



ACADEMIC SENATE OF CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH

Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC)
Annual Report 2024-25

Prepared by – Deepali Bhandari, Chair

2024-25 GSAC Membership

Elected Members: Vesna Terzic (COE), Loretta Ramirez (CLA), Sara Nourazari (CHHS), Seungjoon Lee (CNSM), Howook Shin (COB), Alejandra Priede (CED), Colleen Dunagan (COTA)

Student Representatives: Quinn Bentley (ASI), Johnathon Davis (ASI)

Staff Members Designated by College Dean of Graduate Studies: Mary Anne Rose (CED) and Lindsey Sterk (COB)

Academic Senate (AS) Designee: Neil Hultgren (AS Chair)

Associate Deans or College Designees: Rebecca Bustamante (CED), Sarah Schrank (CLA), Tiffanye Vargas (CHHS), Babette Benken (CNSM), Rod Smith (COB), Kerop Janoyan (COE), Anthony Byrnes (COTA)

Academic Affairs Representatives: Dina Perrone (Interim Dean of Graduate Studies), Steven Salcido (Admissions), Lisa Fascia (Enrollment Services), Eugenia Kim (CIE), Laura Vlad (IR&A)

Officers: Deepali Bhandari (Chair), Jackie Morales and Ammisha Opoku Boamah (Historian)

Introduction

During AY 2024–2025, the Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) met on the third Thursday of each month from September 19, 2024, through April 17, 2025. Meetings focused on advancing graduate student success and addressing systemic needs within CSULB graduate programs. Below is a summary of key activities and outcomes.

Key Activities and Outcomes

Policy Review and Feedback: One of the committee's primary areas of focus was the proposed amendments to two master's-level policies:

- Dr. Neil Hultgren (Chair, Academic Senate) provided regular updates on the revision process for the *Policy on Master's Degrees* and the *Policy on Master's Level Culminating Activities*.

- GSAC members discussed potential impacts on college-specific programs and provided feedback to ensure broad applicability and fairness.
- Drs. Dina Perrone and Deepali Bhandari raised these concerns on the Senate floor and proposed friendly amendments.
- GSAC proposed two amendments to the original drafts of the master's policies approved by CEPC – grade forgiveness for one graduate course in programs under 60 units (two courses if 60 or more units) and awarding posthumous degrees. Both were approved by the Academic Senate.
- The revised policies (PS 25-11 and PS 25-12), which introduced clearer language, removed administrative barriers, and added flexibility were approved by the Academic Senate and concurred by President Conoley in April 2025.

Graduate Student Pulse: Graduate student representatives Quinn Bentley and Johnathon Davis regularly shared updates on student concerns and priorities. Based on their feedback, the Dean of Graduate Studies held meetings to learn how GS can better support graduate student needs.

Graduate Center Initiatives: Jackie Morales and Ammisha Opoku-Boamah (Graduate Center Coordinators) provided updates on student support programming, including writing retreats, workshops, and panel discussions aimed at academic success and professional development.

Generative AI Guidelines: Cecilia Paredes (Lead, Thesis and Dissertation Office) consulted with Librarian Dr. Alexis Pavenick, the AVP of ATS, Dr. Shariq Ahmed, and the Dean of Graduate Studies to develop a draft of Generative AI Guidelines. Cecilia brought these guidelines to GSAC for further discussion and feedback on the use of generative AI in graduate education.

- Topics included the ethical and academic implications of using Gen AI in thesis writing and the reliability of detection tools such as Turnitin.
- Based on GSAC feedback, the [Graduate Studies Generative AI Guidelines webpage](#) was launched in April 2025.

Graduate Advisor Summit: GSAC brainstormed ideas for our inaugural Grad Advisor summit which led to a successful summit titled “*Leveraging Student Data to Enhance Graduate Programs*” on April 11, 2025.

Guest Presentations: Several invited speakers contributed valuable insights to GSAC meetings throughout the year:

- Dr. Steven Salcido (AVP, Admissions and Enrollment Services): EAB Grad Journey Pilot Project
- Dr. Chris Hansen (VP, University Partnerships, Everspring): Data trends in California graduate education
- Jacqueline Record (Director, CSULB American Language Institute) & Dr. Tom O'Brien (Associate Dean, CPaCE): Recruitment pipeline development via the American Language Institute
- Meghan Griffith-Piña (University Registrar): Streamlining policy exceptions for graduate students

- Eugenia Kim (Director, Center for International Education) and Ignacio Castor (International Student Advisor): Immigration policy updates affecting international graduate students

External Engagement: Outside of regular meetings, GSAC members met with:

- CSU Trustee Darlene Yee-Melichar on November 18, 2024
- Dr. Tracy Love (Dean, Graduate Studies at SDSU) for the external review of CSULB's Graduate Center and Thesis & Dissertation Office on January 30, 2025.

In both instances, GSAC provided input on current strengths and challenges in graduate education at CSULB.

Conclusion

- Through its collaborative efforts with faculty, student representatives, and university leadership, GSAC made meaningful contributions to strengthening graduate education at CSULB in AY 2024–2025.

Recommended Topics for AY 2025–2026

- Continue discussion and refinement of generative AI usage guidelines in graduate education.
- Discuss ways to improve admissions processes.
- Develop a doctoral policy.
- Review and provide recommendations on remaining goals in the *Graduate Studies Strategic Plan 2021–2026* and help shape a vision and roadmap for the next five years.