

University of Waterloo
SENATE GRADUATE COUNCIL
Minutes of the March 3, 2026 Meeting

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

Resources/Guests: Laura Bredahl, Graham Brown, John Dick, Carrie MacKinnon Molson, Mary Ochana, Marianne Simm, Nadia Singh, Richard Wikkerink

Regrets: Charmaine Dean, Tom Duever, Vivek Goel, Abhishesh Homagain, Tizazu Mekonnen, Nicholas Pelligrino, Clarence Woudsma

Organization of Meeting: Justin Wan took the chair and Tony Ly acted as secretary. The secretary advised that a quorum was present.

1. Governance Resources

This item was provided for information only.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

2.1. Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2.2. Approval of the Agenda and Consent Items

Council approved the agenda as distributed.

2.3. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair noted that Senate approval for the major modifications for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Political Science and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Political Science - Co-operative programs was deferred pending feedback from the Quality Council.

3. Consent Agenda

3.1. Minutes of the January 21, 2026 Meeting

A council member noted minor amendments for the minutes. Council approved the minutes of the meeting as amended.

3.2. Curricular Submissions

Council approved all curricular submissions items 3.2.1. – 3.2.2. on behalf of Senate.

3.3. Graduate Awards and Scholarships

Council received for information and approved all new awards and scholarships.

3.4. Updated Final Examination Regulations and Guidelines

Council received for information the updated Final Examination Regulations and Guidelines.

4. Regular Agenda

5. Chair's Remarks

The Chair provided updates on the provincial investment in post-secondary education, the planned lifting of the tuition freeze for 2026–27, and major changes to OSAP shifting from primarily grant-

based to predominantly loan-based funding. The Chair mentioned that there are new TA/RA agreements that will impact graduate teaching assistants, research assistants, and sessional instructors. There will be new hiring processes, defined workload limits, pay increases, and expanded leave provisions, with full implementation expected by September 1, 2026. These changes will require greater specificity in admission packages and revisions to institutional policies. Key discussion points included: maximum hours of work per week, changes to overtime pay, number of GTA and GRA appointments in admission package, pay increases, and a review of Policy 1 and Policy 30. The Chair will provide further information to council members at a future Senate Graduate Council meeting.

6. Curricular Submissions

6.1. Graduate Studies Academic Calendar Updates

Simm and Wikkerink presented the changes in the Graduate Studies Academic Calendar. Updates for *Section 10.1 Graduate work-integrated learning* incorporated feedback provided by graduate students. Council members offered additional edits for *Section 13.2.3 Academic progression: Good academic standing*. The Chair recommended deferring approval of this section pending further revisions. *Section 16.4 Courses and assessments* was updated to comply with requirements from Bill 166 legislation.

A motion was heard to recommend that Senate approve the major modifications to the 2026 Graduate Studies Academic Calendar, effective May 1, 2026, as amended. Ingalls and Pomeroy. Carried.

7. Policy 70 Consultation

Singh and Brown provided a summary of the changes for Policy 70, which has undergone extensive consultation with different stakeholders on campus. The revised policy will be submitted to Senate for approval. A council member asked for clarification on the reassessment procedures and criteria. Singh stated that each Faculty may have their own reassessment criteria. Additional support is available for those who would like to develop new procedures. Council members were encouraged to send any additional comments and feedback to Singh and Brown.

8. ORCID Implementation Pilot

Bredahl and Ochana presented an update about the ORCID pilot project and highlighted its importance for research tracking and funding applications. This work was endorsed by the Working Group on Bibliometrics and supported by the library, Office of Research, and GSPA. Focus groups were conducted with graduate students, staff, and faculty. The findings included challenges with user adoption and highlighted opportunities to improve administrative processes such as annual performance reviews. Key discussion points included: engagement with GSA members and the burden of having to create multiple online CVs. Bredahl mentioned that further improvements to the system is underway and invited council members to send further questions to library staff.

9. Velocity Support and Resources for Graduate Students

Dick provided a presentation about Velocity and highlighted various programs and funding opportunities that are available for students, staff, and faculty. Since its founding, Velocity has supported over 1,200 founders and 500 companies. Through its programming, Velocity aims to bridge the gap into industry by helping entrepreneurs develop new skills to create sustainable impact. Dick noted that Velocity is aiming to be a cost-recovery unit, and broader engagement is needed to increase awareness about its services among members of the campus community.

10. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

No item was removed from the consent agenda.

11. Other Business

No other items of business were identified.

12. Adjournment

The next meeting of the Senate Graduate Council will be held on April 16, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. in Needles Hall 3318.