

Discussion Items

Graduate Council (GC) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

Purpose: The Graduate Council shall review all curricular requests pertaining to the graduate and professional academic programs, shall be responsible for the quality and development of the graduate instruction and programs and shall advise the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies on all graduate program matters. The Graduate Council shall communicate in writing, through its secretary, its recommendations to the Faculty Senate.

Meetings: The GC will meet on the first Thursday of each month.

(1) Membership shall consist of one representative from each college and off campus academic unit, who shall be selected by the Faculty Senate Committee on Committees after consultation with the college deans and caucuses (chairs of college graduate instruction committees and associate deans for graduate programs shall be considered for appointment); two representatives of the Graduate Faculty; two graduate students; and the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies as an Ex-Officio member. All faculty members shall be members of the Graduate Faculty.

All of the above members except the Associate Provost shall be voting members. In the absence of the appointed member, a substitute may vote on behalf of that unit.

The Associate Directors of Graduate and Professional Studies, one representative of the University Library Council, and one member of the Medical Sciences Library shall serve as non-voting members. In addition, a representative from Curricular Services shall serve and provide advice as a non-voting member.

All faculty members shall serve three-year terms. Those serving on a committee as a result of their Texas A&M University position shall continue to serve as long as they are in that position. Student members shall serve one-year terms.

A representative from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) shall serve as secretary but not have voting privileges.

(2) The election for the GC Chair and Vice-Chair should take place during the October meeting for an effective date of 1 January. The chair and vice chair will be limited to one three-year term; the elevation of the vice-chair to chair, though commonplace, shall not be automatic. It is recommended that the Chair and Vice-Chair represent different Colleges.

(3) The GC shall review all proposed courses, programs, and changes to existing curricula at the graduate level and shall recommend appropriate policies to improve and develop graduate academic programs. All items for review shall be routed by through the appropriate colleges for approval.

(4) Items requiring vote include New Courses, Course Withdrawal, Change in Courses, Change in Curricula, Administrative Changes and Special Considerations (including new programs, degrees and certificates). These items may be approved, not approved, approved with changes (friendly amendments), referred to an electronic vote (e-vote, see item 11) prior to the deadline to submit to Faculty Senate, or postponed to a certain time (tabled, see item 12). Each item must receive a majority vote to pass. That is, at least half (50 percent) of GC voting members in attendance must approve an agenda item.

(5) The College representative or designee must be present to answer any questions regarding an agenda item. If a question arises and no representative is present, then the item will not be considered.

(6) Letters of support from all academic programs affected by curricular changes shall be provided to the GC by the department bringing the item(s) forward.

(7) Proposed courses in which undergraduate and graduate students meet together at the same time with the same instructor ("stacked courses") must have an instructor of record that is a member of the Graduate Faculty and the syllabus must clearly indicate the additional work required for the graduate students.

(8) New cross-listed courses require individual sets of approval forms. Adding a cross-listed course to an existing course only needs to be considered by the GC if the course is a new course.

(9) Approval of research and problem-based credit hours (685 and 691) and exploratory new (special topics) courses (689) do not require the GC approval.

(10) The GC shall operate under these rules:

Two weeks prior to meeting all agenda items are due to OGAPS.

No later than one week prior to meeting all voting and non-voting members will receive the agenda as a digital file easily searched and including all materials necessary to complete an informed review.

No Consent Agenda is designated. Rather, all agenda items will be fully considered at the Thursday meeting.

Any agenda item may be challenged at the meeting by a motion from a Committee Member with a second from another Committee Member.

(11) The Chair and/or Vice-Chair may elect to hold an electronic vote (e-vote) meeting when agenda items are minimal and there are no pending deadlines. An e-vote for a specific agenda item with an extremely tight deadline may also be used as deemed appropriate by the Chair or Vice-Chair and voted by the committee. E-votes by the committee are sent to the Secretary for compilation. The Chair and Vice-Chair are notified and the agenda item either passes or fails based on the e-votes received.

(12) The GC may vote to postpone voting on an agenda item (table the item) for various reasons (i.e., no representative present, support letters missing, corrections to form/syllabus, etc.). It is the responsibility of the department to resubmit the postponed item for reconsideration with the updates as requested by the committee.

(13) Submissions for consideration by the GC that are not complete or correct by stated GC standards will be returned by the Secretary, in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

(14) New course requests and course changes involving significant content modification or alteration in course credit hours must include syllabi that comply with current University minimum syllabus requirements (<http://curricularservices.tamu.edu>).