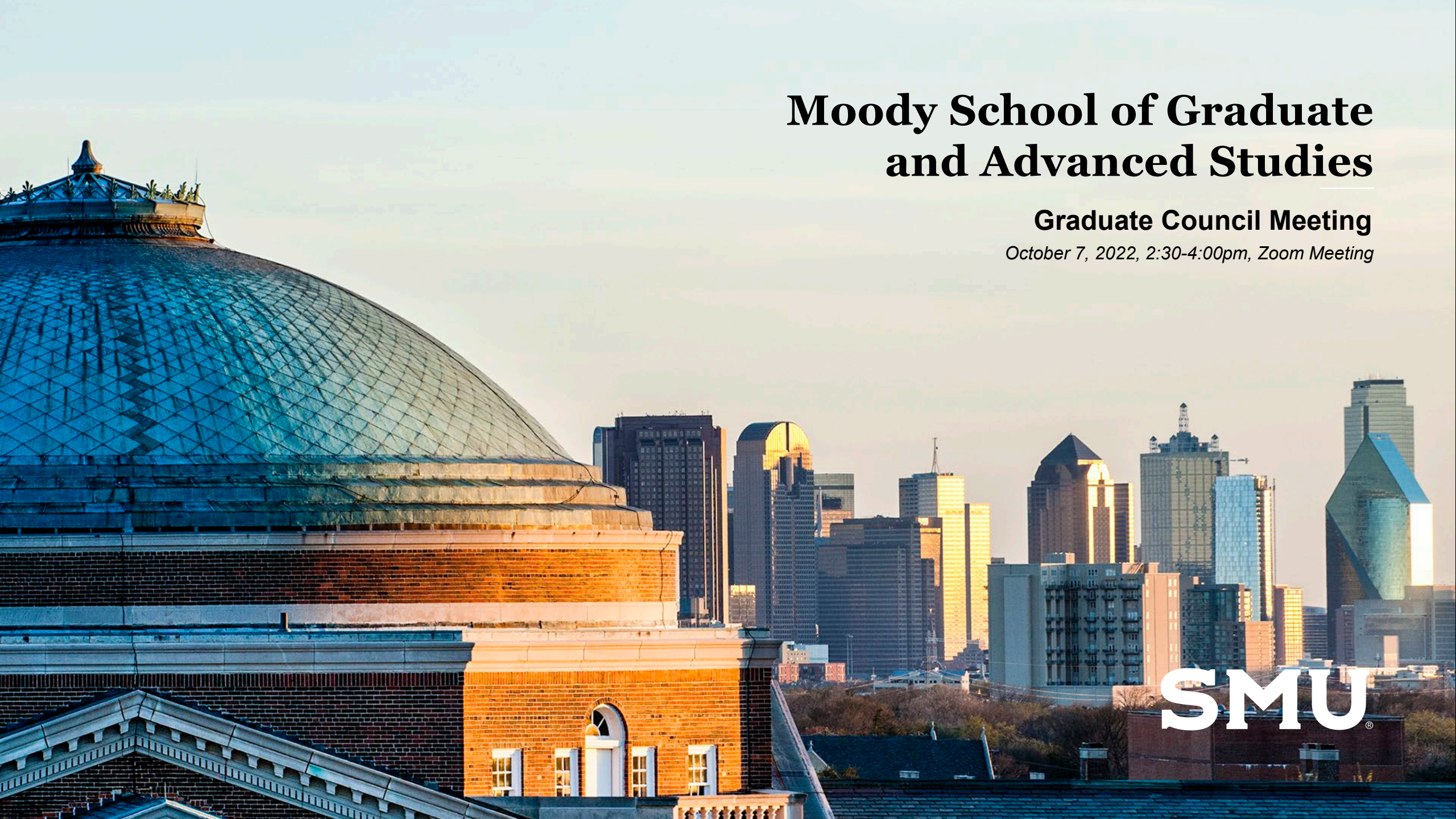
program. Dr. Robertson answered that Eva Chiang would be the director and that two SMU faculty members had committed to teaching and helping to further develop the program.

