



Board of Graduate Studies Terms of Reference

Approving Authority: Senate
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1. MANDATE

The Board of Graduate Studies has the responsibility to:

- 1.1. Formulate and offer advice to Senate consistent with Senate's responsibilities for development and oversight of educational policy as it relates to graduate education;
- 1.2. Assist Senate in overseeing the implementation of educational policy as it concerns graduate education at the University;
- 1.3. Support the priorities of Senate;
- 1.4. Make contributions that will enhance the overall academic reputation of the University and reflect the full range of Senate's responsibility for the educational policy of the University.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. General

The Board of Graduate Studies will, in general, advise and make recommendations to Senate concerning:

- 2.1.1. statements of academic and educational goals and standards pertaining to graduate education at the University, including the University Learning Objectives, and Graduate Learning Outcomes, and matters pertaining to internationalism and student financial accessibility at the graduate level;
- 2.1.2. policies pertaining to academic and educational plans, priorities, and pedagogical developments affecting graduate education at the University;
- 2.1.3. the implementation of Senate-approved statements, policies and programs affecting graduate education and matters that bear on the formulation of further development of Senate policy;
- 2.1.4. academic standards, admission standards, examinations, and graduation requirements for graduate programs;
- 2.1.5. policies affecting the appointment to Graduate Faculty.

2.2. Graduate & Diploma Programs

For graduate degree and diploma programs, in alignment with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), consider and make recommendations to Senate concerning:

- 2.2.1. proposals for the addition or elimination of graduate programs and collaborative specializations, taking into consideration the academic philosophy of the institution, its planned directions, and the coherence of proposed programming and relevant internal and external criteria for the evaluation of such programs, as primarily considered by the Graduate Programs and Faculty Committee (GPFC).

For graduate degree and diploma programs, in alignment with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), acting on Senate's authority and subject to subsequent report to Senate, decide upon:

- 2.2.2. proposals for the addition or elimination of a graduate program field.

2.3. Changes to Graduate Degree & Diploma Programs

For graduate degree and diploma programs, in alignment with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), consider and make recommendations to Senate concerning:

- 2.3.1. Proposals for program changes that meet one or more of the following criteria: represent significant strategic importance to the University, involve substantial risk (including reputational risk), require broad consultation across the University community, necessitate full Senate approval to comply with governments or external certification requirements.

- 2.3.1.1. These recommendations must be informed by the academic philosophy of the institution, its planned directions, and the coherence of proposed programming changes.

- 2.3.1.2. Evaluation shall also consider relevant internal and external criteria, as primarily considered by GPFC.

For graduate degree and diploma programs, in alignment with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), acting on Senate's authority and subject to subsequent report to Senate, decide upon:

- 2.3.2. Proposals for changes to program requirements, admission requirements, fields, and examinations.

- 2.3.3. Where multiple changes are proposed, the Board may refer such decisions to Senate on recommendation of the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies).

2.4. Standards & Requirements for Graduate Programs

- 2.4.1. For institutional-level academic standards, admission standards, examinations, and graduation requirements for graduate programs, advise and make recommendations to Senate concerning relevant policies.

2.5. Graduate Faculty

- 2.5.1. Advise and make recommendations to Senate concerning policies affecting the appointment to Graduate Faculty.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. The Board of Graduate Studies shall consist of:

- a member of the Graduate Faculty from each College
- four (4) graduate students (one (1) of whom shall be the Vice-President (Academic) of the Graduate Student Association)
- Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies)
- Vice-President (Research and Innovation) or designate
- Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) or alternate appointed from among the Associate Deans (Research and Graduate Studies) by the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies)
- University Librarian or designate

4. OTHER REGULATIONS

4.1. Decisions to be Reflected in University Publications

- 4.1.1. In all cases, policy and program decisions made by the Board of Graduate Studies or recommended by the Board and approved by Senate, shall be reflected in the text of relevant University publications, including program calendars.

4.2. Authority to Delegate

- 4.2.1. The Board may elect to delegate routine decisions within its authority to either the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) or the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral (OGPS) who shall provide periodic reports to the Board about actions taken so that all such matters shall be considered and reported by the Board to Senate, as appropriate. All such delegated decision-making shall be consistent with relevant policies established by the Board and/or Senate.

4.3. Authority to Establish Sub-committees & Working Groups

- 4.3.1. The Board has the authority to establish sub-committees and working groups with such duties and delegated authority as deemed necessary. Such decisions will be taken with due regard to any Senate guidelines concerning the establishment and operation of such sub-committees and working groups.

5. GRADUATE PROGRAMS & FACULTY COMMITTEE

The Graduate Programs & Faculty Committee ("GPFC") is a sub-committee of the Board of Graduate Studies.

5.1. Mandate

- 5.1.1. With respect to the addition, deletion or amendment of graduate degree and diploma programs, review and make recommendations to the Board on proposals in light of Senate-approved graduate program learning outcomes, graduate program standards, information and recommendations from the Division Committees, coherence of proposed programming, and any relevant external academic quality standards, activating refinement of proposals as necessary to better achieve these goals before bringing the matter forward for consideration by the Board.

5.1.2. With respect to the addition, deletion or amendment of graduate degree and diploma courses, acting on Senate's authority and subject to subsequent report to the Board and Senate, decide upon proposals for graduate course changes, additions, and deletions taking into consideration the academic philosophy of the institution, its planned direction, the coherence of proposed programming changes, and the relevant internal and external criteria for the evaluation of such courses.

