

University of Waterloo
SENATE GRADUATE COUNCIL
Minutes of the September 17, 2025 Meeting

Present: Mike Beazely, Steven Bednarski, David Clausi, Charmaine Dean, Rob de Loë, Alison Hitchens, Brian Ingalls, Brian Laird, Christiane Lemieux, Tony Ly [Secretary], Lilhac Medina, Tizazu Mekonnen, Carter Neal, Christopher Nielsen, Brad Pomeroy, Ian Rowlands, Meray Sadek, Justin Wan [Chair]

Resources/Guests: Ashley Day, Carrie MacKinnon Molson, Marianne Simm

Absent: Helen Chen, Tom Duever, Vivek Goel, Abhishesh Homagain, Nicholas Pelligrino, Clarence Woudsma

Organization of Meeting: Justin Wan took the chair and Tony Ly acted as secretary. The secretary advised that quorum was present. The agenda was approved without a formal motion.

1. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council heard a motion to approve or receive for information the items of the consent agenda. Beazeley and Hitchens. Carried.

2. Graduate Awards and Scholarships

Council approved all new awards and scholarships as presented.

REGULAR AGENDA

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the first Senate Graduate Council meeting after the restructuring of the Senate Graduate and Research Council.

4. Introduction and Orientation

Roundtable introductions were made. The Chair provided an overview of the scope and mandate of the Senate Graduate Council, as well as the role of each member. The Terms of Reference for the Senate Graduate Council was reviewed. It was noted that a priority of this new council was to include broader representation, which includes senior staff, regular faculty members, postdoctoral scholar, and graduate students. Additional meetings were scheduled for time sensitive items that might come forward to the Senate Graduate Council in 2025/26. There is a joint meeting with the Senate Research and Innovation Council on January 13, 2026.

5. Items Proposed for 2025/26

Members discussed and shared ideas for potential upcoming items at the Senate Graduate Council meetings in 2025/26. Members requested the following items brought forward at future meetings: graduate funding and student financial support (a comparison between faculties and external institutions); strategic priorities for graduate education and studies at the university; institutional plans for recruiting and supporting international students; development of new graduate programs and the approval process (market trends and developing effective business cases); graduate student experience and survey results; relationship between supervisors and graduate students; guidance on new technology and artificial intelligence (AI); and the implication and impact of the TA/RA unionization.

6. Updates on TA/RA Unionization

The Chair provided an overview and updates on the TA/RA unionization. The university has a separate bargaining team that is working on this new agreement, and they are currently in the stages of negotiation. The importance of maintaining relationships between TA/RA and their supervisors was emphasized. It was noted that the process of hiring TA/RA could change.

7. Appointment/Election of AQuE Members

The Chair provided an overview of the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee and asked two members of the Senate Graduate Council to participate on this committee. Members discussed the importance of having representation from different faculties on the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee. Ingalls and Laird were selected as the Senate Graduate Council representatives on the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee.

8. Other Business

No other items of business were identified.

9. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on October 23, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in NH 3318.