Welcome
Bryan Porter greeted council members.

Support for Graduate Students During COVID-19: La Wanza Lett-Brewington informed Council that she is currently working with staff members and students to provide assistance to those that are working remotely and balancing parental obligations with academics. She said that these students are suffering in silence and asked for suggestions on how to promote the available assistance. Missy Barber suggested the Let’s Talk Grad Life sessions as another option. There was open discussion about providing flexible and alternative meeting timeframes for students that have children currently at home due to the pandemic.

US News & World Report’s Graduate Engineering Survey: Raphael Landaeta provided an update on the completed survey and a review of some of these questions from the survey was provided. There was open discussion about data and questions at the admission and exit levels and who tracks students after graduation. Bill Heffelfinger said that we can add this information to the admissions application and that we would just need to identify programs that are interested. Tisha Paredes informed Council that a graduate student exit survey already exists, and she provided the assessment link for graduating students. There was a request to receive this report by college and program. Missy Barber will be collaborating with Tisha Paredes and Bill Heffelfinger to clarify questions regarding the Americans with Disabilities ACT (ADA).

Approval of Minutes
Minutes from the Thursday, September 10, 2020 meeting were approved.

Announcements

- **Graduate Student Appreciation Events for September Updates**: The Graduate School co-sponsored a series of events with Career Development Services. These events were available for ODU students only. These events were scheduled on September 8, 2020, September 15, 2020, and September 22, 2020.

- **New Graduate Administrators’ Orientation**: This event will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2020. This orientation is for Graduate Program Directors, but new Administrators are welcome. Missy Barber reminded Council that the RSVP link is provided on the agenda.

- **Graduate School Graduate Alumni Homecoming Event**: This virtual event is scheduled on Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 7:00 pm. The RSVP link will be sent via email.

- **Award Deadlines for 2020-2021**: Missy informed Council that she will send an email reminder for call to nominations for awards. There was a request to review the deadlines
and instructions for clarification before it is disseminated. Bryan Porter informed Council that will have a specific group to review this individually and provide feedback to Missy.

- **Catalog & CourseLeaf Updates**: CIM is open for editing and Council was reminded that the important deadlines for the 2021-2022 Catalog were provided in the agenda. Catalog training will be provided in January 2021.

**Clearing Students for Graduation in DegreeWorks.** Chris Bowman informed Council that a pending graduation report is available to download from Leo online. The Office of the Registrar reviews this report every semester to see who is pending for graduation and missing required graduation forms. Council was informed that degrees will not be conferred for graduate programs if a 100% complete is not met in DegreeWorks. It was reported that there have been instances where DegreeWorks was showing 100%, but some students had not completed their comprehensive exams. It was suggested to add a notes section for these situations.

Council was informed that the Graduate School will be updated in DegreeWorks by the end of the semester and that every program should be added to DegreeWorks in time for graduation. Helen Jacobson will be providing a DegreeWorks presentation during the New Administrators Orientation. Becky Martin was hired to replace Laura Vann’s previous position.

Bryan Porter informed Council that graduate program directors (GPDs) can approve substitutions easily and that they must be added in DegreeWorks. Substitutions and audits should be emailed to degreeworks@odu.edu. Missy Barber is working closely with Helen Jacobson to ensure that curricular changes are updated in DegreeWorks.

**Graduate Assistants – Fall 2020 Experience.** There was open discussion about changes to the work assignments for graduate assistants due to COVID-19, heavier workloads than normal, and graduate assistants expressing concerns about teaching assigned face to face classes. Jane Dane informed Council that departments will determine the resolution for there is concern for required face-to-face classes. More guidance on this issue was requested. It was reported that programs are continuing with the Wellness Center and that students are feeling isolated.

It was mentioned that research may be delayed for students conducting field work with human research because they cannot get participation even through Zoom. As a result, there may be requests for exemptions to the eight-year rule. Bryan Porter explained the eight-year rule and informed Council that this conversation will continue as we monitor these issues.

**Recruiting a more Diverse Graduate Student Population.** Dale Miller suggested this topic and reported that he reached out to Dr. Narketta Sparkman-Key to see how we can recruit a more diverse student population for terminal degrees. It was suggested that he connect with the Graduate School because her focus is on recruiting faculty. Bryan Porter reported that there are separate student and faculty efforts. Bill Heffelfinger suggested that we use our underrepresented faculty to recruit graduate students. Council was informed that there is competition with other colleges that affects acceptances into programs for students and faculty regarding funding offers. There was open discussion on if each program has target values as a university for students and how they can make their programs more diverse. Bryan Porter
informed Council that he will discuss this further with Dr. Wojtowicz and to expect this as a topic of discussion at a future GAC meeting.

**Forms & Policies Committee**

**Continuance Policy Revision.** Non-degree criteria for the probationary status policy was sent to GAC twice because of inconsistencies with the language. This language was regarding the number of credits needed to improve GPAs once non-degree students are put on probation. The language that stated non-degree students can be put on probation anytime during a semester was revised to provide clarification. The policy now states that all students have up to the allowable amount of credits to improve their GPA and the minimum is 12 credits.

Non-degree students are now parallel with all students and certificate and life learner students can now apply to be reinstated. Non-affiliated students may not be reinstated until they apply to a program. The hope is that adding 12 credits to the policy that this will standardize the review process. The revisions to this policy are accepted to be submitted to the Dean’s Council.

**Graduate Certification for Center Faculty.** Council was informed that language will need to be added, about one sentence that states that who are not affiliated with a specific department, school or college shall have their credentials reviewed by the college. Also, language under procedure will need to be added to state that all we need are CVs for faculty being qualified. Transcripts, licenses, and certification were removed as required documentation. These edits were accepted with this change and moved and passed.

**Course Level Distribution and 3/5ths rule.** The title of this policy was revised by removing the word course load was removed from the title and replacing it with Credit-Hour Distribution. An explanation of the 3/5ths rule was provided and there was open discussion about what the colleges are doing. Council was also informed that 48 credit hours was the standard for PhD programs and 3/5ths of those credit hours need to be at the 800 level. For master’s students, 3/5ths applies to courses at the 600 level or higher. All courses used for a degree (including research credits) are counted when assessing 3/5ths. The policy edits were passed

**Next Meeting**
The next Graduate Administrators’ Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2020 from 8:30 am – 10:30 am.

Meeting adjourned.