



GRADUATE COUNCIL BYLAWS

ARTICLE I – VISION (To be reviewed and aligned with the University’s strategic plan)

The vision of graduate studies at Georgia College & State University (herein referred to as Georgia College) is to be at the forefront of best practices in graduate education, develop and sustain innovative programs, and provide exemplary learning environments to meet the needs of students and communities.

ARTICLE II – MISSION (To be reviewed and aligned with the University’s strategic plan)

The mission of graduate studies at Georgia College is to provide acclaimed and distinctive programs to meet the academic, professional and workforce needs of the students and communities we serve.

ARTICLE III-CHARGE

Graduate Studies at Georgia College provides a framework of excellence in graduate education through student engagement, faculty mentorship, collaborative initiatives, and research to support the mission of Georgia College and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

The Graduate Council provides a central body and voice to support communication between existing graduate programs, to review all proposals related to graduate programs for content and consistency, and maintain high standards by graduate faculty and graduate students.

These bylaws shall govern the internal operation and procedures of the Graduate Council at Georgia College.

The council shall:

- i. act on behalf of the Graduate Faculty,
- ii. review and when applicable develop university policies, procedures and practices affecting graduate studies,
- iii. evaluate and approve new graduate program prospectus/proposals submitted by college deans before forwarding to the Office of Academic Affairs
- iv. evaluate and approve proposed changes to the delivery of graduate programs,
- v. support the accreditation of graduate programs by regional and national accreditation commissions,
- vi. evaluate and approve proposals for the deactivation and/or termination of graduate programs.

ARTICLE IV- MEMBERSHIP, QUORUM

A. The membership of the Graduate Council shall consist of:

- a. Director of The Graduate School,
- b. one dean or designee from each college,
- c. at least one and no more than two graduate coordinators or graduate faculty elected from each college,
- d. one graduate student,
- e. Director of Graduate Admissions and Enrollment Management

B. Only members with faculty status are permitted to vote on curriculum-related submissions

C. The term of service for graduate student representative shall be one year.

- D. The term of service for graduate coordinators or graduate faculty shall be two years with the selection process being determined by faculty at the college level.
- E. Each committee member's term of service shall be effective in the fall semester. Colleges should notify the Council's chair of the college's dean or designee and elected graduate coordinators/faculty before the end of the spring term each year.
- F. A member who shall be absent for an extended period of time and who is unable to serve (e.g., professional leave, sick leave, etc.), shall be replaced by an appropriate alternate for that period. If no alternate has been designated and a replacement is needed, it is the responsibility of the Graduate Council to provide one in a manner consistent with the initial appointment or selection.
- G. A quorum shall consist of 50%, plus one of the voting graduate council membership.

ARTICLE V-OFFICERS

- A. A chair elected by members of the Council shall preside at all meetings of the Graduate Council. The chair must hold graduate faculty status.
- B. The Director of The Graduate School shall assist the chair of the Graduate Council in the function and operation of the Council.
- C. A secretary elected by members of the Council shall record the minutes at all meetings of the Graduate Council. The secretary shall provide an electronic copy of the minutes to the chair of Graduate Council.
- D. The administrative assistant for the Director of The Graduate School shall be responsible for adding the minutes to the online database.

ARTICLE VI-MEETINGS

- A. The Council shall hold meetings at the discretion of the chair or by agreement by five (5) or more members of the Council. Notice of meetings shall be provided at least five (5) days prior to meetings. Meetings will be held in accordance with the dates on the Governance Calendar. The Council may conduct any meeting virtually, and may cast any votes by electronic means.

ARTICLE VII-PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. The chair of the Graduate Council and Director of The Graduate School shall prepare the agenda for each meeting and distribute it prior to each meeting to all Council members. Any member of the Council is eligible to propose items to include on an agenda.
- B. Proposals are due a minimum of two weeks before each meeting to allow members of the council time to review and prepare for the meeting.
- C. The order of business at each Council meeting shall be as follows:
 - a. Call to order by the chair
 - b. Disposition of minutes of previous meeting
 - c. Disposition of pending business as listed on the agenda for that meeting
 - d. Presentation of new items for agenda of future meetings
 - e. Announcements or communications to Council
 - f. Miscellaneous new business
 - g. Adjournment
- D. Program and curriculum proposals considered by the Graduate Council must meet the following criteria:
 - 1) Proposal should be specific; if additions and/or deletions of programs or courses are involved, detailed supporting information should be provided, including financials if new program is being proposed,
 - 2) Proposal should be accompanied by data that justifies the need for the proposal,
 - 3) Proposal should contain appropriate information that demonstrates the academic validity of the proposal, and
 - 4)

Any material that illustrates the improvements that would result in the adoption of the proposal should be included. The chair of the Graduate Council and Director of The Graduate School may refuse to consider any program/curriculum proposal that is not supported by sufficient information.

- E. All proposals must meet the guidelines outlined by the University System of Georgia and available from the Office of Academic Affairs.
- F. 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 Graduate Council may adopt.
- G. Individuals who are not voting members of the Graduate Council may be invited to attend meetings to provide information in support of the Council's deliberations.

ARTICLE VIII-COPIES OF BYLAWS

The administrative assistant for the Director of The Graduate School will provide each member of the Graduate Council and all Georgia College Graduate Faculty and Graduate Coordinators with an electronic copy of these bylaws. All amendments shall be distributed in the same manner.

ARTICLE IX- REVIEW OF BYLAWS

The Graduate Council shall review the bylaws during the first regularly scheduled meeting each academic year to determine if any changes need to be made. A two-thirds majority of those present when at least a quorum is present must vote for the continuation and/or changes to the bylaws. Changes to the bylaws are subject to the approval of the Provost and will take effect following that approval.

ARTICLE X – INTERPRETATION OF BYLAWS

Questions of interpretation of these bylaws shall be directed to the Graduate Council, which shall review the question and forward its recommendations to the Provost, whose ruling shall be final.

Graduate Council Endorsed by the GCSU Senate, April 2015
Bylaws Approved by 2015/2016 Graduate Council – May 2, 2016
Bylaws Approved by Provost – May 12, 2016
Updated by Graduate Council, September 30, 2016
Bylaws Approved by Provost – May 11, 2017
Updated by Graduate Council- September 22, 2017
Bylaws Approved by Provost-September 28, 2017
Updated by Graduate Council-April 12, 2019
Bylaws Approved by the Provost-April 18, 2019
Updated by Graduate Council-August 23, 2019
Bylaws Approved by Provost-August 27, 2019
Updated by Graduate Council-October 9, 2020
Updated by Graduate Council-October 15, 2021
Updated by Graduate Council-August 26, 2022
Updated by Graduate Council-September 8, 2023
Approved by Graduate Council-August 30, 2024
Approved by Graduate Council-August 29, 2025
Updated & Approved by Graduate Council-September 11, 2026