



Constitution and Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty of Western Washington University

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CONSTITUTION

Article I: Name and Purpose

- I.1 The name of the organization is the Graduate Faculty of Western Washington University.
- I.2 The purpose of this organization is to support and advance graduate education at Western Washington University through shared graduate faculty governance.
- I.3 The Graduate Faculty of Western Washington University affirms and seeks to uphold the Collective Bargaining Agreement of the United Faculty of Western Washington University.

Article II: Membership

- II. Voting members include Graduate Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty holding appointments at 0.5 FTEF (annual average) or greater at Western Washington University. Graduate Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty holding appointments of less than 0.5 FTEF (annual average) are not eligible to vote in graduate faculty elections or to serve on Graduate Faculty of Western Washington University committees but are entitled to representation through their colleges and programs.

Article III: Graduate Faculty Governance Council

- III. The Graduate Faculty Governance Council is empowered to speak and act for the Graduate Faculty with particular responsibility in the areas of graduate curricula and degree programs, and the mission and administrative effectiveness of the Graduate School.

Article IV: Amendments

- IV.1 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by majority vote of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council voting members or by petition of 14 members of the Graduate Faculty.
- IV.2 This Constitution may be amended by majority vote of graduate faculty voting in an election held for this purpose.
- IV.3 Bylaws to this Constitution may be adopted, amended, or repealed by majority vote of the total voting membership of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) provided that the amendments are proposed in writing at one meeting of the GFGC, are posted on the GFGC website and delivered to graduate faculty via email, and are voted on at a subsequent regular meeting of the GFGC following a comment period of no fewer than 10 business days.

Article V: Ratification

- V.1 This Constitution is ratified by the Graduate Faculty when accepted by a majority vote of graduate faculty members voting in an election held for that purpose.

BYLAWS

BL1 Rules of Order

Rules on quorum, voting procedures, terms of office and term limits, and rules of order follow those established for the Faculty Senate in the [Constitution of the Faculty of Western Washington University](#) (Faculty Constitution).

BL2 Graduate Faculty Status

BL2.1 Graduate Faculty

Members of the Western Washington University (WWU) Graduate Faculty are those faculty members who are engaged in graduate education, are in tenured or tenure-track positions, and are active in scholarship or professional or creative activities in the disciplines in which they teach and supervise graduate students. Graduate Faculty are responsible for the development, execution, and review of graduate programs, and through representation on the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, the recommendation of policy on all graduate matters at Western.

Eligibility

Graduate Faculty members must meet all following requirements:

- Appointment in a tenured or tenure-track position
- Terminal degree in faculty member's particular field of study

Duties

Graduate Faculty members are approved to perform the following duties provided that they are consistent with terms and conditions of the faculty member's Letter of Offer.

- Teach graduate courses
- Serve as a mentor for a graduate degree-seeking student (e.g., thesis chair or member of comprehensive examination committee)
- Serve as a member of a graduate thesis committee in the home or related department
- Serve as Graduate Program Advisor
- Serve on Graduate Faculty of WWU standing and ad-hoc committees
- Serve as a Graduate School Representative at Master's thesis defenses and/or oral examinations

Appointments

Eligible faculty are automatically appointed. Appointments are continuing as long as Graduate Faculty members meet department standards for reappointment on their annual probationary review or meet departmental standards for successful post tenure review. Those who do not meet department standards for probationary or post tenure review may have their Graduate Faculty status revoked by the Graduate Dean as recommended by the department chair or Graduate Program Director during the time of remediation, and in such instances must satisfy the terms and conditions set forth by the department and the Collective Bargaining Agreement before they can be reinstated as Graduate Faculty.

BL2.2 Associate Graduate Faculty

Individual graduate programs may identify associate faculty who bring a special expertise to the graduate program or a specific thesis or project.

