

GRADUATE COUNCIL BYLAWS
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BYLAWS

The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Council

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization is The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Council.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of the Graduate Council is to supervise the graduate academic affairs of the University.

ARTICLE III

Relationships and Responsibilities

Section 1. Relationships

As indicated in Table 1, the Graduate Council makes recommendations about graduate programs and policies to the University Provost. The Provost makes recommendations regarding graduate programs to the President, who in turn presents his/her recommendations to the Board when their approval is required. The Graduate Council is the final authority in matters of graduate faculty status and graduate curricula.

Table 1: Procession of Graduate Council Actions

Board of Institutions of Higher Learning
University President
Provost
Graduate Council
Professional Education Council*
College Curriculum Committee
Department Curriculum Committee

*For matters dealing with professional educational education programs

Section 2. Responsibilities

Graduate Council responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Faculty Qualifications. The Graduate Council, via its credentials committee, determines the graduate faculty status of all USM faculty.
- 2) Curriculum and Program Approval. The Graduate Council reviews and recommends action to the Provost regarding new graduate programs and/or program changes. The Graduate Council makes the final decision on proposed new graduate courses, certain course modifications, and course deletions. Matters dealing with professional education programs must first go to the Professional Education Council.
- 3) Disseminating Information. The Graduate Council disseminates information relating to graduate policies and procedures to faculty and appropriate Councils within the University.
- 4) Policies and Procedures. The Graduate Council, via its policies and procedures committee, makes recommendations to the Provost on policies affecting graduate studies at the University of Southern Mississippi.
- 5) Program Review. The Graduate Council, via its program review committee, conducts periodic systematic reviews and evaluations of existing graduate programs.

ARTICLE IV

Members

Section 1. Voting Members

The voting membership of the Graduate Council is composed of the elected representatives from the regular graduate faculty of the colleges, on elected faculty member from USM Gulf coast, and one graduate student representative determined by the Graduate Student Association. The specific number of faculty representatives from each college is based on the number of Regular Graduate Faculty, using a ratio of 1

representative per 30 graduate faculty, rounded up if the number is within 5, so that a college within 5 faculty members of getting another Graduate Council representative will be given that additional representative. There is a cap of 5 Graduate Council members per college. Representation from the college of Science and Technology shall include a representative of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and a representative of Stennis Space Center. [Current Council Members on Graduate Studies website]. The allocation of Graduate Council representatives per college will be reviewed every three years (beginning in 2000) by the Bylaws committee.

Section 2. Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members

The University President, the Provost, the deans of the colleges the University Librarian, and the University Registrar serve as ex-officio, non-voting members.

Section 3. Election and Terms

a. Graduate Council faculty members are elected in April by the Regular Graduate Faculty in their college or campus (in the case of the USM-GC, GCRL, and Stennis representatives). The Graduate Council's election committee oversees the distribution and counting of the secret ballots. The graduate student representative is determined yearly by the Graduate Student Association.

b. Elected Graduate Council members serve three-year terms. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms, although after a one-year absence from the Council, a faculty member again becomes eligible for two consecutive three-year terms. The term begins with the September meeting following the member's election.

c. An elected member who takes a leave of absence for a year or less should appoint an eligible proxy from his/her college or campus. If an elected Graduate Council position is vacated for any reason (for example, if the elected member will be absent for more than a year for any reason, or fails to appoint a proxy for an absence of one year or less), the Chair of the Graduate Council must appoint an eligible faculty member from that college or campus to serve out the rest of the term.

Section 4. Eligibility and Qualifications

Regular members of the graduate faculty who are in at least their third year of full-time contractual service to the university are eligible to be elected to Graduate Council. No more than one representative from any department or school may serve at any given time.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Graduate Council, serve on committees if possible, and communicate the issues raised in Graduate Council to their colleges as well as communicating the concerns and opinions of their colleges back to Graduate Council.

Section 6. Proxies

A member may appoint a proxy for one meeting, or for a period of one year or less, if the member will be absent. The proxy form must be submitted to the Chair of the Graduate Council.

ARTICLE V

Officers

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Graduate Council are the Chair and Chair-Elect.

a. Chair

Any elected member of Graduate Council is eligible to hold the office of Chair. The Chair-Elect from the previous year becomes Chair, beginning his/her term with the May meeting. The Chair's responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Chairing the meetings of the Graduate Council.
2. Setting the agenda for Graduate Council meetings.
3. Chairing the Graduate Council Executive Committee.
4. Appointing members and chairs of the various standing and ad hoc committees of the Graduate Council.

b. Chair-Elect

Any elected member of the Graduate Council is eligible to hold the office of Chair-Elect. The Chair-Elect is elected by secret ballot during the April meeting. Whoever is elected serves as Chair-Elect in his/her first year (beginning with the May meeting) and Chair of the Council in the following year. The Chair-Elect's responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Assisting the Chair with Graduate Council activities and responsibilities.
2. Chairing the Graduate Council meetings when the Chair cannot do so.
3. Chairing the Graduate Council Executive Committee when the Chair cannot do so.
4. Serving as the chair of one of the standing committees.
5. Becoming Chair of the Graduate Council should the Chair's position become vacant.