5.1.3. Periodically review policies concerning appointments to Graduate Faculty, advising the Board on the need for amendment as appropriate.

5.1.4. Review and decide upon nominations for appointment to Graduate Faculty, with subsequent report to the Board for information.

5.1.5. Report regularly on GPFC's activities to the Board.

5.2. Membership

5.2.1. Non-ex-officio members shall be appointed annually by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) for one-year terms (renewable), normally to a maximum of three consecutive terms.

5.2.2. The Graduate Programs & Faculty Committee shall consist of:

- Chair, Board of Graduate Studies or designate from among the Graduate Faculty (Chair)
- Four (4) Graduate Faculty members
- One (1) librarian
- One (1) graduate student
- Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) (ex-officio)
- One (1) staff member from the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies who shall be the recording secretary (ex-officio, non-voting)

A Vice-Chair shall be elected annually by the Committee.

5.2.3. In composing the membership of GPFC, the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies shall:

5.2.3.1. Consider first and foremost the needs of the committee;

5.2.3.2. Give preference to current departmental graduate coordinators when selecting the four Graduate Faculty members;

5.2.3.3. Ensure the committee's membership is broadly representative of the University's colleges and graduate programs.

5.3. Graduate Program Committee (GPC)

To enable GPFC to fulfill its responsibilities, Graduate Program Committees shall be established. The Graduate Program Committees (individually "GPC") report to and are sub-committees of the Graduate Programs & Faculty Committee.

5.3.1. Mandate

The role of the GPCs is to oversee the graduate program(s) of the academic unit, in particular the curriculum and students' progress in their individual programs.

In keeping with this mandate, the GPC shall:

- keep the affiliated program curriculum under ongoing review;
- assess the degree of achievement of its learning outcomes as required by University and external quality assessment processes;
- initiate or respond to proposals for curricular change, and initiate action, as necessary, according to University academic governance processes;
- oversee the progress of students in the relevant graduate program(s) under its purview, consistent with the relevant policies established by the Board and/ or Senate.

5.3.2. Membership

Each academic unit (department, school or interdepartmental/inter-collegiate group) which offers graduate education shall establish, in a manner appropriate to its operations, a GPC consisting of members of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and including graduate student representatives. Any student representative(s) shall be elected by the graduate students or named after consultation with the graduate students in that academic unit. Normally, the chair of each GPC shall be the Graduate Coordinator of the relevant graduate program. Graduate student representatives shall be recused for discussions on the progress of students in their individual programs.

5.4. Division Committees

To enable GPFC to fulfill its responsibilities, Division Committees shall be established. The Divisions Committees report to and are sub-committees of the Graduate Programs & Faculty Committee.

The number and composition of Division Committees is based on the interdisciplinary review framework and program groupings in place for the purposes of provincial graduate program quality control processes and the University's own array of graduate programs. Currently, there is a Division Committee for each of the following discipline areas: the humanities, the social sciences, the human and animal sciences, the plant sciences, and the physical sciences. The current Division Committee structure can be reviewed by contacting the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies at ogsadmin@uoguelph.ca and may be amended by Senate from time to time on recommendations of the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies).

5.4.1. Mandate

The Division Committees provide an opportunity for interdisciplinary input and recommendations regarding the addition, deletion or amendment of graduate programs and courses. Normally new program proposals or significant program or course revisions will be reviewed first by the relevant Division Committee(s) for comment prior to consideration by GPFC.

5.4.2. Membership

The membership of each Division Committee shall consist of the Graduate Coordinator or designate from each of the programs identified under that Division.

6. COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS AND PROGRESS (A&P)

The Committee on Admissions and Progress is a sub-committee of the Board of Graduate Studies.

6.1. Mandate

The actions of the Admissions and Progress Sub-Committee are informed by Senate policies regarding admission of applicants and progress of graduate students.

Guided by Senate-approved policies, A&P shall:

- review and decide upon the admission of applicants under alternate admission criteria;
- review and decide upon requests for re-admission;
- review and decide upon student status pertinent to maximum registration limits;
- take action on behalf of the Board with respect to unsatisfactory progress;
- review and decide upon requests for Leave of Absence based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds;
- review and decide upon requests for academic consideration based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds;
- review and decide upon requests for academic consideration regarding course grades and course results based on medical, psychological, or compassionate grounds;
- make decisions in regard to student appeals of dispute resolution issues related to evaluation of progress, and qualifying or oral examinations, including procedural irregularities.

Decisions of the A&P are subject to appeal to the Senate Standing Committee on Student Petitions.

6.2. Membership

6.2.1. Members are appointed annually for one-year terms (renewable), normally to a maximum of three consecutive terms, by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies)).

6.2.2. The Committee on Admissions and Progress (A&P) shall consist of:

- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies or a representative from among the Associate Deans (Research and Graduate Studies) or Graduate Program Coordinators, to be designated by the Assistant Vice-President (Graduate Studies) (Chair)
- three (3) Graduate Faculty members
- three (3) graduate students (one of who shall be the Vice-President (Academic) of the Graduate Student Association)
- one (1) representative from the Office of Student Affairs
- two (2) staff members from the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, one (1) of whom shall be the recording secretary (non-voting)

6.2.3. The Chair may appoint a Vice-Chair from among the Graduate Faculty members of the Committee.

6.2.4. In composing the membership of A&P, the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies shall:

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- Strive to ensure the composition of the committee reflects the University's commitments to Indigenization, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility and then seek to provide representation from each College, if possible.
- Give preference to Graduate Faculty members with experience in graduate studies administration.