

Bylaws of the Graduate Council

Approved 2/5/2019

I. Description and Mission

Composed primarily of Graduate Faculty members from every graduate-degree-granting college of The University of Alabama, the Graduate Council provides evaluations and recommendations on all aspects of graduate education to the Graduate School and the Office of Academic Affairs, and through the Provost and President to the Board of Trustees. Members represent the entire Graduate Faculty, not merely those of the program, department, division, school, or college with which they may normally be affiliated; hence, the primary concern of Council members shall be the general welfare and advancement of graduate education at The University of Alabama as a whole.

II. Membership

The Council consists of the dean of the Graduate School or a representative designated by the dean, who chairs the Council but does not vote except to break a tie; the Provost, the dean of University Libraries, a representative from the College of Continuing Studies, and a Graduate Faculty member appointed by the Faculty Senate, all ex officio members without voting privileges; and 40 voting members appointed or elected as specified below:

- A. 2 student representatives, 1 each from the Graduate Student Association and African American Graduate Student Association, chosen internally by their constituencies in whatever way they deem best;
- B. 6 Graduate Faculty representatives appointed by the dean of the Graduate School;
- C. 32 faculty representatives elected by and from within the ranks of the Graduate Faculty of the following nine graduate-degree-granting schools and colleges:
 - 1. College of Arts & Sciences
 - 2. College of Communication & Information Sciences
 - 3. College of Community Health Sciences
 - 4. Culverhouse College of Business
 - 5. College of Education
 - 6. College of Engineering
 - 7. College of Human Environmental Sciences
 - 8. Capstone College of Nursing
 - 9. School of Social Work
- D. The number of elected Council positions assigned to each of these nine schools and colleges is to be reallocated every year according to the following cumulative procedures:
 - 1. Each school or college shall receive 1 Council member provided that at least one member of the Graduate Faculty resides therein;
 - 2. Each school or college shall receive 1 additional Council member for each full 10% of the university's Graduate Faculty that resides therein;
 - 3. Each school or college shall receive 1 Council member provided that at least one graduate student in good standing is actively pursuing a graduate degree therein;
 - 4. Each school or college shall receive 1 additional Council member for each full 10% of the university graduate student population in good standing that resides therein;
 - i. If any of the 32 elected faculty position remains unassigned as a result of the

procedures for proportionate representation outlined above (because, for example, the numbers of Graduate Faculty or graduate students in good standing do not divide evenly into full 10% increments across the schools and colleges), then they shall be divided amongst the schools and colleges specified above by the dean of the Graduate School, who shall

- ii. Allocate one additional member to each school or college with more than 5% but less than 10% of the total number of the university's full Graduate Faculty residing therein;
 - iii. Allocate one additional member to each school or college with more than 5% but less than 10% of the total number of the university graduate student population in good standing residing therein;
 - iv. Allocate any remaining members as deemed appropriate in light of the most recent three-year trends in graduate student enrollment at The University of Alabama.
- E. The number of representatives allocated to each school or college should be communicated to the unit's coordinator of Graduate Council elections early in the Spring semester, so that elections can be planned accordingly.
- F. Each of the nine schools and colleges listed above should select a number of alternates to the Council equal to one-half of the number of members allocated according to the above cumulative procedures (always rounding up, so that, for example, a school or college with three members should also have two alternates).

III. Term of Membership

Members and alternates shall ordinarily serve three-year terms, beginning in the Fall semester after their appointment or election. No member shall be elected to more than two consecutive full terms (a member could, however, be elected to two full terms, then appointed to serve through the process outlined in II.B above, then elected again)." Any member who misses more than two consecutive Graduate Council meetings, without arranging an appropriate proxy for their absences, shall be considered to have vacated their position (see V.B.).

IV. Vacancy and Election Procedures

Each school or college shall determine its own process for the election of its Council members, and for the replacement of any of its members necessitated by a vacancy. Replacement members shall serve out the remainder of the full term of their predecessor.

V. Meetings of the Graduate Council

- A. The dean of the Graduate School shall call meetings of the Graduate Council as often as required to transact the business of the school, and in no case fewer than four times in each academic year. The dean shall call an additional meeting if requested to do so in writing by at least 10 members of the Council.
- B. A quorum for actions at a Council meeting shall be a majority of its members. Absentee ballots shall not be permitted. In the event that a member anticipates being absent, they should notify their programmatic, departmental, divisional, or decanal supervisor so that an alternate member from the same school or college can attend in their place. In the event that an alternate is unavailable, and with at least one week's notice to the dean of the Graduate School, the head of the regular member's school or college may appoint a Graduate Faculty member who is not currently serving on the Graduate Council and whose appointment resides in the same academic unit as the regular member to act in person at the meeting as that

member's voting proxy.

- C. The agenda for each meeting, along with pertinent information on items that the Council will discuss and the minutes of the prior meeting, shall normally be distributed to all Council members at least one week prior to the meeting. Items may be placed on the agenda by the dean of the Graduate School, by the chair of any standing or ad hoc committee, or by a two-thirds vote of members present and voting at the meeting. Agendas and minutes shall be publicly posted by the Graduate School, so that all graduate faculty can access the information.

VI. Committees of the Graduate Council

- A. Standing committees of the Graduate Council shall be appointed annually by the dean of the Graduate School from among that year's membership of the Council. Each committee shall include at least one member from four or more of the schools and colleges specified in II.C above. The dean of the Graduate School or a representative designated by the dean shall serve in an ex officio capacity on all committees but shall not vote except to break a tie. The dean shall appoint a member of each committee to serve as chair, and that chair shall be empowered to schedule meetings and apportion workloads among committee members. The following standing committees act on the matters indicated and on others, as charged by the dean of the Graduate School:
 - 1. Admissions and Recruitment Committee – reviews applications received from departments, divisions, schools, or colleges for changes to admissions requirements or procedures, including applications for new or changes to existing AMP programs
 - 2. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee – reviews all departmental nominations for fellowships and scholarships awarded by the Graduate School (these include Graduate Council Fellowships, National Alumni Association Fellowships, McNair Fellowships, and the David A. Francko Fellowship) and assigns awards to individual students, as well as advising on related policy such as the timing of fellowship cycles, number of awards, or other changes that enhance the competitiveness of these awards.
 - 3. Policy Committee – makes recommendations concerning academic policies that govern graduate education, the graduate faculty, and the implementation of Council decisions within the Graduate School; individual exceptions to existing policies are not the purview of this committee and should be decided on a case-by-case basis by the dean of the Graduate School; a list of repeated exceptions should be forwarded to this committee for annual review and, if a majority of the committee deems it necessary, new policy recommendations will be drafted
 - 4. Graduate Curriculum Committee – reviews proposals from departments, divisions, schools, or colleges for new graduate degrees and certificate programs and for changes to existing programs; makes recommendations concerning such applications to the Council, which serves in an advisory capacity to the Provost for new program approval
 - 5. Teaching, Research, and Service Awards Committee – oversees the process for awarding all “Outstanding Student” awards made by the Graduate School each year and assigns awards to individual students
- B. The Council may create, by a majority vote, or the dean of the Graduate School may appoint, other ad hoc committees as they deem necessary to conduct the business of the Graduate School. Any ad hoc committee operating continuously for more than one year shall be considered for conversion to a standing committee, subject to an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the Graduate Council in attendance at the meeting in which the vote occurs.

VII. Revision to the Bylaws of the Graduate Council

Changes to these bylaws can be effected only by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Graduate Council in attendance at the meeting in which the vote occurs.