Eligibility

Associate Graduate Faculty members must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a faculty or professional position with the university, such as non-tenure track faculty and research associates
- Hold a graduate degree appropriate to the field of specialization (a terminal degree is not necessarily required)
- Exhibit recent professional work, research, or creative activity in the area of specialization

Duties

Associate Graduate Faculty members are approved to perform the following duties provided that they are consistent with the terms and conditions of the faculty member's appointment contract:

- Teach a specific graduate course
- Serve as member of comprehensive examination committee
- Serve as second or third member of a thesis or graduate project committee
- Serve as a chair of a thesis committee on the condition that the Associate Graduate Faculty Member has a terminal degree and at least two committee members are Graduate Faculty members.

Nomination and Renewal

If the candidate meets the Eligibility requirements outlined above, the Department Chair will submit a nomination form and vita to the Graduate Dean. Appointments are continuing as long as the duties performed comply with the terms and conditions of the faculty member's contract.

BL2.3 Affiliate Graduate Faculty

Affiliate Graduate Faculty membership may be granted to volunteers who are not members of the Western Washington University faculty. Affiliate Graduate Faculty may be appointed to offer expertise and may serve as third reader on a thesis, graduate project, or comprehensive examination committee. Emeritus faculty members in a department are eligible to apply for Affiliate status.

Eligibility

Affiliate Graduate Faculty members must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a graduate degree appropriate to the field of assignment (a terminal degree is not necessarily required)
- Be locally or regionally recognized as having exceptional expertise relating to the specific thesis project
- Meet the definition of a volunteer as described by law (RCW 52.12.035) and complying with the WWU Volunteer Registration Program

Duties

Affiliate Graduate Faculty members are approved to perform the following duties:

- Participate as a third committee member on a thesis or graduate project
- Serve as third member of comprehensive examination committee

Nomination and Appointment

If the candidate meets the Eligibility requirements outlined above, the Department Chair will submit a nomination form, vita, and a completed WWU volunteer application to the Graduate Dean.

- Candidates must be appointed separately to serve on an additional thesis or graduate project or comprehensive examination committee
- Appointments expire after the committee concludes their work, as occurs when the graduate student graduates or is no longer officially matriculated

BL3 Graduate Faculty Governance Council

BL3.1 Charge

The Graduate Faculty Governance Council is empowered to speak and act for the Graduate Faculty with particular responsibility in the areas of graduate curricula and degree programs, and the mission and administrative effectiveness of the Graduate School. Graduate Faculty Governance Council powers and duties include:

- Providing leadership in the areas of Graduate School strategic planning, policy and standards, and resource allocation in collaboration with the Dean of the Graduate School
- Promoting the interests of the Graduate Faculty and graduate students
- Enhancing the visibility of graduate education throughout the University, including the promotion and celebration of academic accomplishments of graduate students
- Approving and monitoring standards for graduate admission, retention, and graduation
- Advising on the development and creation of new graduate programs
- Reviewing graduate curriculum proposals from all academic departments and programs
- Conducting graduate program reviews to ensure ongoing program effectiveness
- Participating in the Graduate School NWCCU accreditation process
- Selecting WWU outstanding thesis nominees
- Adopting and amending its rules of operation as the “Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council”
- Authorizing the appointment of members to the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC), Faculty Senate, and University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC)

BL3.2 Membership

The Graduate Faculty Governance Council is composed of 14 voting graduate faculty members, 4 graduate students, and 2 advisory administrators. The composition of the membership of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council is as follows:

- Seven graduate faculty members representing each college or area that has a graduate program (Area A – College of Science and Engineering; Area B – Social Sciences; Area C – Humanities; Area D – Fine and Performing Arts; Area E – Business and Economics; Area G – Huxley College; Area H – Woodring College of Education), appointed by the respective college’s faculty governance body during spring quarter;

- One faculty member from the Library, appointed by the Library's faculty governance body;
- Five at-large graduate faculty members who represent graduate education with an institution-wide perspective, appointed by the GFGC;
- Faculty chair, serves at-large;
- Four graduate students, two appointed by the Student Senate and two appointed by the GFGC Executive Council. Student members are advisory to GFGC but voting members of their assigned subcommittees;
- Dean of the Graduate School (advisory, non-voting); and
- Associate Dean of the Graduate School (advisory, non-voting)

BL3.3 Meetings

The Graduate Faculty Governance Council shall meet at least twice per quarter, typically on Tuesdays at 12 p.m., and more often as deemed necessary by the Chair and Executive Council.

