

## **BYLAWS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL**

### **Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

#### **GRADUATE COUNCIL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

*Mission: The Graduate Council at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is responsible for a) recommending rules and procedures to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, and b) reviewing and approving all academic matters relating to graduate education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, and passing its recommendation to the Faculty Senate for the Faculty Senate's consideration as part of the university's academic policy review and faculty governance processes. The Graduate Council's overarching role is to support the improvement of graduate education of the highest quality at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi through its consultative and faculty governance roles.*

## ARTICLE I

### CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

1. The Graduate Council of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is constituted of faculty members whose professional and scholarly accomplishments and effectiveness in teaching graduate students shall qualify them for active participation in graduate instruction at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

2. Membership on the Graduate Council

The Graduate Council shall be composed of Members and Ex Officio Members.

- a. Regular Membership

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi faculty members who hold tenured or tenure-track appointments as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor or non-tenure track faculty as defined in University Procedure 12.07.99.C0.01 and who currently are designated as Graduate Faculty according to University Procedure 12.99.99.C0.03 are eligible for appointment as Members of the Graduate Council.

- i. Representation

Each of the five (5) degree-granting colleges will have three (3) members on the Graduate Council. Each member will be appointed to a three-year term. The three terms for the three representatives from each college will be staggered so that each college will have a representative beginning a new term each academic year. Members are to be selected by the colleges to begin terms at the beginning of the academic year and end on the last day of the academic year. Incoming members shall be encouraged to attend the last meeting of the prior academic year in order to facilitate effective functioning of Graduate Council and alignment with University deadlines.

- ii. Election of Graduate Council Members

In the spring semester of each year, the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will provide each college with information about which representative will be leaving at the end of the academic year and whether that individual is eligible for a second term. Each college is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal procedures to elect its Graduate Council representatives from eligible faculty with current graduate faculty designations. Each college will notify the Associate Dean of College of Graduate Studies of the identity of the new representative by April 15.

- iii. Replacement of Graduate Council Members

Each college is responsible for filling any vacancies created by a Graduate Council member who is unable or unwilling to complete his or her three-year appointment. The replacement faculty member must meet all requirements noted above and will serve out the remainder of the unserved term.

- iv. Term Limits of Graduate Council Members

Graduate Council faculty members may be re-elected for a second term.

However, no Graduate Council faculty member may serve more than two consecutive terms, or a total of six (6) years, without at least a year break in service on the Graduate Council.

b. Ex Officio Members

The Graduate Council of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi also will include ex officio members who hold administrative positions important to Graduate Programs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Ex officio members of the Graduate Council do not vote and are not included in establishing a quorum of the Graduate Council. Ex officio members include:

- i. The Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.
  - ii. A member of the Faculty Senate serving as a liaison with the Graduate Council.
  - iii. A senior leadership member of the Mary and Jeff Bell Library appointed by the Dean of Libraries.
- c. If a regular member of the Graduate Council is also a member of the Faculty Senate, he or she may serve as the Faculty Senate Ex Officio member and may vote in his or her capacity as Graduate Council member.
- d. The Graduate Council may invite additional persons to participate as ex officio members by invitation of the Graduate Council chair or by a majority vote of the members in attendance.
- e. The Role of the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies

The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies may attend meetings at the Dean's discretion, does not vote, and is not an ex officio member. The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies serves as both a consultative client and a resource for the Graduate Council.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **GRADUATE COUNCIL FUNCTIONS AND AUTHORITY**

The Graduate Council is responsible for all functions that relate to recommending action on Graduate Education matters at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. This function is divided into consultative and faculty governance roles.

1. Consultative:
  - a. The Graduate Council serves as a consultative body to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies may request input from the Graduate Council and/or the Graduate Council may make recommendations to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies that are originated within the Graduate Council, and/or the programs, departments, and faculty its members represent. These recommendations to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies are public and are non-binding on the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. Consultative actions of the Graduate Council shall be addressed using the normal and accepted procedures of the Graduate Council described in these Bylaws.

