

Bylaws of the Graduate Faculty Organization

College of Graduate Studies
State University of New York
Upstate Medical University, Syracuse

Preamble

In accord with Article X of the Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (2013) and Bylaws of the Upstate Medical University Faculty (2012), the Faculty of the College of Graduate Studies, as a unit within the State University of New York, Upstate Medical University at Syracuse, hereby organizes and adopts these Bylaws to guide its primary functions in pursuing the missions of Upstate Medical University. These roles and responsibilities include but are not limited to developing and implementing effective programs in (i) scientific research and (ii) graduate education with standards appropriate for awarding the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Science. We affirm that all actions under these Bylaws shall be advisory to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Upstate's chief administrative officer, and the Chancellor of the State University of New York.

Definitions

As used in these Bylaws, unless otherwise specified, the following terms shall mean:

- a. "Board of Trustees" - the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York;
- b. "Chancellor" - the Chancellor of the State University of New York;
- c. "Upstate" – Upstate Medical University at Syracuse, a college (Health Science Center) of the State University of New York;
- d. "President" - the Chief Administrative Officer of Upstate;
- e. "Vice President" - the Vice President for Research of Upstate;
- f. "Dean" - the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at Upstate;
- g. "College" - the College of Graduate Studies at Upstate;
- h. "Graduate Faculty" - members of the Faculty of Departments/Programs in the College of Graduate Studies as specified in Article III and such other persons as may be granted membership under those same provisions;
- i. "The Upstate Faculty Council" - the elected body of the Upstate Faculty Organization that represents the entire Upstate Faculty (see BOT Policies, Article VIII, and the Bylaws of the Upstate Faculty);
- j. "SUNY RF" – The Research Foundation for the State University of New York.

Article I: Name

The name of the organization representing all faculty in the College of Graduate Studies shall be "The Graduate Faculty Organization of the College of Graduate Studies, State University of New York, Upstate Medical University at Syracuse". This may be abbreviated below as GFO.

Article II: Responsibilities, Functions of the GFO

The GFO shall be advisory to the Dean, with the following purposes:

1. To fulfill the obligation the Graduate Faculty to participate significantly in the initiation, development, and implementation of the educational, research, and service programs of the College (see Policies of Board of Trustees, 2013, Article VI).
2. To study and act on other matters relevant to the Graduate Faculty, including the educational policies of the College; this includes reports or recommendations from the Upstate Faculty Council, committees of the GFO, or individual GFO members.
3. To serve such other functions as may be determined by the Chancellor, the President, the Vice President for Research, or the Dean.

Article III: Membership in the GFO

1. Voting membership
 - a. The voting membership of the Graduate Faculty Organization shall include the Chancellor, the President, and Vice President for Research of the State University of New York Upstate Medical University at Syracuse, the Dean of the College, the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary of the Graduate Faculty Organization, the Chairpersons of Basic Science Departments, and Directors of Basic Science Graduate Programs (currently these programs are Cell & Developmental Biology, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Microbiology & Immunology, Neuroscience, Physiology, and Pharmacology).
 - b. Members of the full-time Faculty (supported by the State or SUNY RF) holding professorial rank in Departments and Programs of the College of Graduate Studies offering approved and authorized programs leading to the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy/Master of Science.
 - c. All others must meet the eligibility criteria below (Article III, Section 1.d) and be nominated by the Chairperson/Program Director of the above Graduate Program with which they are affiliated. Nominations will be acted upon by the Graduate Council, with final approval by the Dean (Article VI, Section 2.1b). The term of membership will be at the joint pleasure of the nominating department/program and the Graduate Council.
 - d. Criteria for nomination to voting membership in the Graduate Faculty Organization. Nominees must be employees of Upstate Medical University at Syracuse (supported by the State or SUNY RF, full- or part-time) with one of the following designations:
 - i. professorial rank with primary appointment in another College of Upstate Medical University and an adjunct appointment in one of the above programs; or

- ii. primary appointment in one of the authorized programs of the College of Graduate Studies with the title of "Lecturer" or of professorial rank preceded by a qualifying designation such as "Research" or "Adjunct", and who makes a significant contribution to the training of graduate students.

