Graduate Academic Affairs Committee– Meeting Minutes
Saint Louis University
December 12, 2025

Voting Members Present: Jen Popiel, Katie Stamatakis, Marcia McCormick, Zhenguo Lin, Rabia Rahman, Melissa Berrien-Elliott, Srikanth Mudigonda, Dana Baum, Helen Lach, Kristi Richter, Kat Walcott, Katie Mascari

Non-voting Members Present: Jay Haugen, Nicole Mispagel, Marissa Cope, Christine Harper, Janie Henderson, April Trees

Absentees: Chris Thomas, Toby Benis, Takako Nomi, Elizabeth Richard, Sarah Burt, Simona Rentea

Guests: Genevieve Del Rosario, Program Director, Clinical Health Sciences; Chezna Warner, Associate Professor, Physician Assistant Education; Kyle Mitchell, Roobic Gharabagi, Sahin Ozdemir, Electrical and Computer Engineering in SSE; Divya Subramaniam, Julia Howe, Teresa Neal, Kelly Lane-deGraaf, HCOR, Doisy, and Public Health; Min Choi, Computer Science; Brittany Hollister, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs, SOM; Sarah Arkebauer, Director of Graduate Programs, SSE; Steven Winton, Organizational Development and Leadership, SPS

I. **Approval of November 14, 2025 Minutes:** Approved with the correction that Sarah Arkebauer had been present as a guest.

II. **Academic Program Proposals**
   A. **New Program Proposals**
   - **805: Electrical and Computer Engineering MS (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously contingent on their working with Marissa Cope on assessment. There are substantial issues to address. They also need to specify three thesis committee members per SLU policy rather than two and a Registrar's letter is necessary.
   - **816: Mechanical Engineering MS (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously contingent on changing admissions wording from conditional to provisional. Question for the future: How should admissions letters inform students of additional work needed?
   - **818: Mechanical Engineering PhD (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously.
   - **815: Aerospace Engineering MS (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously.
   - **817: Aerospace Engineering PhD (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously.
   - **814: Civil Engineering MS (second review)**
     GAAC approved unanimously.
   - **819: Civil Engineering PhD (second review)**

Five committee members are required per University policy; only four are provided for here. The committee discussed the requirement for two external committee members are required. Is there enough faculty to offer the PhD? Dana Baum suggested comparing this with Aviation; Aviation has fewer faculty but their program works. This program will be replacing a faculty member who departed. The proposed policy is not consistent with university requirements. The rule is that three of the 5 need to be SLU faculty; here it says two of four. This needs to be updated to reflect SLU policy and put in the handbook how the committee will be structured. GAAC approved unanimously contingent on modifying committee structure to meet SLU requirements.

- **824: Health Services and Clinical Outcomes Research MS (second review)**
  This is all online and geared toward a very specific population. They will keep communicating with Public Health regarding any possible overlap. Courses have been created and approved. GAAC approved unanimously.

- **843: Applied Artificial Intelligence and Decision Analytics MS (second review)**
  Is this a new program? It will probably shift to a major program change. GAAC approved unanimously contingent on forwarding it to CADD for consideration of this question.

- **830: Technology and Leadership MS**
  Steve Winton answered questions. No new classes are required. Courses focus on leading change rather than business management. Some such programs are housed in IS with others in Business; ours offers flexibility. One roadmap included a course not in the proposal. GAAC approved unanimously contingent on correction of the roadmap error.

- **780: Doctor of Medical Science DMS**
  Genevieve Del Rosario and Chesna Warner answered questions. This professional doctorate is common in physician assistant programs. It gives a systems context to position its graduates as leaders in the healthcare profession and fits with SLU's Jesuit mission of service. New courses have been developed and approved. Three starts per year are required quickly for the program to be competitive. There will be eight-week terms with six to eight courses covered by current full-time faculty. Discussion revolved around necessary resources given that 90 credit hours per year will be covered outside the current faculty. A full-time program director may be needed. The program expects to gain additional faculty but is unsure how the University will provide them. The program is expected to grow quickly and to demonstrate the sustainability that will demand more help. The new faculty workload policy will not be affected.

All who teach in the program will have the terminal degree before the program begins. Most students are expected to finish within two years, taking two courses at a time, which is standard for programs nationwide. There are exciting possibilities for partnerships with other University departments. There are unanswered questions regarding resources as the commitment to new resources seems uncertain, but they are definitely going to need them to deliver the program. GAAC discussed asking for a letter of support from the dean and considered whether or not a timetable would be helpful. GAAC tabled this for more information on deliverables.

- **822: Electrical and Computer Engineering PhD**
  Kyle Mitchell, Roobic Gharabagi, and Sahin Ozdemir answered questions. The total number of credit hours is being reduced to 42. Some programs demand many more; how will both coursework and research be fitted into the new scheme? Nationwide the number of hours varies from 30 to 90. The program will deliver a competitive edge without compromising quality. GAAC approved unanimously contingent on a revised assessment plan and changing of admissions wording from conditional to provisional.

- **825: Artificial Intelligence in Medicine MS**
  Divya Subramaniam, Kelly Lane-deGraaf, and Min Choi answered questions. The program is intended for those with no computer science background. Many departments are interested in working with Computer Science on AI; this program could be a great opportunity for collaboration and serve as a model for future endeavors. AI courses developed by the Computer Science department will be required but have not yet been approved; AIM courses have been approved. The new courses won't be approved until January. Artificial Intelligence courses offered by Comptuer Science will be offered online; the focus will be on quality redevelopment of online delivery. Both online and in-person starts are envisioned for fall. The School of Medicine is committed to providing the necessary resources including possibly adjuncts or faculty lines depending on program size. As yet there has been no discussion of the proper sequence of courses or a probable roadmap for students. A curriculum map with sequencing has been put together with courses taught by HCOR. There are three issues to be addressed. 1) GAAC has questions for the dean about overall demand on resources in that unit; they should provide a letter that takes into consideration all new HCOR program proposals. 2) What will the final curriculum be? 3) How will they be able to deliver both an online and an onground version given resources available?

- **826: Health Informatics MS**
  Divya Subramaniam, Julia Howe, Teresa Neal, and Kelly Lane-deGraaf answered questions. A small start is intended because they don't know what the market will be. Have they considered beginning online rather than both online and onground? Is the total envisioned number of students—ten across both modalities—too small to warrant the investment required? Health Informatics provides the background scene of data management while Health Data Sciences emphasizes statistics and Python coding and is tech-heavy. Anyone with any major should be able to join the program, so needed skills will be imparted at the start. There is no data yet on the numbers of domestic versus international students. All courses have been approved by the curriculum review committee. There is some alignment with Public Health but no great duplication. What about accreditation? Gaining it will take as long as necessary to ramp up the program; this is a newer field so some existing programs aren't yet accredited. The capstone should for this program, not Health Data Sciences. GAAC approved unanimously contingent on a letter from the dean regarding resources and a capstone update.

B. **Program Closures**
- **424: Biostatistics and Health Analytics M.S.**
  There is an updated teach-out plan. GAAC approved unanimously.
- **520: Software Engineering M.S.**
  There isn't much demand for this program. There is a teach-out plan. GAAC approved unanimously.

C. **Program Changes**
- **460: Public Health Studies PhD**
  - **851: Biostatistics and Epidemiology Concentration**
  - **852: Health Systems, Policies, and Behaviors Concentration**
    The proposed change was occasioned by an accreditation change. Two concentrations are being merged so those listed here will be the only concentrations. GAAC approved unanimously.

III. **Announcements**
- Next GAAC meeting January 9 in Tegeler Hall, Room 207

IV. **Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM.