



## **Bylaws of the Augusta University Graduate Faculty Council**

### **Article I: Name**

The name of the organization will be Augusta University (AU) Graduate Faculty Council.

### **Article II: Mission**

The mission of the Graduate Faculty Council is to provide timely, responsible, ethical, and evidence-based recommendations to the Dean of The Graduate School (TGS) at AU, with the goal of improving the education, scholarship, and research experiences for all graduate students while creating a supportive academic environment for all graduate faculty.

### **Article III: Structure**

The Chair of the Graduate Faculty Council will be the TGS Dean. The Dean will designate another senior leader of TGS to be a standing member of the council and to fill in for the Dean when needed. The Dean will not be a voting member and the other senior leader will only vote in the case of a tie.

Sub-committees of the Graduate Faculty Council facilitate activities to support the goals and objectives of the Dean and of TGS. Standing sub-committees include:

- **Access, Belonging, and Culture (ABC):** The charge of the ABC sub-committee is to advocate for access, foster belongingness, and celebrate culture through respect for everyone to maximize opportunities for success in research and education.
- **By-Laws and Policy:** The charge of the By-Laws and Policy sub-committee is to review, update and recommend policies and procedures governing TGS as requested.
- **Curriculum Review:** The charge of the Curriculum Review sub-committee is to provide feedback, mentorship and guidance based on AU and TGS policies, guidelines and best practices for program/course development and/or revision and serve as a critical review and approval step in the Curriculog process.
- **Faculty Wellness:** The charge of the Faculty Wellness sub-committee is to encourage, educate, and support TGS faculty to promote a culture of health and professional well-being that empowers our faculty to reach their full academic and personal potentials.
- **Graduate Community and Student Success:** The charge of the Graduate Community and Student Success sub-committee is to promote student achievements, facilitate professional development, and foster relationships and collaborations across the graduate student community at AU.

Each committee will elect a new chair annually, to be named at the August meeting of the AU Graduate Faculty Council. Other sub-committees will function at the discretion of TGS Dean to focus on topics important to TGS.

#### **Article IV: Composition**

The Graduate Faculty Council is composed of 30 graduate faculty members divided into three different groups of 10 faculty each:

- The first group is comprised of one faculty selected by each of the ten colleges and schools at AU (Allied Health Sciences, Arts, Humanities & Social Science, Business, Computer and Cyber Sciences, Dental Medicine, Education, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, and Science & Mathematics).
- The second group of 10 faculty is proportionally distributed according to the ratio of the total number of graduate students in each of the colleges and schools to the total number of graduate students at AU.
- The third group of 10 faculty is proportionally distributed according to the ratio of the total number of graduate faculty in each of the colleges and schools to the total number of graduate faculty at AU.

Every even year, before the August meeting, the Dean of TGS provides the Graduate Faculty Council with the updated number of students and faculty in order to perform a new calculation for the second and third groups of faculty. In the event the Graduate Faculty Council membership is less than 30 faculty members, the Dean of TGS has the option to invite additional graduate faculty members to fill the vacancies. Each Graduate Faculty Council member will serve on a sub-committee. Two graduate student representatives will be allowed to attend the meetings the AU Graduate Faculty Council and the meetings of each of the sub-committees except for the Curriculum Review sub-committee.

#### **Article V: Policies**

The Graduate Faculty Council is governed by the following policies/procedures (most recently approved version-see list following Bylaws):

- Bylaws of the AU Graduate Faculty Council
- Graduate faculty appointment
- Graduate faculty appointment with major advisor privileges
- Adding a Graduate Program Affiliation, only for faculty who currently hold an approved Graduate Faculty Appointment
- Technical Standards
- Program Directors guidelines

Current versions of these policies/procedures are available on TGS website.

#### **Article VI: Membership**

- All faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Council must have a graduate faculty appointment in TGS at AU.
- All faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Council will be elected by fellow members of their respective college or school, by self-nomination, and/or by the Dean (or his/her representative) of their college or school.
- All faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Council may serve a 3-year term and may not serve more than six consecutive years without a one-year hiatus.
- The two student representatives are: the President of TGS Graduate Student Council and a second student chosen by that organization. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled in a program offered by TGS. Students will serve a 1-year term and may not serve again unless they have been re-elected as President of TGS Graduate Student Council.
- The Graduate Faculty Council terms shall be August 1 - July 31.