BL3.4 Agenda and Minutes

BL3.4.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of Graduate Faculty Governance Council, in consultation with the Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, establish the meeting agendas.

BL3.4.2 The agenda for any meeting of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council shall be delivered by email to members at least four days prior to the meeting and posted on the Graduate Faculty Governance Council website.

BL3.4.3 The Graduate Faculty Governance Council shall maintain archival copies of official minutes of all meetings. Approved minutes of all meetings shall be posted on the Graduate Faculty Governance Council website.

BL4 Officers and Executive Council

BL4.1.1 *Officers.* The officers are Chair and Vice-Chair.

BL4.1.2 *Duties.* Officers perform the duties normally associated with these offices in addition to those assigned by this Constitution and Bylaws, and by the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.

BL4.1.3 *Election.* Officers are faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council. They are to be nominated from the floor and elected by majority of those voting at the last regular meeting of each academic year.

- BL4.1.4 *Term of office.* The term of office for the Chair and Vice-Chair will run for one year from the first regular meeting of the fall term. The Chair and Vice-Chair may be re-elected as long as they have not exceeded their Terms of Office (see [Faculty Constitution](#)). It is anticipated that the Vice-Chair will also serve as Chair-elect and accede to the position of Chair following the end of the current Chair's final term.
- BL4.1.5 *Voting privileges of the officers.* All officers are voting members of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.
- BL4.1.6 *Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.* The Chair presides over the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, schedules the meetings, and serves as Chair of the Executive Council. The Chair is expected to maintain communications with the University and Graduate School administration during the summer (see Bylaw 11).
- BL4.1.7 *Vice-Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.* The Vice-Chair presides over Graduate Faculty Governance Council and the Executive Council in the absence of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council Chair. The Vice Chair is expected to maintain communications with the University and Graduate School administration during the summer (see Bylaw 11). It is anticipated that the Vice-Chair will also serve as Chair-elect and accede to the position of Chair following the end of the current Chair's final term.
- BL4.1.8 The Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council will receive release time of 0.2 FTEF from other duties to carry out the responsibilities of their office as specified in the Collective Bargaining Agreement of the United Faculty of Western Washington University. The partial FTEF shall be returned to the Graduate Faculty Governance Council Chair's academic unit.

BL4.2.1 Executive Council

The Executive Council is to establish and maintain communications between the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, Committees, representatives to external committees (such as ACC, Faculty Senate, UPRC, and ad-hoc University committees), and the Graduate School administration in facilitating the charge of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.

- BL4.2.2 *Membership.* The voting membership of the Executive Council will include the officers of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC; Chair and Vice-Chair), Chair of the Curriculum Committee, Chair of the Program Review Committee, and Chair of the Graduate Student Support Committee. Non-voting advisory members of the Executive Council include one graduate student member of the GFGC, elected by the student membership of the GFGC, and the Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

- BL4.2.3 *Duties.* The Executive Council reports to the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, schedules its meetings, advises on its agenda, meets on a regularly scheduled basis with the Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School to review strategic planning, policy and standards, and resource allocation; and performs such other duties as may be delegated to it by the Graduate Faculty Governance Council.
- BL4.2.4 In rare or unusual circumstances in which decisions by the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) are not possible, the Executive Council may act for the GFGC subject to review by the GFGC at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special GFGC meeting called for this purpose. All Executive Council actions taken on behalf of the GFGC will be stated in writing and submitted to the GFGC for ratification at its next meeting (for summer, see BL11).
- BL4.2.5 All Executive Council actions will be entered in the minutes of the next Graduate Faculty Governance Council meeting under the heading "Executive Council Actions."
- BL4.2.6 A meeting of the Executive Council may be called by the Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council or by two of its members.
- BL4.2.7 Mid-year vacancies on the Executive Council are filled by nominations from the floor and election by the majority of those voting.

