1. Vice-Chair Dr. Dan Reynolds asked for a motion to accept the minutes of February 25, 2011.

Motion to accept the minutes was made by Dr. Lara Dodds and seconded by Dr. Dwayne Wise.

The February 2011 Graduate Council Minutes were approved by acclamation.

2. University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC)

   No Report

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

   Dr. Louis D’Abramo presented the following report:

   • **Spring 2011 Commencement**

     **Friday, April 29 – 7 p.m., Humphrey Coliseum**
     Bagley College of Engineering, Swalm School of Chemical Engineering, College of Veterinary Medicine, College of Agriculture & Life Sciences, School of Human Sciences, College of Forest Resources, and College of Education

     **Saturday, April 30 – 10 a.m., Humphrey Coliseum**
     College of Arts and Sciences, College of Architecture, Art & Design, School of Architecture, College of Business, and the Adkerson School of Accountancy

   • **Anticipated Ph.D.’s to be awarded, spring 2011**
     A total of 367 Master’s and Educational Specialist candidates and 67 doctoral candidates have applied for graduation this spring. The number of Ph.D.’s awarded for the entire year (summer 2010, fall 2010, and spring 2011) is estimated to be 130, a little less than the record of 143 for last year, but 10 above the five year running average of 120.

   • **Applications and Admissions to Graduate School**
     There is essentially no change in number of applications for the fall 2011 semester versus the fall 2010 semester. International applications are down by 4.6 % but compensated by an almost equivalent increase in domestic applications. For the fall 2011 semester, AOCE applications are up by 15.5 %, from 97 to 112. The admission information is really premature as a total of 469 files are in departments pending decisions.
Fulbright Applicants
There have been 14 applications for Fulbright students. At this point, 4 have been admitted and two have withdrawn. Neither of the remaining two students (Computer Science MS and MS Electrical Engineering) has indicated future plans to attend. There are a remaining 8 applications that have yet to be acted on.

Health Insurance for Graduate Assistants
The University continues to provide Graduate Assistants with monetary supplements ($400 total, $200 each for the fall and spring semesters) to help defray the cost of health insurance purchased through the MSU Student Health Center.

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<tr>
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<th>Fall 2010</th>
<th>Spring 2011</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$119,400</td>
<td>$87,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$206,400</td>
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Graduate Coordinator Workshop
Two sessions were held on March 7 and March 21. Combined attendance for the two sessions was 52 that included 5 staff. The attendance was very good, 91% of all coordinators. Topics included English equivalency tests, the new scale for GRE scores, CAPPS, responsible conduct in research training for graduate research assistants, and graduation audits.

Graduate Research Symposium
The Graduate Research Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, April 16 in McCool Hall. The oral competition will begin at 9:00 am and the poster competition at 10:00 am. For both the oral and poster sessions, there will be groupings of up to four per subject area. New awards for Outstanding Research, Most Innovative Research and Best Presentation across all subject areas and the best presentation and poster in each category will be announced at the GSA Annual Awards Banquet. Recipients of the awards will receive a monetary award.

Travel Assistance Grants for Graduate Students
The OGS began accepting requests for Travel Assistance Grants for Graduate Students (TAGGS) awards on March 15 for the second travel period, May 1 through October 31, 2011. Justifiable grant requests will be awarded until the $15,000 allocated for the second period is exhausted. Details for submissions are available on the OGS website.

Graduate Research, Service and Teaching Assistant of the Year
Awards Nomination forms and corresponding instructions for Graduate Research, Service and Teaching Assistant of the Year Awards will be posted on the OGS and GSA web sites and sent to department heads and graduate coordinators by March 4. The deadline for submitting nominations is Monday, April 11 at noon.

Graduate Student Association Annual Awards Banquet
The GSA Annual Awards Banquet is Wednesday, April 20, at 6:00 pm in Coskrey Auditorium at Memorial Hall. All nominees for Graduate Research, Service and Teaching Assistant of the Year awards will be recognized. The award recipients and winners from the Graduate Research Symposium will be announced during the banquet. All members of the Graduate Council should receive an invitation via email by March 15th and are encouraged to attend.

