



Date: April 20, 2026

To: Members of the UAMS Graduate Council

From: Dr. Latrina Prince

Subject: Graduate Council Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2026, 1:00-2:00

Members Present: Drs. Jure Baloh, Mathias Brochhausen, Ann Chou, Abdel Fouda, Lisa Jansen, Brooke Montgomery, Sayem Miah, Angela Odle, Patricia Wight

Non-voting Members Present: Dr. Sean Taverna, Dr. Latrina Prince, Ms. Nadine Ledet,

Members Absent: Drs. Sam Atcherson, Lu Dai, Brian Fairman, Horacio Gomez-Acevedo, Lin-Xi Li, Jacob Painter, Martha Rojo

Non-voting Members absent: Mr. Lokesh Akana

Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting: Dr. Latrina Prince started the meeting by requesting approval of March 2026 minutes. Dr. Patricia Wight approved the minutes. Dr. Lisa Jensen seconded the approval.

Graduate Student Association Report

Lokesh Akana, GSA President

No updates; Mr. Akana was absent.

Administrative Items

Dr. Sean Taverna

1. Reminder about graduation- May 14, 2026, 6:00 PM in Fred Smith Auditorium, Jack T. Stephens Spine Institute.
2. No summer meeting for Grad Council. May be replacing members whose time is up. Committees still meet, just not general Grad Council.
3. Spring reception went well. Send any suggestions/ comments to make it better.

Dr. Latrina Prince

1. Undergrad recruitment conference was held last week. It went well and offered sessions, lunch, and campus tours. All colleges participated, and it was a good number of students who participated.

2. Dr. Martha Rojo's term is expiring for Academic Senate. Please send an email if you are interested in serving as representative of Graduate School along with Dr. Lisa Jensen. The senate meets once per month.

Other Administrative Items

There were no other administrative items to discuss, so the meeting moved to the committee reports.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee – Dr. Angela Odle

No report

Faculty Committee – Dr. Patricia Wight, Chair

1. Two new faculty approved in February: Jennifer Callahan Koru: associate professor in the College of Public Health and Dr. Miranda Wallace, assistant professor in the College of Medicine.
2. Two new faculty approved in April: Dr. Ann Chou, chair of Health Policy and Management and Dr. Christopher Wardell, Associate Professor in Bioinformatics.
3. Update: There is a charge in WD under workers' unemployment compensation where the grants are being charged approximately \$4.00

Academic Senate – Lisa Jensen, GS Representative

1. Senate is requesting two potential candidate names for Senate voting or GRS can provide one name to replace Dr. Rojo.

Concerns/Discussion:

Dr Taverna prompted a discussion about recruiting:

Recruiting season- how do you feel it went; did you hit your recruitment limits? If not, why do you think you did not meet it?

- Dr. Jure Baloh—extending appl deadlines could help, especially for domestic students.
- Dr. Prince: If we start accepting J visa, this may help us to get more students to transfer into UAMS. This will be beneficial since travel bans may be affecting international applicants.

- Dr. Taverna: What could be improved or altered to expand the number of candidates accepting our offers?
- Jure Baloh: 90 % of the issue is funding. If we can't offer funding, the candidates will not come.
- Dr. Mathia Brochhausen: The best way to get a really good student is to write out a grant for a research project and include the graduate candidate.
- Dr. Angela Odle: Often receives questions about funding from candidates. Funding affects the candidates decision to accept offers.
- Dr. Ann Chou: The monetary cap for the budget can create difficulty in affording funding, especially with the addition of new expenditures such as insurance, etc.
- Some Universities offer the stipend through their program, and their Graduate School waives tuition to help the program afford to sponsor the student.
- Dr. Taverna: Is the consensus that there an appetite for more students but the programs cannot afford them?
- Dr. Abdel Fouda: Is there another source for funding: students who are accepted but funded outside of UAMS?
- Dr. Prince: We have a few students funded by the government or their home country
- Jure Baloh: Have there been any recruiting efforts for UAMS employees to pursue degrees?
- Dr. Mathias Brochhausen: Once had influx of employees in his program. At some point the number of students leveled out. Potential issue could be assumption that faculty position will be available once PhD is earned.
- Dr. Lisa Jansen shared link about UA program:
- <https://edre.uark.edu/resources/pdf/ua-doctoral-fellowships-spring2024.pdf>
This is an example of a tried and proven program up in Fayetteville. International students are eligible, and if granted, get waived tuition.
- Dr. Taverna: forward to him a mentor who wants to take on students but do not have funding
- Faculty expressed that many faculty hesitate to take on additional students due to lack of funding.

- Dr. Patty Wight: If the faculty mentor does not have enough funding the chair decides whether the department can provide additional funding.
- Dr. Mathias Brochhausen: Faculty mentor must have full funding. Additional funding was being provided with “bridge funding” for current student in their third year.
- Dr. Jure Baloh: international students- How are these students managing if they lose funding before completion?
- Dr. Taverna: Sending students home early is not an option.
- Dr. Abdel Fouda: For GPIBS program, students are encouraged to apply for grants they can use as personal funds.
- Dr. Taverna: Going to see what we can do to make it better. Email thoughts.
- Sayem Miah: Health insurance: what about programs who have no budget for this?
- Dr. Taverna: Group is looking into this to see what the effects may be when it is rolled out in August/September.

Closing

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 PM