2. Faculty governance:
  - a. The Graduate Council serves as a faculty governance body in the process of approving rules and procedures governing graduate education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi even as it also respects academic freedom. Further, the Graduate Council may recommend graduate program rules and procedures. It also participates in faculty governance by providing feedback from the Graduate Council representatives to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) regarding non-editorial changes to graduate programs and courses as well as creation of new graduate programs and courses. Finally, Graduate Council members are aware of changes within their own colleges and communicate within their colleges about concerns impacting graduate education.
  - b. Specific functions include, and are not limited to, the following:
    - i. Reviews and approves graduate curricula for existing graduate programs and the establishment of new programs.
    - ii. Reviews and provides feedback to the UCC via Graduate Council representation on UCC regarding new graduate courses and programs at the University.
    - iii. Reviews and recommends rules, procedures, and standards that govern approving graduate faculty status. Reviews and recommends approval of faculty members and others nominated for graduate faculty standing in accordance with designations established in University Procedure 12.99.99.C0.03.
    - iv. Reviews and recommends changes to rules and procedures for admitting qualified students to candidacy for doctoral degrees.
    - v. Reviews and recommends rules and procedures for appointing committees in charge of graduate students' program of study.
    - vi. Reviews and recommends rules and procedures for proper supervision of the conduct of public and other examinations for higher degrees.
    - vii. Reviews and recommends guidelines for the format, distribution, and preservation of master's theses and doctoral dissertations.
    - viii. Reviews and recommends procedures relating to the conferring of graduate degrees.
    - ix. Provides counsel and recommendations to the Faculty Senate by submitting reports and making recommendations to the Faculty Senate and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies on matters pertaining to graduate education.
    - x. Provides guidance on graduate program review processes.

## **ARTICLE III OFFICERS**

### **1. Graduate Council Chair**

- a. The Graduate Council chair shall preside over all meetings of the Graduate Council.
- b. The Graduate Council chair is responsible for the following duties and responsibilities:
  - i. The Graduate Council chair will set the agenda for the Graduate Council in coordination with the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and, when appropriate, the chairs of the Graduate Council subcommittees.
  - ii. The Graduate Council chair will lead the Graduate Council meetings in an efficient and effective manner that promotes collegial discussion, consideration of all viewpoints, and timely decision-making.
  - iii. The Graduate Council chair will have a vote in all Graduate Council matters as a member of the Graduate Council. However, the Graduate Council chair will promote open and objective discussion of all matters before the Graduate Council.
  - iv. The Graduate Council chair will serve as an ex officio member of all subcommittees and may attend subcommittee meetings at the Graduate Council chair's discretion.
  - v. The Graduate Council chair will coordinate activities of the Graduate Council with the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, the Provost, the Faculty Senate, and the chairs of Graduate Council subcommittees.
  - vi. The Graduate Council chair may submit opinions and letters of suggestions or support from the Graduate Council to various administration parties as directed by a majority vote of the Graduate Council. Such opinions and letters of suggestions or support are not binding on administration parties.
- c. The Graduate Council chair shall be a Graduate Faculty Member elected from and by the Council no later than the April meeting of each academic year for a one-year term.
  - i. The Graduate Council will elect a new chair to complete any unfinished term if a Graduate Council chair resigns or becomes unable or unwilling to complete his or her term as Graduate Council chair.
  - ii. The Graduate Council may remove a Graduate Council chair for failure to properly execute duties by a two-thirds vote of all Graduate Council members. Such a vote must be by written ballot. The Graduate Council chair so removed will remain a member of the Graduate Council.

## 2. Council Chair Pro-Tem

- a. The Graduate Council chair may appoint at one's own discretion, and with the agreement of the Graduate Council member appointed, a Graduate Council member to serve as the chair pro-tem of the Graduate Council for a period of no less than one agenda item and no more than one meeting of the Graduate Council if the chair is unable to attend the meeting or unable to maintain an unbiased approach to a topic or topics of discussion.
- b. The Graduate Council chair may appoint a Graduate Council chair pro-tem in writing in the form of an e-mail prior to a meeting or in person during the meeting. The announcement will name the individual selected, the time frame for the substitution (agenda item or items, meeting duration), and whether the Graduate Council chair will be in attendance during the Graduate Council chair pro-tem's appointment.
- c. The chair pro-tem may only relinquish the Graduate Council chair's responsibilities to the elected Graduate Council chair and may not appoint others as Graduate Council chair pro-tem.
- d. The Graduate Council chair pro-tem will maintain a vote on all Graduate Council matters.
- e. The Graduate Council chair pro-tem will be responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Graduate Council meeting during the period of appointment.
- f. The Graduate Council chair pro-tem is not in succession to the Graduate Council chair.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **GRADUATE COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES**

