

Washington State University Graduate School
Bylaws Guidelines
DRAFT: 1 May 2008

INTRODUCTION

All graduate programs must receive approval from the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating (HEC) Board in order to advertise and offer degrees at a WSU campus. The HEC Board specifically approves programs to be advertised and offered at a single or multiple campuses. Approved programs must have approved bylaws on file with the Graduate School. Graduate programs may not operate under bylaws that have not been reviewed and approved by the WSU Graduate Studies Committee and the Faculty Senate. The following guidelines were developed by the Graduate School and the Graduate Studies Committee to facilitate this process.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding the preparation and approval process for graduate program bylaws should be directed one of the following Associate Deans of the Graduate School.

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FORMAT

The bylaws should be prepared as a Word document and be formatted according to the layout and order of information in these guidelines. If specific wording is required, it is noted under the appropriate article. The official Policies and Procedures of the Graduate School may be accessed from the following web site: http://www.gradsch.wsu.edu/2008_updatedpolicies/ .

Additional information for consideration when preparing bylaws is provided in shaded text boxes. In order to expedite the review process, please consult these gray boxes when preparing bylaws for review.

SUBMITTING BYLAWS FOR REVIEW

New or revised bylaws must be approved by the graduate program's membership before submitting to the Graduate Studies Committee. A cover memo and the bylaws should be *submitted to the Graduate School*.

Cover memo: A cover memo from the graduate program Director or delegated faculty member should include:

1. The date and manner in which the program approved the proposed bylaws changes, (e.g. in a graduate program meeting or by an e-mail ballot), including the results of the approval vote.

2. If the proposed changes are in response to a recommendation in the program's most recent Program Assessment report, address this in the memo and provide the date of the Program Assessment report.
3. Provide a summary of all major changes that have occurred since the most recent Graduate Studies Committee and Faculty Senate approval.
4. A summary is not required if this is the initial submission of Guidelines for a program (i.e. the program has not previously had guidelines approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and the Faculty Senate).

PROCESS

Bylaws Review

Review and approval of the bylaws for a new or existing graduate program requires 4 sequential processes.

1. **Graduate Program Review:** Approval of the draft bylaws by faculty members of the graduate program. (Please note: A program may request an informal review of their bylaws before submitting them to the graduate program faculty for vote. This review will be conducted by representatives of the Graduate School and the Graduate Studies Committee and feedback will be provided. This is *not* a formal review; after the bylaws have been formally submitted to Graduate Council, the Committee will provide additional comments.)
2. **Graduate School Review:** After approval by the faculty members of the graduate program, bylaws will be reviewed by a representative of the Graduate School for general compliance with the guidelines. If major inconsistencies, omissions, or errors are found, the document will be returned to the Graduate Program for further revision.
3. **Graduate Studies Committee Review:** The Committee reviews bylaws in the order received. The Committee may approve the document as submitted or may request additional edits or clarification. If edits or clarifications are required, a Committee representative will communicate with the graduate program Director or designated representative. Once the Committee has approved the bylaws, the document will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate.
4. **Faculty Senate Review:** The Faculty Senate provides the final review and approval of all graduate program bylaws and may request additional revisions prior to approval. The final approved document, reflecting the Faculty Senate's approval date, will be forwarded to the graduate program with a cover memo from the Graduate School. The program's bylaws will be posted on the Graduate School's webpage and the program will be instructed to maintain a copy of the bylaws and Faculty Senate's approval letter in their files.

Bylaws Guidelines for Graduate Programs

Header:

Provide the following information in the order below:

- A. Name of the program followed by “Bylaws”.
- B. Current administrative home: [Insert name of department, college, or other administrative home]
- C. Revision date: [Insert most recent revision date]

Multiple revision dates: If there are multiple revision dates (i.e. over a period of years), provide that information at the end of the document.

- D. Faculty Senate Approval Date: [Date to be inserted after approval]

Article I. Objective

- A. Degree(s) offered by the program.
- B. Discipline: A brief statement on the discipline(s) of the program.
- C. Mission of the Program: The mission statement of the program, described in no more than five sentences.

Article II. Membership

- A. Criteria for Membership in the Graduate Program

All faculty who are eligible for participation as thesis advisor or committee chair for graduate programs within the university (as defined by Graduate School policies) are **eligible to apply** for membership to **any graduate program** within the university. Therefore, the bylaws for each graduate program should clearly delineate the criteria by which such applications will be reviewed and membership granted or denied and the criteria by which membership will be reviewed, continued, and discontinued.

1. WSU Campus Participation

Define WSU campus roles in this graduate program.