Assistantship Funding
Six bridge funds ($16,000 to $18,000 for one year) and one stipend supplement (up to $4,000 for 2 years) will be available for the fall 2011 semester. Requests for these funds will open on April 1, 2011 and close on April 8 at 5:00 pm. Click Faculty and Staff on the OGS website and then Recruiting/Funding Opportunities for more details.
• **Alliance of Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM)**
  The AGEM 6th annual Increasing Momentum to Provide Empowerment to Talented Undergraduate Students to Pursue Graduate Education (IMPETUS-PGE) Super Recruitment Weekend is scheduled for April 1-2, 2011. Approximately 30 juniors and seniors in the STEM areas from Mississippi institutions and selected institutions from its contiguous states are expected to attend. We are inviting our STEM faculty and members of the Graduate Council to attend our Graduate Networking Reception to meet our potential graduate students. The reception will be held on Friday, April 1st from 7:00 – 8:30 P.M. in Swalm Chemical Engineering Bldg. – 4th Floor Suite.

• **Information Workshops for Fulbright and NSF Fellowships**
  The Office of the Graduate School and the Bagley College of Engineering will host a NSF-GRFP Information Workshop (Webinar) to inform all first-year graduate students and graduating seniors for 2011-2012 about financial funding opportunities available to support graduate education. The webinar will be held on Monday, April 4, 2011 from 2:00-4:00 pm in 255 Allen Hall.

The Office of the Graduate School, in conjunction with the Institute of International Education (IIE), will host a Spring Fulbright Information Workshop on Wednesday, April 6, 2011 from, 2:00 – 4:00 PM in the Colvard Student Union-Fowlkes Auditorium to inform undergraduates, graduating seniors, and graduate students about fellowship and scholarship opportunities.

• **Thank you**
  A very special thanks is extended to the Graduate Council subcommittees consisting of Drs. Meghan Millea (Chair), Rafael Hernandez, and Wes Schilling, and Drs. Dan Seale (Chair), Kathy Dooley, and Rafael Hernandez for serving to review an academic status appeal for each of two graduate students, respectively.

4. **Report from Graduate Student Association (GSA)**

  GSA President Luke Fowler presented the following report:

  The next GSA meeting will be held on March 29, followed by a social at the Halfway House. Dr. Emison from the department of Public Policy and Administration will be the guest speaker.

  The GSA Research Symposium is scheduled for Saturday, April 16. We will have two new awards - the Outstanding Research Award and the Most Innovative Research Award. We also added a CAPSTONE Research Presentation. The call for papers is out now. We are still looking for judges for the Symposium.

  The GSA Awards Banquet is scheduled for April 20 at Coskrey Auditorium in Memorial Hall. Graduation Council should be receiving invitations for this event. Dr. David Shaw has agreed to be our guest speaker and to present the awards.

6. **Old Business**

   a) **Graduation Qualifications (3’C’s) and changes to Graduate Committee (Hamil)**

   The subcommittee of Drs. Hamil (chair), Monts, Barnett and Schilling tackled two issues. In the absence of Dr. Hamil, Dr. Dave Monts presented the subcommittee report, beginning with changes to the Graduate Committee (specifically after the final examination has been administered). The subcommittee proposes to change the policy as follows:
“Student requests for change in composition of a graduate committee will not be honored subsequent to the administration of the oral and written comprehensive examination unless suitable justification is provided in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.”

Dr. Monts made a motion to accept the proposed change to the policy as presented by the subcommittee. Dr. Hernandez seconded the motion.

Extensive discussion followed about the differences in what constitutes a comprehensive examination which varies widely from department to department. Dr. Tim Barnett suggested the inclusion of the word *final* to make the statement clearer.

Dr. Wise motioned to amend the motion on the table to read as follows:

“Student requests for change in composition of a graduate committee will not be honored subsequent to the administration of the final oral or written comprehensive examination unless suitable justification is provided in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.”

Dr. David Lewis seconded the amended motion.

Graduate Council voted and the amended motion was approved by acclamation.

Dr. Monts presented the second subcommittee issue which examined the current policy regarding C grades on the program of study for graduate students. The subcommittee reviewed the current policy and made several recommendations.

Dr. Barnett made a motion to approve Option 3 from the subcommittee handout which reads:

“The student cannot have more than nine (9) semester hours of grades lower than “B” with respect to all graduate courses taken during their current graduate program (masters, specialist, or doctoral).”

Dr. Wise seconded the motion.

Discussion followed. Graduate Council decided to change the allowable semester hours with a C-grade from 9 hours to six hours and change some of the wording.

Dr. Barnett made a motion to amend the motion on the table to read as follows:

“The student may not graduate with more than six (6) credit hours of grades lower than “B” with respect to all graduate courses taken during their current graduate program (masters, specialist, or doctoral).”

Dr. Wise seconded the amended motion.

Graduate Council voted and the amended motion was approved by acclamation.

7. No new business was discussed.
March 25, 2011

Graduate Council decided to have the next Graduate Council meeting on April 29 as scheduled (one week later due to a University Holiday). April 29 is also the first day of two graduation ceremonies

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The date for the next Graduate Council meeting has been set for Friday, April 29, 2011, at 1:30 p.m. in 611 Allen Hall.
As stated in the MSU Graduate Council, December 2010, minutes, the committee was given two topics to review: (1) Graduation qualifications (3 “C”s) and (2) Changes to graduate committee. Each topic is presented individually.

First Topic to Review
1. Graduation Qualifications (3 “C”s):

(From the minutes)
Dr. D’Abramo asked that a subcommittee be formed to review the possibility of amending the current policy which reads “A candidate for a degree must average B or higher on all courses attempted for graduate credit after admission to a degree program; this includes courses on the program of study as well as non-program courses.” He proposed that a sentence reading “No more than one grade of C can appear on the student’s Program of Study” be added at the end of the current policy paragraph.

The Committee collected information from a variety of sources to obtain information pertaining to the number of "C"s accumulated by graduate students. See attached spreadsheets. The graduate school checked 500 files (masters, specialists, and doctoral) which relates to approximately half the students who graduated during AY 2009-10 (a total of 1,015 students for Fall 2009, Spring 2010 and Summer 2010). A summary of the findings is shown below:

- 387 students graduated without any “C”s on their Program of Study (POS).
- 92 students graduated with one “C” on the POS. That breaks down to 13 PhDs (2 Ag& Life, 6 Education, 3 Engineering, one Forest Resources and one Vet. Med); 66 masters ( 5 Accounting, 6 Ag & Life, 18 A&S, 9 Business, 17 Education, 7 Engineering, 3 Forest Resources and one Vet Med), and 13 Educational Specialists.
- 20 students graduated with two “C”s on the POS. That breaks down to 2 PhDs (Education and Business) and 17 masters (one Accounting, 8 A & S, 2 Business, 4 Education and 2 Engineering) plus one Educational Specialist.
- One master's student in Business graduated with three C's on the POS.

After careful deliberation, the committee has identified the following options (1-4) as a basis for full committee discussion.
Option 1: Keep the policy as it currently reads in the MSU Graduate Bulletin (p. 56) where the student has to maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Option 2: Change the policy to read "A student can have no more than nine (9) semester hours of grades lower than a "B" on their graduate Program of Study.

Option 3: Change the policy to read “The student cannot have more than nine (9) semester hours of grades lower than “B” with respect to all graduate courses taken during their current graduate program (masters, specialist, or doctoral).”

Though Option 4 is not supported by the majority of the committee, it is presented for discussion.

Option 4: At the end of the current policy paragraph (see MSU Graduate Bulletin p. 56), add the statement “No more than three (3) semester hours of "C" can appear on the graduate student’s Program of Study”.

Second Topic to Review

2. Changes to Graduate Committee (Dr. D’Abramo – Handout):

(From the minutes)
The subcommittee was also asked to review the current policy for changing graduate committee members. Some graduate students have used this policy to remove committee members who would not pass them after an examination. Dr. D’Abramo recommended the following modification to the policy be added:

“Student requests for change in composition of a graduate committee will not be honored subsequent to the administration of the oral and written comprehensive examinations unless suitable justification is provided in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.”

After discussion, the committee recommends modification of the policy to read as stated by Dr. D’Abramo’s recommendation.