#### 1. Graduate Council

The Graduate Council will serve as a committee of the whole to approve all recommendations and actions before those recommendations and actions are forwarded to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Council has a consultative role and should strive to provide the best counsel to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies as free as possible of individual, departmental, college, or program bias. The role of the Graduate Council may require the council as a whole or individual members to function as "the loyal opposition" at times to ensure that optimum rules and procedures are recommended.

#### 2. Graduate Council Subcommittees

The Graduate Council is responsible for all subcommittees, standing and *ad hoc*.

Each college will have at least one (1) voting member on each subcommittee. The two standing subcommittees are the Curriculum Subcommittee and the Rules and Procedures Subcommittee. With agreement of the council, the chair may appoint members to temporarily fill a vacancy on subcommittees when a council/committee member will be away or otherwise unable to attend meetings or address the requirements of the committee for a period exceeding one month.

- a. The Curriculum Subcommittee:

The Curriculum Subcommittee is responsible for reviewing proposed non-editorial changes to courses and program curricula to ensure courses and programs are consistent with university regulations, state authorizations, and academic rigor. The Curriculum Subcommittee is responsible for reviewing catalog changes, including but not limited to new graduate degree and certificate programs and, new course proposals. The Curriculum Committee will make recommendations to the Graduate Council and its representatives to the UCC, including questions or concerns to be taken to the UCC.

- i. The members of the Curriculum Subcommittee shall vote to select a subcommittee chair from the subcommittee membership for a term of one (1) year.
- ii. The members of the Curriculum Subcommittee shall determine the time and mode of the subcommittee meetings as needed to meet university schedules for review, approval, and publication of graduate program and course curriculum materials.

b. The Rules and Procedures Subcommittee

The Rules and Procedures Subcommittee is responsible for reviewing proposed changes to the rules and procedures that govern operations of the College of Graduate Studies, the rules and procedures for graduate programs, and the rules and procedures of the Graduate Council itself. This committee oversees the designation of Graduate Faculty. The Rules and Procedures Subcommittee is also responsible for reviewing and approving changes to the catalog regarding the operations of the College of Graduate Studies and documentation of faculty governance processes that address issues related to graduate education.

- i. The members of the Rules and Procedures Subcommittee shall vote to select a subcommittee chair from the subcommittee membership for a term of one (1) year.
- ii. The members of the Rules and Procedures Subcommittee shall determine the time and mode of the subcommittee meetings as needed to meet university schedules for review, approval, and publication of the necessary rules and procedures to expedite efficient and effective operations of graduate programs and for reasonable and timely review of graduate faculty status applications.

## **ARTICLE V MEETINGS**

1. Regular meetings of the Graduate Council are held at least once a month during the Fall and Spring semesters. The Graduate Council may also schedule additional meetings, as needed, to properly and efficiently address its responsibilities. Any meeting during the Summer Semester or outside the regular schedule during the Fall and Spring semesters may be called as special meetings, as described below.
2. Special meetings shall be called by the Council chair, at the request of either of the subcommittees or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, at such times necessary for Graduate Council to address its responsibilities in a timely manner. Notice of special meetings shall be sent by the chair or the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies to all members of the Graduate Council specifying the purpose, time, place, and agenda of the special meetings. Special meetings must be announced by email at least three (3) working days prior to the meeting date.

3. The agenda for any regular meeting and the meeting time and place shall be announced at least three working days in advance of the meeting day. The agenda for any special meeting shall be announced the same day the meeting is announced.
4. A quorum at all meetings of the Graduate Council shall be fifty percent of the voting membership at the time the meeting is scheduled to convene.
5. Meetings of the Graduate Council are open to all Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi faculty members without right of participation.
6. Members of the faculty or staff may be invited by the Council chair to attend meetings when subjects relating to their fields are under discussion. By majority vote of the Graduate Council, they shall have the right to participate in the discussion but not to vote. Members of faculty or staff may also be invited by the Council chair to present or clarify information needed by the Council.
7. The Council chair may control the use of audio and/or video recording devices as necessary to ensure the orderly work of the Graduate Council.
8. Each member of the Graduate Council shall have one (1) vote.
9. No substitute representative may attend Graduate Council or subcommittee meetings as a voting member. Absent Graduate Council members may submit proxy votes on issues before the Graduate Council or its subcommittees by submitting a specific vote on the issue to the Graduate Council chair or the chair of the specific subcommittee prior to the meeting convening. Graduate Council members may not submit proxy authorizations for any issues.
10. Responsibilities of Graduate Council members may require them to be away from campus during some meeting times. The Graduate Council and/or its subcommittees may allow members to attend via teleconference or other electronic means. Graduate Council members who are available to attend meetings in person shall do so.
11. Expediency and costs may make online meetings appropriate. The Graduate Council or its subcommittees may hold on-line discussions and votes, either synchronously or asynchronously following the following guidelines.
  - a. A two-thirds majority vote of all voting members of the Graduate Council or its subcommittees agree that online meeting and online voting is appropriate and agree on the technology to be used for the meeting (e-mail, chat room, conference call, video conference call, or other means deemed appropriate).
  - b. Summary minutes of the online meeting shall be kept and maintained in the same manner as all other minutes of the Graduate Council.
  - c. All votes for online meetings are sent by university e-mails, including the motion being voted on and the Graduate Council members' votes. All votes are transmitted to all members of the Graduate Council or its subcommittees, as appropriate.
  - d. No secret, anonymous, or private online voting is permitted; all vote tallies are announced by e-mail to all participants, and the record tally is submitted as part of the Graduate Council's minutes or the subcommittees report on the issue and included in the summary minutes of the online meetings.
  - e. Any meetings dealing with matters requiring confidentiality or anonymous voting must be



held in person and cannot be held online.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **RULES OF PROCEDURE**

1. The agenda for each Graduate Council meeting will be developed by the council chair with support from the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies and, when appropriate, the chairs of the subcommittees of the Graduate Council.
2. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the standard for parliamentary procedures at all meetings of the Graduate Council. Suspension of the Rules of Order requires a two-thirds vote.
3. A request for a recorded vote shall be granted only if seconded by at least one member of the Graduate Council.
4. Questions of interpretation of Rules of Procedure shall be determined by the council chair.
5. Unless the Council shall otherwise determine, the order of business at all meetings of the Council shall be as follows:
  - a. Call to order and taking of attendance
  - b. Approval of minutes
  - c. Reports
    - i. Council chair
    - ii. Dean of the College of Graduate Studies
    - iii. Subcommittees (in alphabetical order, i.e., curriculum, followed by rules and procedures) and subsections addressing items for discussion and items for action
    - iv. Liaison reports
    - v. Other, as needed
  - d. Unfinished Business
  - e. New Business
  - f. Matters Arising
  - g. Adjournment

### **ARTICLE VII RECORDS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL**

1. Summary minutes of each meeting of the Graduate Council will be made at all meetings of the Council and retained for a period of three years as record of the proceedings. All minutes shall be kept by the Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.
  - a. A draft copy of the summary minutes shall be circulated to all Graduate Council members prior to the next meeting.
  - b. Notices of action by the Faculty Senate on Graduate Council recommendations shall be reported and included in the official Graduate Council minutes.

- c. Approval of the minutes of the prior meeting will be the first agenda item following call to order and attendance for each Graduate Council Meeting unless the council chair postpones approval due to guests meeting with the Graduate Council or the Council agrees to re-arrangement of the agenda for the meeting.
2. Completed, corrected, and approved copies of summary minutes of the Graduate Council meetings shall be posted on the College of Graduate Studies website.

#### **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS**

1. Proposals to amend these Bylaws must be distributed to the Graduate Council members at least fourteen (14) days prior to any vote or final adoption.
2. The Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting in the Graduate Council, provided a quorum is present.
3. All amendments are subject to approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Provost.