BL5 Administrative Support

The Graduate School shall provide administrative assistance to the Graduate Faculty Governance Council and its committees.

BL6 Committees

The Executive Council may create any and all subordinate bodies that it deems necessary to fulfill its charge, define their duties, designate their composition, and appoint their faculty members. All Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) members, including the GFGC officers, are expected to serve on at least one Committee.

The Committees in this Bylaw act under the authority of, report to, and are subject to review by the GFGC. Approved minutes of Committees of the GFGC shall be forwarded to the GFGC for review in a timely manner. The Committees of the GFGC are authorized to establish subordinate bodies in carrying out their duties and to perform such other duties as the GFGC may direct.

Chairs of ad-hoc Committees of the GFGC are approved by the Executive Council.

BL6.1 Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee reviews graduate curriculum proposals from all academic departments to ensure quality, consistency, and accuracy and recommends approval to the Academic Coordinating Commission.

Membership

The Graduate School Curriculum Committee will be comprised of a minimum of three faculty members drawn from and appointed by the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, one graduate student (voting), and the Associate Dean of the Graduate School as an advisory, non-voting member. The chair of the committee serves on the Executive Council. One faculty member of the committee serves as a representative of the Graduate Faculty on the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC).

Meetings

The Graduate School Curriculum Committee meets at least once per quarter and more frequently as necessitated by curricular demand. The Committee generally meets more frequently during fall and winter quarters as the Catalog deadline for the following academic year approaches.

Minutes and Reportage

Minutes shall be forwarded to the Academic Coordinating Commission for acceptance and to the Graduate Faculty Governance Council for informational purposes as soon as possible following approval by the committee.

BL6.2 Graduate Program Review Committee

The Graduate Program Review Committee conducts periodic scheduled reviews of all graduate programs to ensure ongoing program and process effectiveness. Following guidelines provided in the *Guidelines for Graduate Program Reviews*, reviews will focus on strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats and will offer feedback and recommendations for program improvement.

Standing Committee Membership

The Graduate Program Review Standing Committee will be comprised of at least four graduate faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) and at least 3 student members of the GFGC. The chair of the Graduate Program Review Standing Committee serves on the Executive Council of the GFGC. Each year, the Graduate Program Review Standing Committee will create ad hoc Review Committees based on the number of program reviews being conducted.

Ad Hoc Program Review Committees Membership

The Graduate Program Review Ad Hoc Committees will be chaired by graduate faculty members of the Graduate Program Review Standing Committee. Ad hoc review committee members will be added to include at least two additional members, which may include a combination of a WWU graduate student and additional WWU graduate faculty

members. None of the members of the ad hoc committee will be affiliated with the program under review. The duties of the ad hoc review committees are to conduct program reviews following the *Guidelines for Graduate Program Reviews*, write a draft report, and follow up as described in the *Guidelines for Graduate Program Reviews*.

Reportage

Following procedures outlined in the *Guidelines for Graduate Program Reviews*, the final draft report will be submitted to the GFGC Executive Committee. Follow-up with programs will be conducted by the GFGC Executive Committee, or designated Program Review Standing Committee members, as described in the *Guidelines for Graduate Program Reviews*.

BL6.3 Graduate Student Support Committee

Following procedures outlined by the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, the Graduate Student Support Committee works with the Graduate School to support graduate student scholarship and teaching. The committee's specific responsibilities include

- working with graduate programs to develop best practices for supporting graduate student scholarship and teaching;
- advising the Graduate School as requested about graduate student requests to extend the five-year time-to-degree limit; and
- when requested, assigning graduate faculty to represent the GFGC as external observers of thesis defenses to ensure that the process is carried out in a fair and impartial manner, in accordance with the standards of the Graduate School. Requests for observers may come from students, faculty members, or the Graduate School;
- serving as a neutral arbiter supporting graduate student work where conflicts or problems cannot be resolved within departments or by the Graduate School; and
- referring graduate students to appropriate university resources as needed.