Nominees must also meet all the following criteria:

- iii. possess the terminal academic degree in the field, or recognition for substantive and distinctive contributions to the discipline involved;
- iv. have tangible evidence of ongoing productivity in scholarly research and/or creative activity; and
- v. have successful experience in (or potential for) teaching, counseling, and/or direction of students at the graduate level.

2. Non-voting Membership

- a. Voluntary faculty not supported by SUNY RF
- b. Part-time professional staff of the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs
- c. Two of the elected officers of the Graduate Student Association.
- d. Faculty from other colleges or universities with adjunct appointment in one of the authorized programs of the College of Graduate Studies.

3. Privileges of Voting Membership:

- a. teaching and/or serving as the instructor of record in a graduate level course offered by a Graduate School department/program;
- b. serving on student thesis advisory and thesis defense committees as chair, sponsor or voting member;
- c. voting on curriculum issues pertaining to the specific department/program in which primary membership is held, such as curriculum requirements, course content, and changes in the specific guidelines of the graduate program;
- d. serving, if elected, as a representative of his/her department/program on the Graduate Council or on any committee appointed by the Graduate Council, Graduate Faculty or Dean of the Graduate School;
- e. voting in the election of members to the Graduate Council (Article VI, Section 1.e);
- f. voting in the election of Officers to the Graduate Faculty Organization, and on general Graduate School issues.

4. Voting

- a. Graduate School faculty holding either a primary appointment or an adjunct appointment may cast only one vote in the election of officers and on general Graduate School issues;
- b. Qualified professionals who are not members of the Graduate Faculty Organization may teach graduate courses and serve on an individual student's advisory and/or thesis defense committee if approved by the Dean acting on a recommendation from the department/program responsible for the student's training. These approved professionals will have voting privileges on these committees but will not have the more general voting privileges afforded members of the Graduate Faculty Organization.

Article IV: Officers of the Graduate Faculty Organization

1. Officers to be elected

There shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and a Secretary of the Graduate Faculty Organization who shall be nominated and elected by the whole membership of the Graduate Faculty Organization (procedure outlined in Article VII, section 2).

2. Terms of Office

- a. The Chairperson shall serve for three years and shall be eligible for re-election or for election to one term as Vice Chairperson or Secretary;
- b. The Vice Chairperson shall serve for three years and shall be eligible for re-election or for election to one term as Chairperson or Secretary;
- c. The Secretary shall serve for three years and shall not be eligible for re-election as Secretary, but shall be eligible for election to one term as Chairperson or Vice Chairperson;
- d. The officers shall take office at the close of the annual meeting of the full Graduate Faculty Organization in the year of their election;
- e. No person shall serve as an elected officer for more than six consecutive years. After such six-year period, eligibility for elected office is prohibited until two years have passed following those terms of office.

3. Vacancies

- a. In the event that a vacancy or inability to serve occurs in the office of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson until the next annual meeting;
- b. If such a vacancy or inability to serve occurs for both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, the Secretary will serve as Chairperson until the next annual meeting;
- c. If a vacancy in the office of the Secretary shall occur, the Chairperson shall appoint a successor to serve until the next annual meeting.
- d. If all officers' seats are vacant, the Executive Committee of the GFO (Article VII, Section 1) shall appoint interim officials, with approval of the Dean, to serve only until elections can be held at the next annual GFO meeting.

4. Duties of the Chairperson

- a. Shall be the Presiding Officer at all meetings of the full Graduate Faculty Organization;
- b. Shall participate as a member of the Graduate Council during his/her term of office;
- c. Shall be an ex-officio member of all appointed committees of the Graduate Faculty;
- d. Shall inform the Dean for consideration or appropriate referral, regarding actions by or recommendations of the Graduate Faculty Organization;
- e. Shall represent the Graduate Faculty Organization as an *ex-officio*, nonvoting member on the Upstate Faculty Council;
- f. Shall appoint 2 voting GFO members to serve as alternate members of the Upstate Faculty Council, for Council meetings that the GFO Vice Chairperson and/or Secretary are unable to attend.
- g. Shall chair the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty (Article VII, Section 1);
- h. May have such other duties and responsibilities as may be requested by the Graduate

Faculty or as specified by these Bylaws, as long as these do not conflict with the Bylaws of the Upstate Faculty Organization.

