



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

The Graduate School

Inaugural Graduate Education Summit

January 26, 2024

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Joseph F. Rice School of Law





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8:30 – 9:00

Registration

Perrin Lobby

Gamecock CommUnity Drive – food, business clothing, school supplies, household supplies

Book Signing with Leonard Cassuto and Robert Weisbuch



9:00 – 10:30

Opening Session

Karen J. Williams Courtroom

Welcome

Ann Vail, Ph.D.; *Dean, The Graduate School*

Building a Better Graduate Education

Leonard Cassuto, Ph.D.; *Professor, English and American Studies, Fordham University*

Robert Weisbuch, Ph.D.; *Former President, Drew University; Former President, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation; Former Professor of English, Department Chair and Dean at the University of Michigan*

Join Drs. Cassuto and Weisbuch as they discuss their perspective detailed in their acclaimed work, “The New PhD: How to Build a Better Graduate Education.” Through their advocacy, they challenge the traditional confines of academia, proposing a graduate experience that is both humanely enriching and socially responsive. Their call to action is clear: streamline the journey to degree completion, broaden the horizon of post-graduation careers, foster public scholarship, and curate a curriculum that resonates with contemporary society. In this enlightening discourse, they will delve into innovative strategies for revamping the dissertation process, cultivating diversity within the student body, and ensuring comprehensive support systems that address financial, cultural, and emotional needs.



10:30 – 11:00

Break

Perrin Family Event Space



11:00 – 12:00

Break Out Sessions: Choose One

Advising and Mentoring Our Students:

The Faculty Role in Mentoring and Advising

Room 389

As integral architects of student success, faculty members are not merely educators but also mentors and advisors who provide the scaffolding for students' academic and professional growth. This session will delve into effective strategies for advising and mentoring, with a particular focus on how faculty can foster a nurturing environment that supports the holistic development of graduate students.

Leonard Cassuto, Ph.D.; *Professor, English and American Studies, Fordham University*

Presider: Jean Taylor Ellis, Ph.D.; *Interim Associate Dean, Student Success and Engagement*

From Global to Local: Rethinking Support Systems

for USC's International Community

Room 284

Join Dr. Christina Yao and her research team as they unveil comprehensive insights into the multifaceted challenges confronting international graduate students. With a special focus on the University of South Carolina, this session delves into the nuanced experiences of these students, revealing critical concerns such as spousal support, housing, and food security. Dr. Yao will guide attendees through tailored considerations and strategic practices aimed at overcoming these barriers, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for the university's diverse international cohort.

Christina Yao, Ph.D.; *Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Higher Education and Student Affairs M.Ed.; Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*

Sandy Greene; *Graduate Student, Education Administration, Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*

Gaurav Harshe; *Graduate Student, Education Administration, Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*

Katie Hopkins; *Graduate Student, Education Administration, Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*

Zach Jenkins; *Graduate Student, Education Administration,
Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*
Zo Sediqi; *Graduate Student, Education Administration,
Department of Leadership, Learning Design, and Inquiry*
Presider: Tommy Hodges, Ph.D.; *Dean, College of Education*

Designing Graduate Programs for the Future:

USC Examples

Room 301

This session will provide an overview and discussion of USC examples of program reform and modernization. Panel members will describe the process of program revision in their program. They will highlight their motivations for change and how they were addressed. Considerations throughout the process will be described, the various strategies for evaluation of curricular decisions will be shared, and lessons learned will be identified.

Juan Caicedo, Ph.D.; *Chair, Department of Civil Engineering*
Maryah Fram, Ph.D., MSW; *Associate Professor and Ph.D. Program
Director; College of Social Work*
Stephanie Y. Mitchem, Ph.D.; *Interim Director, Women's and Gender
Studies Program; Professor, Religious Studies*
Moderator: Robert Weisbuch, Ph.D.; *Former President, Drew University;
Former President, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship
Foundation*



12:00 – 1:00

Lunch Buffet

Lobby

**Graduate Council and
Graduate Directors Lunch**

Room 130



1:00 – 2:00

Educational Evolution:

Embracing AI in Graduate Teaching

and Research

Karen J. Williams Courtroom

As AI's role in academic settings becomes increasingly prevalent, the imperative to navigate its use with discernment and strategic foresight is more crucial than ever. This discourse will illuminate pioneering examples where AI has been integrated into the fabric of graduate learning, enhancing both research and pedagogy. This session will

explore the transformative potential of AI to advance graduate education, aid in recruiting, and encourage student success. Specific, practical demonstrations of AI usage will be given during the presentation.

Wes Fondren, Ph.D.; *Associate Professor, Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts; Associate Dean, College of Graduate and Continuing Studies; Coastal Carolina University*

Presider: Angelina C. Sylvain, Ph.D.; *Vice Dean, The Graduate School*



2:00 – 2:15

Break

Perrin Family Event Space



2:15 – 3:00

**Break Out Sessions: Planning for the Future:
What's Next?**

Cultivating Civil Rights and a Community of Care

Room 284

This is an interactive session focused on one's rights at the University related to discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. This presentation includes a discussion of the supports and options available through the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. The presentation will allow participants to explore strategies to intervene in situations where harm is happening. The presenters will encourage open and honest dialogue to empower all to treat members of our community with dignity and respect.

