

**Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
Graduate Council
Governance Document
Draft February 2022**

I. Purpose

The Council of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (i.e. Grad Council), according to the Faculty Handbook¹ and the University Bulletin is responsible for:²

- Determining the requirements for admission
- Providing programs of study and examination
- Establishing and maintaining requirements for graduate degrees
- Establishing such regulations as may be considered necessary or expedient for governing programs and the Graduate School
- Exercising general supervision over the Graduate School's affairs
- Making recommendations for the award of advanced degrees
- Recommending the establishment or discontinuation of such graduate degree programs and their requirements.

The Graduate Council considers matters related to all degree programs in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.³

¹ “The Council of the Graduate School,” according to the Faculty Handbook, “considers matters related to doctoral programs in all schools and Arts and Sciences master’s degree programs (except for “professional” Arts and Sciences master’s degree programs). Subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Council of the Graduate School recommends the establishment or discontinuation of such graduate degree programs and their requirements. The Council reviews proposals with respect to these degree programs; makes recommendations for the award of advanced degrees in these programs; and formulates, subject to the approval of the Provost and the appropriate school Dean, regulations governing these programs. The Dean of Arts and Sciences ensures that changes in the graduate curriculum that have important consequences for undergraduate education are brought to the attention of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for review.”

² The University Bulletin further specifies that “The general direction of the Graduate School is vested in the Council of the Graduate School, composed of a faculty representative of each graduate program and a minimum of one graduate student representative. The Council is chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences or their designee. The functions of the Graduate Council, exercised in consonance with university policy, are to determine requirements for admission; provide programs of study and examination; establish and maintain requirements for graduate degrees; make recommendations for degrees; make recommendations for new areas of graduate study; establish such regulations as may be considered necessary or expedient for governing the Graduate School; and exercise a general supervision over its affairs. The Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is the chief executive officer of the Graduate School.

³ According to the Faculty Handbook, a separate body, the Council of the Graduate Professional Schools “considers matters related to graduate professional degree programs in The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, in the International Business School, in the Rabb School of Continuing Studies, and in Arts and Sciences. Subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, the Council of the Graduate Professional Schools recommends the establishment or discontinuation of these graduate professional

II. Membership

The Council of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences consists of the following according to the Faculty Handbook:

- A representative of each Ph.D. or master's academic graduate program in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Historically, these representatives have been the Directors of Graduate Study in their Departments and Programs.
- At least one GSAS student.

The Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences serves as chair of the Council of the Graduate School.

III. Description of Roles and Responsibilities

The *Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences*, reports to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. She/he is responsible for:

- Leading strategic planning and budgeting for GSAS
- Leading faculty governance in GSAS
- Overseeing graduate recruitment and admissions
- Overseeing fellowships and financial aid
- Overseeing graduate student affairs including careers and professional development
- Managing the GSAS staff of Graduate School of Arts and Sciences staff.
- Advocating for GSAS students at the university.
- Supporting DEI efforts at GSAS
- Representing GSAS at events with external constituents

Historically, this role has been filled by a tenured faculty member who serves a three-year term with 50-75% time allocated for these administrative responsibilities.

The *Directors of Graduate Study* for each Department or Program is responsible within the department for overseeing departmental matters related to graduate study and graduate students and for serving as a liaison to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. This person is responsible for making sure within the department that regular planning and oversight of graduate studies takes place related to: admissions, graduate curriculum, student support, and administration and communication with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. While individual departments and programs may opt to divide these responsibilities in different ways, GSAS will call the faculty member who is responsible for ensuring that they are completed the Director of Graduate Studies.

degree programs and their requirements. The Council reviews proposals with respect to these degree programs; makes recommendations for the award of advanced degrees; and formulates, subject to the approval of the appropriate school Dean or Provost, regulations governing these programs. The Provost ensures that changes in the graduate professional curricula that have important consequences for Arts and Sciences academic programs are brought to the attention of the Dean of Arts and Sciences and either the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Council of the Graduate School, as appropriate, for review.”

A more detailed breakdown of these responsibilities includes:

Admissions

- Oversight for department / program admissions
- Advising GSAS on marketing/recruitment for master's programs
- Organizing accepted students events with department administrators

Graduate Curriculum

- Planning the graduate program curriculum with the chair
- Reviewing and revising the graduate curriculum as needed
- Reviewing new course proposals in collaboration with the Division Councils
- Tracking student fulfillment of degree requirements
- Leading the Department Graduate Committee if there is one and being responsible for department-level decisions about curricular exemptions and other student-specific questions.

Student Support

- Planning departmental orientation for new students
- Providing guidance, mentoring, and feedback to all graduate students as needed, especially during advisor transitions. Ensuring all students have an advisor and a feasible degree completion plan
- Checking in regularly with advisors about their graduate students' progress
- Together with the department chair, ensuring that advising loads on individual faculty remain reasonable
- With the Academic Administrator, keeping track of students' progress toward completing their degree requirement and providing annual feedback
- Establishing a regular schedule of meetings with the Graduate Department Representatives (GDRs) to support their work
- Coordinating with the GSAS Faculty Director of Professional Development on professional development efforts
- Student programming, departmental climate, DEI efforts
- Overseeing the distribution of departmental research resources to graduate students (if applicable)

Administration

- Partnering with the Academic Administrator on all aspects of planning and record keeping
- Attending annual GSAS planning meetings
- Attending monthly Graduate Council meetings

- Leading or participating in the assignment of graduate students as Teaching Assistants, Course Assistants, or Graders

A *PhD Faculty Advisory Committee*, chaired by the GSAS Dean, communicates regularly throughout the academic year to execute routine business, to explore new initiatives, and to address problems of immediate and long-range concern to PhD programs. The PhD FAC can also serve helpfully as a sounding board for the Dean. The Graduate Council delegates to the PhD FAC minor policy reviews, the approval of ad hoc committees and prize committees for PhDs, and other relatively minor matters of routine day-to-day business for doctoral programs currently addressed by the Dean alone. All other decisions concerning doctoral degree requirements, changes in governance, major policy reviews, broad vision, etc., will be made by the full Graduate Council. Agendas and notes from the PhD FAC will be posted to the GSAS Faculty portal and available to all members of the Graduate Council.