#### **Article VII: Responsibilities and Duties:**

The responsibility and duties of the Graduate Faculty Council include:

- Address graduate student issues and concerns.
- Establish general university academic policies and procedures relating to graduate programs.
- Review new courses, course revisions, new certificate program, degree programs, program revisions for programs that have an academic or administrative home within TGS.
- Formulate strategic plans related to graduate education.
- Advise the TGS Dean on strategies for increasing support of graduate students and graduate programs.
- Encourage graduate research, teaching, and service excellence by presenting annual awards.
- Disseminate information related to TGS to the faculty of their colleges/schools by a formal process to be determined by each college/school.
- Periodically review and recommend changes to the bylaws of the Graduate Faculty Council.
- Evaluate and vote on initiatives as brought to the Graduate Faculty Council from sub-committees and from the TGS Dean.
- Provide recommendations to the TGS Dean on priorities that should be addressed by TGS budget.
- Voice issues or concerns from a college or school regarding graduate education.
- Support graduate faculty wellness through encouragement and education, promoting a culture of health and professional well-being that empowers our faculty to reach their full academic and personal potential.

#### **Article VIII: Governance**

- There will be no member proxy voting. A member of the Graduate Faculty Council may not send a substitute if they are unable to attend a meeting or subcommittee meeting.
- If a Graduate Faculty Council member vacates the position prior to completing his/her elected term, the Dean of the respective college/school (according to the protocol of the

specific college/school) from which the member was elected, shall appoint an interim council member to serve in the vacated position until the next scheduled election. The time as interim does not count towards the term as council member if the interim is elected.

- If a Graduate Faculty Council student member vacates the position prior to completing his/her elected term, the President (or Vice President if the President is the student vacating the position) of TGS Graduate Student Council shall appoint an interim council member to serve in the vacated position until the next scheduled election. The time as interim does not count towards the term as council member if the interim is elected.
- Passage of any new policy or revision of any policy will require a simple majority of the members of the Graduate Faculty Council present at the meeting when the vote takes place.

## **Article IX: Meetings**

### *Agenda*

The agenda of the Graduate Faculty Council meetings will be set by the TGS Dean. The business of the Graduate Faculty Council (minutes) together with the agenda of each of the meetings will be made available to everyone by posting them on TGS website.

### *Meetings schedule*

The Graduate Faculty Council should meet quarterly at a standing date and time. Additional meetings will be added as needed and standing meetings may be canceled if the TGS Dean determines there is no business to conduct. The TGS Dean or a minimum of two-thirds of the membership of the Graduate Faculty Council can call a meeting of the Graduate Faculty Council at any time. The TGS Dean will call a general meeting of all the graduate faculty at TGS at least annually to report on the state of TGS and present annual Graduate Faculty Awards.

### *Parliamentary Authority*

All procedures and meetings shall be conducted according to the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order.

## **Article X: Amendments**

Proposals to amend these Bylaws may originate from the Dean of The Graduate School or by petition to the Graduate Faculty Council by two-third or more of the members of the Council. The Dean of The Graduate School shall distribute to the Council copies of the proposed amendment(s) two weeks prior to a meeting of the Council. The proposal will be included in the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. If a motion is passed, an electronic ballot to approve the proposed amendment(s) will be sent to all Augusta University Graduate Faculty Council members. Passage of the amendment(s) will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the balloted return.

## **Article XI: Authority**

These Bylaws shall serve as the sole authorizing instrument (consistent with the Statutes of AU) for the Graduate Faculty Council.

Approved by the Graduate Faculty Council June 2024.

Policy/Procedure versions:

- Bylaws of the Augusta University Graduate Faculty Council (revised – 6/13/24)
- Graduate faculty appointment (revised - 1/21/2023)
- Graduate faculty appointment with major advisor privileges (revised - 1/21/2023)
- Adding a Graduate Program Affiliation, only for faculty who currently hold an approved Graduate Faculty Appointment (revised - 11/1/2019)
- Technical Standards (revised - 10/23/2023)
- Program Directors guidelines (revised - 5/21/24)