The University of Southern Mississippi
Graduate School – 118 College Drive #5024, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

GRADUATE COUNCIL BYLAWS*

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*Approved April 2011
*Revised October 2015
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 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, from regular graduate faculty on the Gulf Coast, and one graduate student representative determined by the Graduate Student Senate. 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. 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, Dean of the Graduate School,
a Graduate Student Senate representative, 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 on the Gulf Coast campus. The Graduate Council's election committee oversees the
distribution and counting of the secret ballots.
b. Elected Graduate Council members serve three-year terms. No member may serve more than
two consecutive terms, although after a term absence from the Council, a faculty member again becomes
eligible for two consecutive three-year terms, including summers as necessary. The term begins with the first
Fall meeting following the member's election and completes in August.
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 may appoint an eligible faculty member from
that college or campus to serve out the rest of the term or an election may be held.

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. If an elected
Graduate Council representative fails to attend two consecutive regular scheduled meetings of the Council
without supplying a proxy, he/she shall be notified in writing by the chair of the Council that his/her
position will be declared vacant in the event of a third consecutive absence without a proxy. Upon his/her
third consecutive absence with a proxy, his/her position shall be declared vacant by the chair of the Council
and filled in the interim by appointment by the Council chair.

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
unable to attend by submitting the proxy form on the Graduate School web page to the Chair. Members of the
Council or a proxy may hold only one proxy at a meeting.

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 last meeting in the spring. 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 last meeting in spring) 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. [Dean of the Graduate School serves as the non-voting Corresponding Secretary].

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 August to November and January to April. The Council will meet in June if the Chair calls a meeting. The meeting is held on the third or fourth Monday of the month. 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, including those members attending by way of an internet or voice call connection when such attendance is approved by the Chair. In these cases, the members will vote using an email or other electronic communication to the Teller.

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
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 dean of the Graduate School whenever requested.

Section 1. Membership
The members of the Executive Committee are the Chair, Chair-Elect, Corresponding Secretary, and Parliamentarian. Chairs of Standing Committees may attend.

Section 2. Meetings
The Executive Committee meets each month prior to the monthly meeting of the Graduate Council, as needed.

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 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 and changes to graduate faculty status can be found on the Graduate School web page; https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/graduate-council

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.