In order for a program to *offer* a degree and *advertise* that degree as being offered at a specific campus (or campuses) within the Washington State University system, the degree must be *officially approved* to be offered *at that site* by the HEC Board of Washington. Graduate faculty within the program may be physically located at other campuses and function as major advisors at those sites if authorized by these bylaws; however, the program is responsible for maintaining academic rigor, which will be reviewed during program assessment. Campuses that participate in delivering a program (offering courses, faculty functioning as major advisors, sites for research, etc.) but are not HEC Board approved are called *supporting campuses*; the specific roles of faculty at these sites must be defined by these bylaws.

- a. Campuses approved by the Washington State University HEC Board to offer and advertise this degree program.
 - b. Supporting campuses and their specific roles in this program.
2. Graduate Faculty Participation
Include an appropriate statement confirming that participation is open to all qualified faculty, regardless of academic unit affiliations and that all active members have equivalent membership rights. Includes wording “all active members are eligible to vote.”

Membership is independent and separate from academic department appointments. All active members should have equivalent membership rights. It is the general policy not to approve bylaws that in effect create a two-tier membership based on department or college home with different categories of membership rights.

3. Disciplinary expertise, research area, graduate student mentoring, and accomplishments expected for Graduate Faculty participants.
4. Active research appropriate to the discipline(s) encompassed by the program. Include scholarly expectations for Graduate Faculty participants
5. Non-Tenure Track Graduate Faculty
Explain the roles and activities allowed for non-tenure track faculty internal and external to WSU. Professionals who are not WSU faculty must have an adjunct appointment with WSU for active participation in that program. See example bylaws.

Please note: According to the Policies and Procedures of the Graduate School of Washington State University, non-tenured faculty cannot chair a graduate committee unless these bylaws specify otherwise. In addition, at least three members of the committee must hold a degree of comparable level to the degree sought by the student.

6. External Individual Committee Members
Individuals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within a program (for example, a faculty member from another program or university) may be approved to

serve as a thesis/dissertation committee member for an individual student on a case-by-case basis. See example bylaws.

B. Application for Membership

1. Designation of initial Graduate Faculty in the program
2. How faculty may apply (i.e. self nominate, nomination by an existing member).
3. Anticipated contributions that graduate faculty members will perform as a member.

Examples of anticipated contributions include:

- a. Active role in the administration of the graduate program by serving on graduate program administrative committees; as a thesis advisor or committee member, co-chair, or chair; or as an administrative officer of the program.
- b. Providing graduate level instruction, as appropriate, in addition to research instruction.
- c. Service on dissertation/thesis and examination committees, etc.

C. Emeritus Participation (optional)

Define emeritus voting rights, participation in program (teaching) and student committee service role if this role is desired.

D. Continuation of Active Membership

1. Provide information on the criteria that will be used to review membership and define the minimum participation expected in order to continue active membership.
2. If such criteria exist, specify the minimum criteria necessary for continued active membership in the graduate program, including such items as continued active research in the field, participation in program activities (committees, meetings, etc.), participation as a major professor for students in the program, participation as a committee member for students in the program, teaching responsibilities, etc.

Membership will include periodic review for continuation of membership, with reviews typically occurring on a three to five-year cycle with a portion of the membership reviewed each year.

E. Discontinuation of Membership

Explain how faculty may discontinue participation in the graduate program.

F. Membership Appeal Process

1. Define the program's process of how to appeal membership decisions.
2. Final written appeal should be made to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 calendar days of any membership decision.

Article III. Administration

For this article, provide a brief statement on the administrative structure of the graduate program.

Suggested wording: “The administration of the program and its activities will be vested in an Executive Committee consisting of (number) program members and chaired by the graduate program Director.”

Do not include any detailed information regarding committees in this article; committee information should be provided in Article V. Committees.

Article IV. Graduate Program Director

A. Director Appointment Process

Define the process whereby the Director of the graduate program will be selected. The Department Chair may administer a departmentally-based graduate program or a Director may be selected from the faculty members. The Director may delegate the day-to-day responsibilities of the graduate program to one or more faculty members of the program.

For graduate programs with substantive numbers of faculty members expected to originate from diverse departments, a specific Graduate Program Director selection process must be defined. This section should define the term of service for the Director (recommendation is 2-4 years).

An example strategy may be the appointment of a Nominating Committee by the Executive Committee or Director of the graduate program with the task of soliciting, from the faculty and graduate students of the group, names of nominees for Graduate Program Director. Those nominated are contacted regarding their willingness to serve. The names of the nominees who have indicated a willingness to serve are submitted to the Group’s faculty and graduate students for comments. All comments remain confidential. The Nominating Committee forwards two names to the Dean of the Graduate School along with all comments received on the nominees. All comments solicited from faculty and students of the group are treated as confidential information by the Group’s Nominating Committee and by the Graduate School. The group may express a preference and, if it does, should indicate the basis for determining that preference. After interviewing the nominees the Dean of the Graduate School forwards his/her recommendation to the Provost.

B. Duties of the Graduate Program Director

Define the duties of the Director .