Standing Committee Membership

The Graduate Student Support Committee consists of at least three graduate faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council and one graduate student to be appointed by the GFGC. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School also serves as an advisory, non-voting member.

BL7 Members on Leave

BL7.1 A Graduate Faculty Governance Council voting member on leave and unable to attend meetings for one academic quarter to one year will, in a letter to the Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council, declare their seat vacant for that academic quarter or year, and seek another faculty member from their area to fill the vacancy; specifically, the member on leave will request that the college governance body of their respective area appoint a faculty member to fill the seat during their absence.

BL7.2 Graduate Faculty Governance Council voting members on leave and unable to attend meetings for longer than one academic year must resign their seats, or the Graduate Faculty Governance Council will declare their seats vacant.

BL8 Removal from Office for Absenteeism

BL8.1 The Graduate Faculty Governance Council may expel a voting member for a high rate of absenteeism and declare the seat vacant. The Executive Council initiates such action via Executive Council motion and majority of those voting.

BL8.2 The Chair of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council must notify the member in advance of the Executive Council meeting at which the Executive Council intends to initiate action against the member.

BL9 Graduate Faculty Assembly

BL9.1 *Definition.* A Graduate Faculty Assembly is a public meeting of the Graduate Faculty of Western Washington University called for the purposes stated in the announcement of the meeting.

BL9.2 A Graduate Faculty Assembly may be called by a resolution duly passed by the voting members of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) setting out the purposes, date, time, and place of the meeting. The GFGC may also vote to call an Assembly for some purpose and direct the Executive Council to set the date, time, and place of the meeting. An Assembly may also be called by petition signed by at least five percent of the Graduate Faculty and setting out the purposes of the meeting and the date, time, and place, or directing the GFGC to set the date, time, and place.

BL9.3 *Voting at Graduate Faculty Assembly.* Votes may be taken at the Graduate Faculty Assembly and shall be reported to the Graduate Faculty Governance Council by the Chair, who presides over the Assembly. Such votes are advisory, except for affirmative votes calling for a Graduate Faculty referendum. A vote calling for a Graduate Faculty referendum will set in motion a referendum vote of the voting members of the Graduate Faculty. In the case of a referendum vote taken pursuant to a vote of a Graduate Faculty Assembly, the Graduate Faculty Governance Council shall determine the question or questions to be voted on and state the same on the ballot, along with other necessary information, prior to directing the Executive Council to prepare the ballot and poll the Graduate Faculty.

BL10 Graduate Faculty Referendum

BL10.1 A Graduate Faculty referendum is a matter submitted to all the voting members of the Graduate Faculty. For a referendum to pass, the matter must receive a majority of all the votes cast in the election. Referendums are held as a result of a vote of the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) or the vote of a General Faculty Assembly. The results of all referendums are reported by the Executive Council to the GFGC, entered into the minutes, and sent to the President of the University and the Board of Trustees as soon as possible. When a referendum results in a favorable vote on an issue of substance, the GFGC is required to accept the Faculty position as binding and to take such action as is necessary and proper to carry out the decision of the Graduate Faculty.

BL11 Summer Session

BL11.1 Normally the Graduate Faculty Governance Council (GFGC) will not meet between the end of spring term and the beginning of fall term. The Chair and Vice Chair are expected to maintain communications with the University and Graduate School administration during the summer. In the event that something occurs during the summer period that falls within the purview of the Constitution or Bylaws, then the Executive Council or, in the absence of a quorum of the Executive Council, the remaining members of the Executive Council, shall discuss and act on the matter on behalf of the GFGC, provided that, on any matter of substance, they will seek delay of university action until the matter is properly brought before a full meeting of the GFGC.

Per the CBA, all faculty must be compensated for service undertaken during summer quarter.