- **Supporting Graduate Students of Concern:** Melinda Sutton, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and Sidney Gardner, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Student Advocacy and Support, presented to the Graduate Council about the CCC (Caring Community Connections) program and The Shop, SMU's food pantry for students. Both programs support graduate students, and, in fact, graduate students represent the majority of users of The Shop. Prof. Molanphy made the point that stipends are below the cost of living for some graduate programs and that that is a contributing factor in graduate students' use of The Shop. Dr. Poston mentioned that she is advocating for subsidized graduate student housing on campus, which would help reduce student need. Dr. Carte mentioned that the History Department used to provide regular meals to their graduate students but were not allowed to continue this due to regulations related to catering and expenses. Dr. Gardner mentioned the Student Emergency Fund, which helps alleviate immediate acute financial needs for students, including graduate students, and helps to connect students to financial aid and other resources. The CCC form is the first step in the Student Emergency Fund application process. Dr. Petrosino asked if some graduate students with families qualify for SNAP food benefits. Drs. Sutton and Gardner answered, yes, but mentioned that many of the users of The Shop are international students. Dr. Itkin asked if it would be possible to get a breakdown of Shop users by school and/or program, and Drs. Sutton and Gardner agreed that that could be provided. Dr. Rajan asked if leftover food from Dining Services could be made available to students for free. Dr. Sutton mentioned that Student Affairs had partnered with Dining Services on ways to assist food insecure students in the past and would continue to look for ways to partner. Dr. Petrosino mentioned that there were mental and physical health impacts of economic and food insecurity. Dr. Itkin offered to ask the Moody School's Graduate Student Life Assistant to run a food drive for The Shop.
- **Graduate Students for Honor Council:** Dr. Sutton told the Council that the Honor Council is looking to increase participation from graduate students, so that graduate students undergoing honor code hearings are evaluated by their peers. She asked for assistance in enlisting graduate students to serve on the Honor Council. Dr. Poston mentioned that this was an experiment. The Faculty Senate Graduate Student Committee had worked on developing a proposal for a graduate honor code with a separate graduate honor council. If enlisting graduate students for the current honor council is not effective, that approach would be considered as well. Dr. Itkin offered to have information sent out to graduate students about the Honor Council and to request graduate student volunteers.
- **Policies for Assigning Grades:** Bobby Lothringer, University Registrar, and Melissa Stanford, Associate Registrar, presented about an issue that has arisen: Grades for graduate-level thesis, dissertation, and research courses are often not entered on time by faculty, and many grades that are assigned for these courses are incompletes which remain on the students' records. All grades, including for these sorts of courses, are required to be submitted within 72 hours of the time that is scheduled for the final exam (even if the course does not include a final exam). Dr. Lothringer suggested that an S grade should be assigned for students who are continuing to make progress on their research and that, otherwise, a U grade should be assigned. Most critical, though, for reasons

related to financial aid and other regulations, is that faculty follow a consistent policy that allows the institution to be aware when students have “disappeared” and are not giving their faculty supervisors any indication that they are progressing in their studies. Dr. Itkin shared a list of spring 2023 courses for which grades were not assigned within 72 hours of the end of the term (see slide 7). Dr. Beskok mentioned that there were issues with assigning a student an S or a U grade if the student is funded on a grant and is continuing to work on their research but not at a satisfactory level. Council members raised a number of reasons why current policies did not meet faculty needs. Dr. Poston suggested putting together a task force to consider this issue. Some of those present volunteered to be on the taskforce. The task force will be: Dr. Beskok, Dr. Kamata, Dr. Itkin, Dr. Lothringer, Associate Registrar Melissa Stanford, and Claudia Hart, Director of ISSS.

- **Fellowship Application Incentives Plan:** Rachel Ball-Phillips, Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards, presented a new plan to incentivize graduate students to apply for external fellowships. The plan will be piloted this year. It will provide students who are awarded a replacement grant, i.e. a fellowship that is intended to replace their SMU stipend, with a small supplemental award. Without this supplemental award, students are disincentivized to apply for external funding, because they already have a stipend from SMU which may provide the same level of funding—or a higher level—than any external award they would apply for. Dr. Rajan raised the issue of internships over the summer, and Dr. Poston answered that, for students supported by Moody School fellowships who take an internship instead, the Moody School would consider a supplement for them as well.
- **Faculty Committee Substitutions in Anthropology:** Dr. Itkin informed the Council that, due to faculty departures, the Moody School would be reviewing and approving petitions for substitutions on Anthropology PhD students’ dissertation committees on a case-by-case basis.
- **Graduate Enrollment Update:** Dr. Poston shared information about graduate enrollments, which are down as a whole, and initiatives that SMU and the Moody School are undertaking to recruit more graduate students and increase enrollments (see slides 11-12).
- Meeting adjourned.





# Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

**Graduate Council Meeting**

*September 13, 2023, 12:00-1:30pm, Moody Hall 241*

**SMU**<sup>®</sup>

# Meeting Agenda

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1. Minutes of the May 5 Meeting
2. Master of Public Policy (MPP) Proposal (visit from Michael Robertson and Eva Chiang)
3. Supporting Graduate Students of Concern (visit from Mindy Sutton and Sidney Gardner)
4. Graduate Students for Honor Council (with Mindy Sutton)
5. Policies for Assigning Grades (visit from Bobby Lothringer and Melissa Stanford)
6. Fellowship Application Incentives Plan (visit from Rachel Ball-Phillips)
7. Faculty Committee Substitutions in Anthropology
8. Graduate Enrollment Update
9. Other Items

# Minutes of the May 5 Meeting



<https://smu.box.com/s/vrm8s1rmry38evj8bamiadad9fwaa3c4>

# Master of Public Policy (MPP) Proposal



<https://smu.box.com/s/n5wv5k3bvcbsdy8j4lacmvnm2g5tm46z>

# Supporting Graduate Students of Concern





# Graduate Students for Honor Council



# Policies for Assigning Grades



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# Fellowship Application Incentives Plan



# New Pilot: Moody External Fellowship Incentive Program

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» Topping-up awards to students who receive external funding that replaces an SMU stipend or assistantship, bringing their total stipend level up to at least 110% of the amount they would otherwise receive from their SMU stipend or assistantship\*

» To be eligible, students must

» submit an application during the 2023-24 academic year for external funding that replaces an SMU stipend or assistantship

» be awarded the funding

» Examples:

» If the external funding is less than the amount the student would receive from their SMU stipend or assistantship, the student receives the external award and additional support to bring them up to 110% of the amount they would otherwise receive from their SMU stipend or assistantship

» If the external funding is equal to or greater than the student's current stipend, the student will receive the full external award plus a topping-up award equal to 10% of the amount they would otherwise receive from their SMU stipend or assistantship

» If the external funding is for the summer specifically or is intended to supplement, rather than replace, a student's SMU stipend or assistantship, the student will continue to receive their SMU stipend or assistantship pay

\* Because the stipulations of external funding organizations affect whether and how much funding may be offered through this program, we encourage PhD students and their advisors to contact the Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards, Dr. Rachel Ball-Phillips ([rmball@smu.edu](mailto:rmball@smu.edu)), to confirm eligibility.

# Faculty Committee Substitutions in Anthropology



# Graduate Enrollment Update



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## New Graduate and Professional Students – Fall 2023

School/College	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Percentage Change in New Enrollments
Cox	563	581	+3.2%
Dedman College	131	133	+1.5%
Dedman Law	281	233	-17.1%
Guildhall	50	51	+2.0%
Lyle	247	369	+49.4%
Meadows	73	121	+65.8%
Perkins	72	59	-18.1%
Simmons	313	320	+2.2%
<b>Total Graduate and Professional (New)</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>1,867</b>	<b>+7.9%</b>
Total Graduate and Professional Enrollments	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Percentage Change
	4,997	4,727	-5.4%

# Other Items



# Items for Future Meetings

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- » Fellowship Recipients Taking Paid Employment
- » Parental Leave Policy for Fellows and Other PhD Students
- » Moody Faculty Fellowships
- » Appeals of Suspensions and Dismissals
- » Certificates for Graduate Programs
- » Dissertation Title Pages
- » Retired and Former Faculty Serving on PhD Committees
- » Yellow Ribbon Agreement
- » Definition of a Graduate Student Instructor
- » Reporting on Postdocs and Non-faculty Researchers
- » Expectations for Students on Fellowship

**Thank you!**

