



University of  
Pittsburgh

Office of the Provost  
Graduate Studies

**University Council on Graduate Study Minutes  
Tuesday, June 10, 2025**

The May meeting minutes were approved with 14 in favor, 6 abstentions. Six members arrived after the minutes were approved.

**Academic Program Proposals**

The Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences presented a proposal for a new PhD program in Astrophysics. The new program will be housed within the Department of Physics and will offer a degree in a field that has been an active area of research within the Pitt community for some time. Having a degree in Astrophysics to represent their research interests will improve job prospects for Pitt graduates. The new degree will both attract new students and provide an opportunity for current students to start their Astrophysics work earlier in their studies. Council members raised no questions or concerns, and the proposal was recommended for approval with 23 in favor and 1 abstention.

The School of Medicine presented a proposal for a new PhD program in Cell, Molecular and Systems Biology. The new program will combine three existing PhD programs: Cell Biology, Molecular Genetics and Developmental Biology, and Integrative Systems Biology. The three programs are currently housed in the same Department with many cross-listed courses and faculty who work across disciplines. The targeted enrollment for the new degree is 20-25 students per year. Graduates of the program are expected to go into academic research and industry in equal parts. Council members raised questions related to how the existing programs will be terminated and what options current students will have to continue their current degree path, and about the proposed curriculum seeming unbalanced across the three disciplines. The proposal was recommended for approval with 19 in favor and 2 abstentions.

The Katz School of Business proposed a new graduate Certificate and Micro-Credential in Artificial Intelligence and Business. The proposed credentials will fit the Katz model where students take 9 credits that can be stacked into 15. Six of those credits are required; the rest are electives. The long-term vision is that most courses within Katz will have an AI component, which will allow many students to be eligible to apply for the micro-credential or certificate. Council members raised questions about how faculty are trained in the fast-evolving field of AI, opportunities to cross-list with other schools who are already working in the AI space, and how Katz is thinking about the potential changes to job opportunities for students with the growth of AI. The proposal was recommended for approval with 21 in favor and 3 abstentions.

The School of Nursing proposed a new graduate Certificate in Palliative and End-of-Life Care and Communication. This certificate is intended to fill a gap in education for nursing students and current practitioners at all levels; currently there are only 5 similar programs nationwide, and none in the Pennsylvania area. The School has received a large grant to support this certificate and expects to



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enroll 10-15 students in each cohort. Council members offered suggestions for collaborations with related schools and existing coursework, and the proposal was recommended for approval with 24 in favor.

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

The meeting adjourned at 3:52 pm.



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### Attendance

|                                              |              |             |              |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences         | Faculty      | Peng        | Liu          |
| Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences         | Faculty      | Jonathan    | Woon         |
| Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences         | Faculty      | Marc        | Coutanche    |
| Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences         | Grad Student | Juwon       | Adenuga      |
| Katz Graduate School of Business             | Faculty      | Sara        | Moeller      |
| Katz Graduate School of Business             | Grad Student | Denise      | Bergdolt     |
| Office of the Provost                        | Chair        | Amanda      | Godley       |
| Office of the Provost                        | Staff        | Courtney    | Syskowski    |
| Office of the Registrar, Observer            | Staff        | Christopher | Coats        |
| School of Computing and Information          | Faculty      | James       | Joshi        |
| School of Education                          | Faculty      | Michael     | Gunzenhauser |
| School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences | Grad Student | Abdalmohsen | Alroumi      |
| School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences | Faculty      | Mark        | DeRuiter     |
| School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences | Faculty      | Ketki       | Raina        |
| School of Law                                | Faculty      | Joshua      | Ash          |
| School of Medicine                           | Grad Student | Brooke      | Dresden      |
| School of Medicine                           | Faculty      | Arjumand    | Ghazi        |
| School of Medicine                           | Faculty      | Saleem      | Khan         |
| School of Medicine                           | Faculty      | Tija        | Jacob        |
| School of Nursing                            | Grad Student | Myeong-ga   | Cho          |
| School of Nursing                            | Faculty      | Elizabeth   | Schlenk      |
| School of Pharmacy                           | Grad Student | Christina   | Kazarov      |
| School of Pharmacy                           | Faculty      | Kerry       | Empey        |
| School of Public Health                      | Faculty      | Ying        | Ding         |
| School of Public and International Affairs   | Faculty      | Luke        | Condra       |
| School of Public and International Affairs   | Grad Student | Zena        | Kesselman    |
| School of Social Work                        | Faculty      | Suzanne     | Pritzker     |
| Swanson School of Engineering                | Faculty      | Bryan       | Brown        |

**Additional attendees:** Stephanie Hoogendoorn, OTP; Andrew Zentner, DSAS; Jennifer Seaman, SON; Michael Tsang, SOM; Gerry Hammond, SOM