5. Duties of the Vice Chairperson:
 - a. Shall serve as Chairperson if the Chairperson is unable to serve;
 - b. Shall, as Vice Chairperson, be a member of the Graduate Council if not already a member by virtue of being a Chairperson or Director of an authorized program;
 - c. Shall serve as Vice Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty;
 - d. Shall represent the Graduate Faculty Organization as a voting member on the Upstate Faculty Council;
 - e. Shall have such other duties and responsibilities as may be requested by the Graduate Faculty, by the Chairperson, or as specified in these Bylaws.

6. Duties of the Secretary
 - a. Shall give proper notice to the Graduate Faculty of all GFO meetings;
 - b. Shall keep accurate and complete minutes of each meeting;
 - c. Shall, as Secretary, be a regular member of the Graduate Council only in the event that the Chairperson or the Vice Chairperson are already members by virtue of being a department chairperson or program director;
 - d. Shall, when requested, represent the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson at meetings and other occasions;
 - e. Shall serve as Secretary of the Executive Committee of Graduate Faculty;
 - f. Shall represent the Graduate Faculty Organization as a voting member on the University's Faculty Council;
 - g. Shall attend to all correspondence and perform such other duties as may be appropriate or specified by these Bylaws.

Article V: Meetings

Section 1. Meeting Schedule

1. An annual meeting of the GFO should be held during the spring semester if there are significant issues for the agenda, including installment of newly-elected officers. The officers shall poll the membership for such agenda items. However, after polling GFO members and consulting with the Dean of the College, GFO officers may opt to forego the annual meeting if no significant issues for an agenda have been raised;
2. The annual meeting or other meetings may be called, as deemed desirable or necessary, by the GFO Chairperson, the Dean of the College, or by petition of 10 percent or more of voting GFO membership, or in the alternative, an agenda item may be identified for consideration;
3. In lieu of physical meetings, the GFO officers or Executive Committee may inform the entire membership of said agenda item(s) and initiate a discussion electronically that may culminate in a recommended action item (decision) to be voted upon by ballot, either at a physical meeting or electronically, as provided for in Section 2.

Section 2. Meeting Agenda

1. The agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the elected officers of the GFO, after conferring with the Dean;
2. The agenda shall be sent with the announcement of the meeting to the membership not less than 15 days in advance of a scheduled meeting;
3. Only agenda items may be considered for formal action at the meeting. Items not on the agenda may be discussed, but formal action will require either a ballot vote (by mail or email) of the entire membership of the Graduate Faculty Organization or the scheduling of another duly announced meeting;
4. Suggestions for the agenda may be submitted to an officer by a member of the Graduate Faculty Organization not less than 30 days in advance of a scheduled meeting.

Section 3. Quorum

The presence or electronic participation of twenty percent of GFO members will be considered a quorum for meetings of the Graduate Faculty Organization.

Article VI: Graduate Council

Section 1. Composition of the Graduate Council

- 1) A Graduate Council, advisory to the Dean, shall be formed to include as voting members:
 - a. the Dean of the College, who shall chair the Graduate Council;
 - b. the Vice President for Research and the Dean of Student Affairs;
 - c. the Chairperson or Director (or his/her representative) of each of the departments/programs authorized to offer training for doctoral/master's degrees in the Basic Sciences. (This currently includes Cell & Developmental Biology, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Microbiology & Immunology, Neuroscience, Physiology, Pharmacology, and the MD/PhD program);
 - d. the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the GFO or their representatives. If a representative is needed, the first choice should be the Secretary if he/she is not already sitting on the Graduate Council for other reasons (*i.e.*, Article IV, Section 6.c.). Otherwise, the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson can choose any member of the GFO as temporary representative;
 - e. one other faculty member from each of the programs elected/appointed by that program's faculty members. This sub-group of the Graduate Council will also meet as part of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty (Article VII, Section 1).

