1. Graduate Council Chair Dr. Juan Silva asked for a motion to approve the Graduate Council minutes of March 2, 2012.

2. Dr. David Monts asked the second paragraph under New Business, item a Graduate Minors, be amended as follows: Dr. Worthy asked Graduate Council to consider making a change to the number of hours for the certificate program from 18 hours required to 13-15 hours required.

3. Dr. Dwayne Wise made a motion to approve the minutes with the noted addition. The motion was seconded by Dr. Monts. Graduate Council approved the March 2, 2012 minutes.

4. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)
   - No Report

5. Report from the Office of the Graduate School (OGS)

Dr. Louis D’Abramo, Dean of the Graduate School, presented the following report:

- **Administration and Staff Office of the Graduate School**
  On March 5, Ms. Margaret McMullen began working as Program Coordinator in the Office of the Graduate School. Karin Lee was recently selected as a recipient of a 2012 MSU Staff Diversity Award. Karin is recognized by the President's Commission on the Status of Minorities for her committed efforts to go beyond her "normal job responsibilities to institute diversity initiatives". Yesterday, Dr. Karen Coats was officially appointed Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

- **Renovation of the front portion of the Office of the Graduate School**
  About 2/3 of the Office of the Graduate School has been renovated with new carpeting, the removal of very old wallpaper and the painting of all walls. We are hoping to have some funds left over to purchase some new furniture for the reception area.
• **Graduate Student Grievance Policy as an AOP**
The graduate student grievance policy that was prepared by the Graduate Council was recently presented at the Associate Deans Council in the form of an AOP. They Associate Deans provided some positive input and minor changes that does not change the intent or process. Next Monday, I will present the proposed AOP to the University Counsel for review.

• **Graduate Student Health Insurance Supplement**
$108,600 dispersed for fall 2011, and $78,400 for the spring 2012 semester. Supplements are $200 per student per semester. The supplement assists graduate students in paying approximately 40% of the annual medical insurance premium.

• **Applications, Admissions, Enrollment**
For the spring 2012 semester, the number of admissions decreased by 12.7% and was primarily attributed to a decrease of 100 Ph.D. students. As of March 19, 2012, relative to the same date last year, applications are up 5.8% and admissions are up 83.8%. The increase in the admissions is due to a restructuring of the responsibilities of the admissions assistants, specifically in response to requests to minimize delays of the processing of complete applications. We are indebted to the Admissions Manager and all OGS admissions assistants, particularly Linda Bonner, for their enthusiastic embracing of the new approach to the processing of applications.

• **Fulbright Applications**
To date, a total of 14 Fulbright applications have been received to date and nine have been admitted. The students are applying for an array of majors including two for humanities, Public Policy and Administration and English. Their native countries include Paraguay, Syria, Indonesia, Ecuador, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Dominican Republic, Columbia and Iraq. We are now waiting to hear which students will decide to enroll at MSU. The OGS Program Manager, Ms. Karin Lee, has been very instrumental in increasing the number of Fulbright graduate students at MSU, one of the indicators of high scholarship among graduate schools throughout the country.

• **Spring 2012 Graduation**
A total of 459 graduate students (381 master’s; 11 educational specialists and 67 doctoral students) have applied for graduation for spring 2012. When graduation is complete for the spring, it is estimated that between 130 and 138 Ph.Ds will have been awarded for 2011-2012. The total number of Ph.D.s awarded for the previous two years is 143 and 139.

• **International Teaching Assistant Workshop; Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) Orientation; Classroom Certification**
Plans for the fall International Teaching Assistant Workshop, Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation and Classroom Certification, and New Graduate Student Orientation have begun. The GTA Orientation will include a special section specifically devoted to students who are laboratory instructors. The ITA Workshop will be held during the entire week of August 6-10. The GTA Orientation will be held on August 13 and 14. The classroom certification will be held on August 15. Last semester, the opportunity to participate in a My Courses workshop was very well received. The MyCourses workshop for a limited number of the GTAs will be held on August 16. The New Graduate Student Orientation will be held on August 17. For the first time, plans are being made to hold the orientation in conjunction with orientation services that are offered through the Mitchell Memorial Library.
• **Graduate Student Research Symposium**
  This year’s Graduate Student Research Symposium will be held on April 14, in McCool Hall. There have been a total of 104 submissions, 37 posters and 67 oral presentations, the largest Symposium ever held. We need judges. Please call Ms. Margaret McMullen, OGS Program Coordinator, to volunteer.

