

Graduate Academic Affairs Committee - Meeting Minutes
Saint Louis University
February 13, 2026

Voting Members Present: Dana Baum, Toby Benis, Melissa Berrien-Elliott, Sarah Burt, Helen Lach, Zhenguo Lin, Katie Mescari, Marcia McCormick, Srikanth Mudigonda, Takako Nomi, Rabia Rahman, Simona Rentea, Kristi Richter, Katie Stamatakis, Chris Thomas

Non-Voting Members Present: April Trees, Janie Henderson, Marissa Cope

Absentees: Jen Popiel

Guests: Lisa Fischer, Maria Weber, Divya Subramaniam, Yan Sun, Elizabeth Block, Linda Warren

I. Approval of January 16, 2026, Minutes: Approved.

II. Announcements:

1. Kat Walcott has stepped down from the GSA VP of South Campus position. Rowan Hollinger is the new South Campus VP and will be taking her place on GAAC for the remainder of the semester.
2. Chris Harper has retired from SLU as of January 28, 2026.

III. Academic Program Proposals

New Proposals

867: Foundations of Health Informatics, PBC

Divya Subramaniam joined via Zoom and provided answers and additional information for committee questions. This is a subset of existing courses in the new Health Informatics MS program, so it doesn't require a new market, library, or IT analysis.

The assessment plan does not have HI 5260 on the curriculum map. Map should be updated. It does need a registrar's letter of support. Doisy faculty have not been consulted. Larger question from GAAC: should there be a procedure in place to prevent programs or courses from being brought to GAAC prematurely (before all necessary parties have been included in the conversation)? Given this is an

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interdisciplinary program, there was discussion regarding the need for meaningful collaboration with faculty across units regarding curriculum design and a plan for ongoing interdisciplinary oversight of the program.

The committee unanimously voted to send this back to the unit with the request/requirement to have conversations with all involved programs—highlighting the expectation of having an interdisciplinary conversation and plan for interdisciplinary coordination moving forward.

868: Artificial Intelligence in Medicine, PBC

Divya Subramaniam also answered questions about this proposal. As with the previous PBC, all of the courses that will be offered come from the AI in Medicine program. A meeting is planned with the chair of Computer Science to get a letter of support from CS. This proposal also needs a letter from the Registrar.

The committee unanimously voted to approve contingent upon the required Registrar letter update and letter of support from Computer Science

Program Changes:

205: Accounting MACC (second review):

Yan Sun, Department Chair, attended to answer questions. Intention for course changes to allow perspective students to count previous prerequisite course to reduce admission requirements. It will prevent accounting students or prospective students from having to repeat courses completed in undergrad and move forward with taking 5000 level courses. It will also allow those students without an accounting background to take 2 4000 level courses and have them count them towards their degree.

Given what Dr. Sun indicated the intent was, some clarifications are needed for the proposal to move forward. The current submission does not indicate that students must earn a C- or higher in a class for it to count toward the degree program. This does not go in the continuation standard section but does need to be in the catalog. As the program intends ACCT 4110 and ACCT 4300 to be an option for electives, only for students without an undergraduate background in accounting, this needs to be clarified in the curriculum description.

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The committee voted to approve contingent upon updates to the catalog entry to clarify continuation standards and the place of ACCT 4110 and 4300 in the requirements.

187: Theological Studies (second review):

Elizabeth Block discussed Theology's proposed program change of moving away from three separate program areas and creating one program with three concentrations. The goal is to create an interdisciplinary program, which would allow students to move and progress in the program together. Additionally, the change would allow faculty to expand their availability to explore academic opportunities. The committee discussed the requirement for teaching assistants in the non-course requirements and whether a GA requirement belongs in the academic requirements.

GAAC voted to approve the program change, contingent upon removal of the TA training requirement from the non-course requirements.

399: Information Systems and Emerging Technologies, M.S.

Maria Weber attended to answer questions about these program changes, including the program name change. She explained that the proposed changes are necessary to address the broadening of the technologies landscape and to stay on top of evolving and emerging market trends. Additionally, students will be able to take approved PBC courses as electives.

GAAC voted to approve the program changes for the Information Systems and Emerging Technologies M.S.

535: Geoscience PhD; Geophysics Concentration

Linda Warren attended to answer questions about the changes to the Geophysics Concentration in the Geoscience Ph.D. The rationale for the program change is to accommodate student interest, and to provide students with more course flexibility.

GAAC voted to approve the program changes for the Geophysics Concentration in the Geoscience Ph.D.

Graduate Pathway Updates

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Lisa Fischer updated GAAC about changes and updates about ongoing courses and program pathways. This was an FYI as the pathway updates have approval from all of the graduate programs and are not separate programs.

IV. Announcements

1. The GEAR committee finalized and completed a report based on the data gathering from 2025. They plan to write and submit a final proposal to Provost Lewis before his departure at the end of the semester.
2. Graduate Education held the first of several mentoring workshops for faculty. There will also be mentoring workshops specifically for graduate students this semester.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:26am.