Section 2. Duties of the Graduate Council

- 1) The Graduate Council shall be advisory to the Dean as follows:
 - a. to review/approve proposals submitted by Departmental Chairpersons or Program Directors and/or other members of the Council for the establishment, modification or deletion of courses and programs leading to the doctoral or master's degree, and the periodic assessment of courses and programs for their effectiveness.

- b. to recommend, in accordance with Article III, Section 1, those persons who are qualified for membership in the Graduate Faculty Organization, and to annually review the membership list with the purpose of keeping it current in accordance with the provisions of Article III, Section 1;
- c. to establish minimum qualifications and requirements for admission to the College of Graduate Studies and for admission to candidacy for the doctorate or master's degrees; but this shall not impair the right of individual departments/programs to make additional requirements of applicants for admission to and continuance in the various departments/programs;
- d. to establish rules and procedures governing the student's progress toward the doctorate or master's and to review each student's progress in that regard;
- e. to perform such other duties as may be requested by the Dean in the exercise of his/her administrative responsibilities.

Article VII: Committees of the GFO

Section 1. The Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty

1. The Executive Committee will consist of the GFO officers, with the same designated roles for the committee, and the elected representatives to the Graduate Council (Article VI, Section 1.e) from each of the Graduate departments/programs.
2. A priority function of the Executive Committee is to facilitate communication between the Graduate Council (and thereby the Dean's Office) and the Graduate Faculty organization, keeping each informed of the other's activities. As issues arise and are passed along, the Executive Committee may make recommendations. For instance, the Executive Committee may wish to argue in favor of the Graduate Faculty Organization's position on some issue at a meeting of the Graduate Council.
3. The Executive Committee shall meet as needed to serve the above liaison function. Before and after scheduled meetings of the Graduate Council, the Secretary shall poll committee members for agenda items. If any two GFO officers or any three members of the committee agree on issues for an agenda, a meeting will be scheduled.

Section 2. The Elections Committee

1. In February of each year requiring GFO elections (typically every 3 years), the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will appoint a 4-5 person Elections Committee to supervise the nomination and election of the following officers:
 - a. Chairperson of the GFO, who also chairs the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty;
 - b. Vice-Chairperson of the GFO, who is also Vice-Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty;
 - c. Secretary of the Graduate Faculty Organization who is also Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty;
 - d. Department/Program representatives to the Graduate Council, who also serve on the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty.
2. After soliciting and receiving the suggestions and recommendations of the Graduate Faculty, the Elections Committee shall nominate candidates for the offices given in Article

- VII, Section 2.1a,b,c. In addition to this procedure, specific nominations for one or more offices may be made to the Elections Committee by a petition signed by ten members of the Graduate Faculty Organization. There shall be at least two nominees for each office.
3. The election shall be by secret ballot [electronic or paper] sent to each member of the Graduate Faculty Organization. The ballot shall contain the names of the candidates for each office, and there shall be provision for a write-in vote. The election shall be supervised and the ballots counted by the Elections Committee.
 4. The nomination and election of the Department/Program representatives to the Graduate Council (Article VI, Section 1e; Article VII, Section 1.1; Article VII, Section 2.1d) shall be administered by each department/program individually by a procedure approved by the Elections Committee.
 5. All elections shall be held at least 15 days before the annual meeting. Arrangements shall be made for ballots, electronic or paper, to be cast over a period of several days.

Article VIII: Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws shall be initiated by a proposal signed by 15 or more members of the Graduate Faculty and submitted to the Graduate Council for its consideration at least 30 days before a scheduled meeting.

Copies of proposed amendments shall be sent to each member of the Graduate Faculty at least 15 days before the meeting at which they are to be considered. The recommendations of the Graduate Council regarding the proposed amendments shall be reported at the meeting. A vote, by mail ballot, shall be arranged to take place 15 to 30 days after the meeting. With a majority of the Graduate Faculty voting, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the votes cast shall be required for adoption.

The amendment shall be effective following its adoption by the Faculty and approval by the Dean of the College and the President of the State University of New York, Upstate Medical University at Syracuse.

Article IX: Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority for procedures and conduct except where they are inconsistent with these Bylaws.

07/15/83 (Rev 11/1991, 2/1992, 3/1992, 5/1992, 1/1999, 8/2011, 05/2015)