Typical duties (and wording) include:

- a) provide overall academic leadership for the program
- b) develop and implement policies for the program
- c) represent the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators
- d) call and preside at meetings of the Executive Committee
- e) call and preside at meetings of the program
- f) be responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Graduate School
- g) manage the budgets of the program

- h) submit course change or approval forms
- i) be responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to the program including web pages and catalog copy
- j) coordinate program's graduate course teaching assignments with relevant department chairs
- k) supervise the activities of the academic coordinator as they relate to the program

C. Co-Director

A program may or may not have a Co-Director. If the program does have a Co-Director, define the following:

1. How appointed and by whom.
2. Term of service.
3. Voting rights.
4. Duties.

Article V. Committees

This article provides information on the standing committees of the program. A graduate program should have an Executive Committee and a Membership Committee. Occasionally, small programs will have just one Graduate Studies Committee that is charged with the responsibilities of all or a combination of some of these committees. Programs should provide bylaws descriptions of all committees that function in the program.

A. List Of Committees Within the Graduate Program

Typical committees might include:

Executive Committee or Graduate Program Committee: Coordinates with the Chair in administering the program and student mentoring within the program.

Membership Committee: Reviews new member applications and nominations, conducts periodic reviews of members, and maintains a current list of members.

Admissions Committee: Oversees admissions.

Fellowship Committee: Responsible for student financial support.

Education Policy and/or Curriculum Committee: Aids in the process of determining curricular changes and in changes in the program policy.

B. Information Related to Each Committee

1. Make-up of the committee; include student participation, if any.
2. Number of members, how appointed, elected/selected, and by whom. Include, if appropriate, whether membership must include representation from specific units.

3. Committee Chair: how appointed/selected and by whom.
4. Term of membership and renewal of membership.
5. Voting rights.
6. Role and function of the committee.

The Executive Committee is generally the body elected by the faculty, and if so, it names or approves the members of other committees.

Article VI. Graduate Student Committees

- The initial selection, or subsequent changes, of a graduate student's committee shall be determined jointly by the student and the student's advisor. Each bylaws must include the following statement: *In accordance with the Policies and Procedures of the Graduate School at WSU, graduate students are not permitted to serve on the committees of other graduate students.*
- The graduate committee of each student shall have a minimum of three members for MS and four members for Ph.D. A majority of committee members shall be active Graduate Faculty members.
- As specified in the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures, the performance of each graduate student shall be reviewed annually.

Article VI. Student Representatives

The Director, upon recommendation of the program's graduate students, often from a Graduate Student Organization, appoints student representatives to committees. Provide the following information:

- How and by whom students are appointed to committees.
- Committees students will serve on.
- Term of service and reappointment.
- Voting rights.
- Attendance at annual meetings of the program.
- Insert the following wording regarding committee business that students must be excused from participating in: "The Chair of any committee with students members must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about other students, personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students."

Each bylaws must include the following statement: *In accordance with the Policies and Procedures of the Graduate School at WSU, graduate students are not permitted to serve on the committees of other graduate students.*

Article VII. Graduate Faculty Meetings

Graduate programs should have at least one annual meeting, either in the Fall or the Spring. Some programs have more frequent meetings. This article provides details regarding the annual and special meetings of the graduate program. Define the following:

- A. Time and frequency of meetings.
- B. How and by whom the annual meetings may be called.
- C. How faculty members can petition for additional meetings (i.e. “by petition of five or more members”).
- D. Notification of meetings (i.e. e-mail or hard copy of memo) and time period for notification.
- E. How faculty may participate if away from campus (i.e. video conference).

Article VIII. Quorum

This article should reflect the program’s quorum policy and the details for obtaining a vote of the membership (i.e. mail or e-mail ballot, etc.). Note: Page 18 of the Faculty Manual states “The quorum for meetings of the faculty and the graduate faculty shall be all qualified persons in attendance at regularly scheduled and announced meetings. Each of these bodies shall be free to make its own rules of procedure, but unless rules to the contrary are adopted, motions shall pass by majority vote.”

Suggestions for a minimum quorum are that all issues that require a vote must be voted on by $\geq 50\%$ of the eligible members and that passage requires a $\geq 50\%$ supporting vote of the members voting. The program may set more stringent quorum requirements if it wishes.

Article IX. Order of Business for Meetings

This article describes how meetings will be conducted and is *optional*. If a program has a set format for meetings, it should be included here.

Article X. Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws must be approved by a quorum vote and submitted to Graduate Council for review and approval. Define the following:

- A. The process for proposing amendments to the bylaws.
- B. How amendments will be circulated to faculty.
- C. Vote process, including time period to distribute and quorum for the amendment to pass.

- D. Include the following wording: “All amendments and revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee and Faculty Senate for review and approval.”

Article XI. Initial Graduate Faculty Members

- A. Bylaws should include an initial list of active and inactive Graduate Faculty participants.
- B. Must include a statement that annual updates of this list will be sent to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

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