• **Bulletin of the Graduate School**
  If you haven’t done so, please submit program changes/revisions that need to be included in the printing of the 2012-2013 *Bulletin of the Graduate School* to OGS Program Assistant Ms. Pam Sullivan.

• **National Graduate Student and Professional Appreciation Week**
  Graduate Student and Professional Appreciation Week will be held on campus April 2 through 6. This is a national observance week. A number of activities are scheduled including the screening of the very popular PhD movie, an etiquette dinner, and ice cream social, and a graduate student forum. Special discounts for graduate students will be available at local restaurants. A 16’ x 4’ banner that announces the week will be hung across the columns at the front entrance of Allen Hall.

• **Graduate Student Association Banquet**
  The Graduate Student Association Banquet will be held on April 24, beginning at 5:30 pm. President Keenum is the guest speaker.

• **OGS Assistantships**
  The OGS received a total of 32 applications for 7 bridge assistantships and 3 assistantships stipend enhancements. Recipients have been selected and will be formally notified early next week.

• **TAGGS**
  The next application period for Travel Assistant Grants for Graduate Students opened on March 15 for travel from May 1 through October 31. Applications are processed when they become complete.

• **Outstanding GRA, GTA, and GSA**
  Nominations for outstanding GRA, GTA and GSA have opened and will be accepted until April 2 and should be directed to the Office of the Graduate School. Nomination forms can be accessed under announcements on the home page of the OGS. Plaques and monetary awards will be presented to the recipients at the Graduate Student Association Banquet held on April 24th.

• **Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor of the Year**
  We received 26 nominations for the Outstanding Graduate Student Mentor of the Year Award and the nominations are currently being reviewed by an assigned committee. The faculty member selected will be presented a plaque and monetary award from the MSU Alumni Association at the Annual Faculty Awards and Recognition Program scheduled for on April 24. The recipient will be nominated for the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Award for outstanding Graduate Student Mentor.

• **Summer Research Funding for Undergraduates**
  OGS has awarded AGEM summer research funding (up to $1600 each) to 4 undergraduate students, 2 in Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion, 1 in Biological Sciences, and 1 in Chemical Engineering. This is an 8-week research experience during June and July and finishes with a poster session and informal luncheon. The student can receive up to $500 in supply/travel money.
Grant awarded to OGS by Council of Graduate Schools
The University of Mississippi and Mississippi State University were selected to participate as research partners in a grant provide by the Council of Graduate Schools. The $10,000 award for the grant titled “Doctoral Initiative on Minority Attrition and Completion (DIMAC) will pay for a graduate student to assist us in gathering and analyzing assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM) Program.

6. Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)

GSA Vice President Vemitra White presented the following report:

GSA will hold its final meeting on March 28 and have elections for the 2012-13 GSA officers. GSA is co-sponsoring an etiquette dinner with OGS in conjunction with the Graduate Student Appreciation week. The Graduate Research Symposium is scheduled for April 14, and the GSA Banquet is going to be held on April 24.

1. New Business

a) MAIS Graduate Program (Diehl)

Dr. Walter Diehl informed Graduate Council the admission into the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies is suspended. The low number of applications and enrollment in that program after three years make continuation not feasible. Low application numbers reflect the objection of prospective students to earning a Master of Arts degree; they want a Master of Science degree.

Students who are currently enrolled in the degree program will be allowed to finish it. One student currently admitted for the summer semester will be contacted and possibly moved to the program in Geosciences.

b) Thesis and Dissertation Defenses – Who can attend? (D’Abramo – Handout)

Dr. D’Abramo asked whether Graduate Council considers thesis and dissertation defenses open to any member of the graduate faculty and requested that a clarifying statement be put in the next Graduate Bulletin under the appropriate sections. He also distributed a SACS Compliance 3.6.1 statement that states that “the defense before the graduate committee is open to any member of the graduate faculty and the Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School.”

Discussion followed. A definition of public and open was given. The presentation by the student is considered public while the subsequent defense of the presentation is supposed to be only attended by the student’s graduate committee. Only the graduate committee should be present for the subsequent deliberation.

Questions arose regarding Mississippi state law and open meeting laws. Dr. Diehl suggested that University Council be consulted to answer this question.
Dr. Ed Allen requested that an exception mechanism be included when it comes to intellectual property and research in sensitive fields that may require security clearance.

In the absence of other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

The date for the next Graduate Council meeting has been set for Friday, April 27, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.