

## **CSS Graduate Committee Minutes – February 6, 2026**

### **CP303/Zoom**

#### **Attendance**

**Voting Faculty:** Paulo Barreto, Ka Yee Yeung, Martine De Cock, Raj Katti, Mohamed Ali, Ankur Teredesai, Donald Chinn, Wes Lloyd, Chris Marriott, Eyhab Al-Masri, Xutong Liu, Damiano Torre, Juhua Hu, Wei Cai, Zhi-Qi Cheng

**Non-Voting Faculty and Staff:** Rachel Crook, Anisha Joshi, Aubree Steffens, Kira King

..

#### **Items**

**1. Vote to approve minutes from 1.9.2026 (author Damiano Torre)**

Moved: D.Chinn

Seconded: P.Barreto

10 in favor, 0 against, 3 abstain

**2. Rachel: MSCSS AY2026-27 Application Reviews**

Rachel reported that applications for the upcoming academic year are continuing to roll in. As of the meeting, 19 applicants had been admitted and 7 had confirmed enrollment. Six applications have been denied and 21 were currently under review.

Rachel noted that the program is entering the phase where admitted student engagement becomes important. Plans are underway, in collaboration with Victoria, to host an admitted student information session to encourage admitted applicants to confirm enrollment and submit their deposit.

**3. Rachel: 2026/27 GSFEI Top Scholar Update**

Rachel reported that the program's application to the GSFEI Top Scholar program was approved for three students. As in the previous year, the award structure will provide research assistantship quarters. The program must identify the nominated students and provide individualized offer letters specifying the timing of RA quarters and any GTA support. The deadline for submitting nominations is May 1.

**4. Ka Yee: SET Research Showcase: abstracts Feb 23**

Ka Yee reminded the committee that the SET Research Showcase will take place on February 23. Faculty and students were encouraged to submit abstracts. In addition to the standard 200-word abstract, participants may submit an extended abstract if they would like their work considered for a lightning talk or the Best Poster award.

## **5. Juhua: Artificial Intelligence MS program update**

Juhua provided an update on the proposed Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence program. The program budget was finalized at the end of January, and the program notices of intent for AI Foundations, AI Applications, and the MS in AI have been drafted.

The Office of Academic Affairs has requested time to review new AI program proposals across the university. An advisory group will be formed to evaluate and coordinate these proposals before they move forward. This means there may be a short delay in the approval timeline.

Discussion followed about the growing number of AI programs in the Seattle area. Ankur noted the importance of clearly differentiating the proposed program from other offerings. Juhua explained that the proposal highlights flexibility in elective pathways and a broad application certificate structure that allows students to focus on different domains. The program also emphasizes accessibility and alignment with UW's urban serving mission.

## **6. Wes/Rachel: Early MSCSS Apps - how to review apps w/ minimal transcript data**

The committee discussed how to evaluate MSCSS applications submitted early in a student's undergraduate program when transcripts are missing recent coursework.

Wes explained that in some cases applicants submit transcripts before their most recent grades appear, which can make it difficult to verify prerequisite completion. His current practice is to leave a comment requesting an updated transcript and postpone scoring the application.

Rachel agreed with this approach and offered to help manage these cases by contacting students directly and requesting updated transcripts. If the application lacks sufficient information, it can be temporarily moved to a waiting category until the transcript is updated.

In general, reviewers were encouraged to evaluate the student's trajectory and GPA. Strong applicants whose transcripts indicate they are currently enrolled in the necessary courses may still be evaluated, while borderline cases should wait for updated documentation.

Rachel also briefly addressed PhD applications. Some applicants continue to apply without a confirmed faculty advisor despite that being a requirement. To handle this, Rachel will send the application materials to the faculty member named by the applicant and allow two to three weeks for a response. If the faculty member declines or does not respond, the application will not move forward.

#### **7. Wes/Rachel: 4+1 combined BS+MSCSS program**

Wes presented preliminary results from a survey of BSCSS juniors about interest in the proposed 4 plus 1 combined degree program. The survey was distributed through Canvas in several 300-level core courses and through email to juniors.

The survey received 43 responses. 23 students rated their interest as 10 out of 10, suggesting strong initial interest. Based on these responses, Wes estimated that the first cohort might include roughly 10 to 15 students.

The next step will be to host an information session for students who responded to the survey. The session will answer questions and help students plan their senior year schedules, since participants will take two 500-level courses during their final undergraduate year.

Rachel reported that the Graduate School approved the credit sharing arrangement required for the program. The structure allows two courses to count toward both degrees, effectively saving students one quarter of graduate tuition, which is approximately \$7,000 for in-state students and \$11,000 for out-of-state students.

Students in the program will complete either 35 graduate credits for the coursework option or 30 credits for the thesis or capstone option after finishing their undergraduate degree.

#### **8. Wes: non-CSS SET faculty as CSS Doctoral Supervisory Committee chair: PhD committee & CSS grad committee service requirements discussion**

The committee discussed how to handle cases where tenure-track faculty in other SET programs such as IT or ECE may want to supervise PhD students in the Computer Science and Systems program.

Because the school is not departmentalized, all faculty technically belong to the same unit, which means non-CSS faculty are not automatically excluded from serving as doctoral supervisors. However, the committee discussed whether additional guidelines should be established.

One suggestion was to require that when a non-CSS faculty member serves as chair, the supervisory committee must include at least one CSS faculty member to ensure familiarity with program requirements. Another suggestion was that non-CSS advisors who supervise CSS PhD students should participate in the CSS Graduate Committee in some capacity so they remain familiar with the curriculum and program expectations.

Several perspectives were shared. Some members emphasized that the central requirement should be that these non-CSS faculty demonstrate/have the ability to supervise rigorous computer science research. Others noted that the graduate committee already has authority to approve supervisory committees and PhD endorsements, which may provide sufficient oversight without adding new formal requirements.

No decision was made during the meeting. The discussion will continue in a future meeting.

#### **9. Wes: PhD Student Seminar - Winter 2026**

Wes reminded the committee that the deadline for capstone and thesis proposals is March 13, the last day of classes. The EasyChair system will be prepared for the 2026 submission cycle and instructions will be sent to faculty.

Plans are also underway to organize a PhD student seminar during Winter 2026.

#### **10. Next meeting: Friday March 6th @ 10am**