Molly Peirano; *Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX; ADA Coordinator*

Kionna Keels; *Education Specialist*

Presider: Jean Taylor Ellis, Ph.D.; *Interim Associate Dean, Student Success and Engagement*

Reimagining the Graduate School Admissions Process

Room 389

Explore the joint venture of the Organizational Excellence Office and The Graduate School to enhance graduate admissions. This session will reveal Phase 1's achievements in streamlining internal procedures and preview Phase 2's focus on departmental improvements. Discover insights from stakeholder surveys and contribute to shaping the future steps for a more efficient application experience.

Stacey Bradley, C.P.A., M.B.A.; *University Organizational Excellence Officer*
Tony Geary; *Program Coordinator, The Graduate School*

Advising and Mentoring our Students Working Group

Room 301

Join us as we build on the lessons from "Advising and Mentoring Our Students", convening as a team to work towards a more comprehensive advising/mentoring framework. This team will craft actionable mentorship strategies to enhance graduate student advising, streamline faculty-student engagement, and support diverse academic and professional trajectories. During this session we will work to refine mentorship practices, ensuring they meet the contemporary needs of students and the academic community.

Leonard Cassuto, Ph.D.; *Professor, English and American Studies, Fordham University*
Angelina C. Sylvain, Ph.D.; *Vice Dean, The Graduate School*

Designing Graduate Programs for the Future Working Group

Room 131

Join us for a dynamic working group discussion led by Robert Weisbuch. Our dialogue will extend beyond traditional academic models to embrace innovative structures for graduate degrees that address contemporary challenges. We will explore the art of crafting programs responsive to current and future needs, touching upon the redesign of capstone experiences and the transformation of dissertation and thesis requirements to align with new paradigms in higher learning and professional practice. Participants will collaborate to turn these discussions into practical reforms for immediate and future academic application.

Robert Weisbuch, Ph.D.; *Former President, Drew University; Former President, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation*
Ann Vail, Ph.D.; *Dean, The Graduate School*



3:00 – 3:30

Closing Session

Karen J. Williams Courtroom

The Future of Graduate Education at the University of South Carolina

Ann Vail, Ph.D.; Dean, The Graduate School



3:30 – 5:00

Conversation with the Authors –

Graduate Students Only

Room 135

This is a unique opportunity for graduate student leaders from the Graduate Student Association (GSA), Presidential Fellows, Rising Stars Fellows, SREB Fellows, and Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program to interact directly with the keynote speakers and authors of “The New PhD.”

Dive deep into the intricacies of graduate education reform, explore the authors' vision for a revitalized academic landscape, and engage in a lively discussion about the future of graduate programs. Whether you're a student leader looking to make an impact in your academic community or a fellow striving for excellence in your field, this session promises to be an enlightening experience that will broaden your perspectives and inspire innovative ideas for the future of graduate education. Don't miss this exclusive chance to connect and be a part of shaping the future of higher education.

*Leonard Cassuto, Ph.D.; Professor, English and American Studies,
Fordham University*

*Robert Weisbuch, Ph.D.; Former President, Drew University; Former
President, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation*



The Graduate School Staff

Dr. Ann Vail, *Dean*

Dr. Murray Mitchell, *Senior Associate Dean*

Dr. Angelina Sylvain, *Vice Dean for Graduate Education*

Dr. Jean Taylor Ellis, *Interim Associate Dean for Student Success
and Engagement*

Dale Moore, *Assistant Dean*

Caroline Arndt, *Administrative Assistant*

Wanda Barr, *Executive Administrative Coordinator*

Melodie Capole, *Program Coordinator for the Colleges of Engineering and
Computing; Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management, and
Pharmacy; International Admissions Coordinator*

Kesha Clavon, *Assistant Director of Recruitment and Student Affairs*

Libby Cross, *Director of Operations*

Wright Culpepper, *Director of Recruitment and Student Affairs*

Barbara Dingle, *Program Coordinator for the Colleges of Education
and Arts and Sciences*

Dr. Andrea M. Fleming, *Associate Director, Grace Jordan McFadden
Professors Program*

Tony Geary, *Program Coordinator for the Schools of Music and Medicine
and College of Social Work*

Holly Gentry, *Assistant Director of Operations*

Rhittie Gettone, *Administrative Assistant*

Laura Kotti, *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator*

Cherrie Markey, *Executive Assistant to the Dean*

Dr. John McFadden, *Director, Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program*

Jeannie Moore, *Program Coordinator for Darla Moore School of Business,
College of Information and Communications, and Joseph F. Rice
School of Law*

Cassandra Nelson, *Program Coordinator for Shorelight/AP Program and
Educational Online Programs*

Garrick Queen, *Director of Admissions*

Robert Sutherland, *Business Manager*

Kim Weston, *Program Coordinator for Colleges of Nursing, Arts and
Sciences, College of Education Interdisciplinary Programs*

David Wilson, *Administrative Assistant*

Sarah Zilinsky, *Program Coordinator for Arnold School of Public Health*





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