In this case, the Chair-Elect would continue as Chair the following year as well. Should the Chair-Elect's position become vacant, Graduate Council will elect a new Chair-Elect by secret ballot at the next meeting.

c. Corresponding Secretary

He or she takes care of all Graduate Council correspondence and can chair a meeting if the chair and chair-elect are both absent.

d. Recording Secretary

The University Registrar serves as Recording Secretary and is a non-voting member. He or she takes minutes during the meeting and distributes the minutes.

e. Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian is appointed by the Chair. If the Parliamentarian is appointed from outside the body of elected Graduate Council members, he or she is a non-voting member. The Parliamentarian can chair a meeting if the chair, chair-elect, and Corresponding Secretary are all absent.

ARTICLE VI
Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Graduate Council meets monthly from September to June. The meeting is held on the third Monday of the month, except in December and May. All meetings are open to all university faculty.

Section 2. Special Meetings

The chair may call special meetings as needed. At least one week's notice should be given unless an emergency situation does not permit.

Section 3. Quorum

A simple majority of the voting members of the Graduate Council constitutes a quorum.

Section 4: Standard Agenda

The Standard Agenda below is distributed to Graduate Council members, chairs, deans, and the Provost one week before the regular meeting. Items for the Agenda must be submitted to the Chair at least ten working days before the regular monthly meeting. Procedures and deadlines for course and program proposals can be found in the Graduate Council's Policies and Procedures Manual.

Standard Agenda

- 1.0 Call to Order
- 2.0 Adoption of Agenda
- 3.0 Approval of Minutes
- 4.0 Course and Program Proposals
- 5.0 Officers' Reports
 - 5.1 Chair's Report
 - 5.2 Chair Elect's Report
 - 5.2 Corresponding Secretary's Report
 - 5.3 Parliamentarian's Report
- 6.0 Standing Committee Reports
 - 6.1 ByLaws Committee
 - 6.2 Credentials Committee
 - 6.3 Election Committee
 - 6.4 Policies and Procedures Committee
 - 6.5 Program Review Committee
- 7.0 Ad Hoc Committee Reports
- 8.0 Unfinished Business
- 9.0 New Business
- 10.0 Announcements
- 11.0 Adjournment

Section 5. Minutes

The minutes of the regular meetings are recorded by the Recording Secretary and distributed to members, chairs, deans, and the Provost no later than three weeks after the regular monthly meeting. Committee reports are summarized in the minutes.

ARTICLE VII

Executive Committee

The purpose of the Graduate Council Executive Committee is threefold: (1) to prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting, (2) to develop long range plans to present to the Graduate Council and (3) to assist the Office of Graduate Studies whenever requested.

Section 1. Membership

The members of the Executive Committee are the Chair, Chair-Elect, Corresponding Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Standing Committee chairs.

Section 2. Meetings

The Executive Committee meets each month prior to the monthly meeting of the Graduate Council.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities

The Executive Committee prepares the agenda, initiates action, and oversees long-range planning for the Graduate Council.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The Graduate Council has Standing Committees that are composed of Council members and other Regular Graduate Faculty as appointed by the Chair for a one-year term. The committees and their purposes are:

a. Bylaws Committee, whose purpose is to review and recommend revisions of the bylaws when needed. This committee also reviews the number of members of the Graduate Council and the number of graduate faculty every three years (by March 1) to adjust the membership and/or formula if necessary.

b. Credentials Committee, whose purpose is to review and recommend faculty members for graduate faculty status. Procedures and deadlines for graduate faculty status changes can be found in the Graduate Council's Policies and Procedures.

c. Election Committee, whose purpose is to oversee the process of electing Graduate Council members.

d. Policies and Procedures Committee, whose purpose is to review and recommend changes when needed to the policies and procedures for graduate study at the University of Southern Mississippi.

e. Program Review Committee, whose purpose is to conduct periodic systematic reviews of existing graduate programs.

Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees

The Chair of the Graduate Council may appoint ad hoc committees as deemed necessary and desirable to assist in carrying out the program for the year. Such appointment expires at the end of the year.

ARTICLE IX

Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Graduate Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Council may adopt.

ARTICLE X

Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting. Amendments to these bylaws must be approved by the Provost and the President.

ARTICLE XI

Dissolution

The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Council may be dissolved only if two-thirds of its members recommend dissolution to the Provost and the President, both of whom must approve the recommendation.