The PhD FAC consists of the GSAS Dean, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean of Admissions, and three to four DGSs of Departments that grant PhDs in different Divisions. Members of the PhD FAC normally serve for two (and not more than three) consecutive years, and must rotate off the PhD FAC for at least one year between terms. Appointments are staggered so that only two new members are appointed each year.

A *Master's Faculty Advisory Committee*, chaired by the GSAS Dean, communicates regularly throughout the academic year to execute routine business, to explore new initiatives, and to address problems of immediate and long-range concern to master's programs. The Master's FAC can also serve helpfully as a sounding board for the Dean. The Graduate Council delegates to the Master's FAC minor policy reviews, the approval of ad hoc committees and prize committees for master's students, and other relatively minor matters of routine day-to-day business currently addressed by the Dean alone. All other decisions concerning master's degree requirements, changes in governance, major policy reviews, broad vision, etc., must be made by the full Graduate Council.

The Master's FAC consists of the GSAS Dean, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, the Assistant Dean of Admissions, and three to four DGSs of Departments that grant Master's in different Divisions. Members of the Master's FAC normally serve for two (and not more than three) consecutive years, and must rotate off the Master's FAC for at least one year between terms. Appointments are staggered so that only two new members are appointed each year.

Before considering the composition for a new academic year, the PhD and Master's FAC will invite all DGSs to communicate any nominations, concerns, or categorical preferences. The PhD and Master's FAC will then present a slate to the Graduate Council for its vote.

IV. Meetings

The Graduate Council meets monthly during the academic year. Agendas are distributed one week before the meeting and minutes sent one week following and posted on the GSAS Faculty portal.

Voting members include the Directors of Graduate Studies of GSAS degree programs. Non-voting members include the registrar (or designate), one student-services staff member from IBS, one student-services staff member from the Heller School, the Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, the Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and select GSAS staff. A quorum of half of the voting members must be present to vote on and approve any proposals.

V. Functions

Following the Faculty Handbook and University Bulletin, the Graduate Council is responsible for:

1. ***Determining the requirements for admission.*** Overall requirements for admission to the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences are included in the [University Bulletin](#) and are reviewed by the Graduate Council annually. While departments and programs recommend individual students to admit, policies and practices around admissions and recruitment, including deferral, are made at GSAS, in conversation with the Graduate Council.
2. ***Providing programs of study and examination which includes establishing and maintaining requirements for graduate degrees.*** The Graduate Council reviews the academic requirements for postbaccalaureate programs, masters degree programs and doctoral programs in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. Minor changes to specific course requirements are made by the Department or Program. More substantial changes that influence the number of courses required for the degree, the relationship between two or more degree programs, and/or that have budget impact are reviewed by the Graduate Council. All current requirements are listed in the University Bulletin. New graduate level courses are submitted through the general [New Course Approval Process](#) and reviewed by the appropriate Division Council. All current requirements are listed in the University Bulletin.
4. ***Establishing such regulations as may be considered necessary or expedient for governing programs and the Graduate School.*** The Graduate Council regularly reviews University and GSAS policies related to programs in the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. Current academic policies related to registration, programs of study, auditing, credit/no credit options, change of courses, examinations and exam absences, grades and course standards, incompletes, credit for work done elsewhere, graduate course-registration, satisfactory academic progress, academic residency requirements, full-time and part-time resident status, post-resident status, continuation status, extended masters status, leaves of absence, etc. are listed in University Bulletin. Additional policies are linked to the faculty portal of the GSAS website. The Dean of Students Office is responsible for [student rights and responsibilities including conduct policies](#). The Office of Student Financial Services is responsible for financial policies. Each Individual Department and Program maintains a Graduate Program Handbook, updated annually, that outlines specific program policies and practices.

5. ***Exercising general supervision over the Graduate School's affairs.*** The Council of the Graduate School consults broadly on matters pertaining to graduate students and faculty at GSAS. This includes strategy, priorities, the changing nature of graduate education, professional and career support for students, graduate student life, DEI, and other issues.
6. ***Making recommendations for the award of advanced degrees.*** The Council of the Graduate School formally recommends the awarding of degrees to graduate students from GSAS each spring.
7. ***Recommending the establishment or discontinuation of specific graduate degree programs and/or their requirements.*** As outlined in the Faculty Handbook, proposals for the establishment or disestablishment of graduate academic degree programs in GSAS must be submitted to the Council of the Graduate School for review.

Minor changes to specific course requirements are made by the faculty of each Department or Program. Changes that shift the content of a degree or signal a significant change in pedagogy, that influence the number of courses required for the degree, that involve the relationship between two or more degree programs, and/ or that have budget impact are reviewed by the Graduate Council. Please review proposed changes with the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs to confirm whether they are minor and can be made by Department/Program faculty or are major and should be discussed by the Graduate Council.

The Graduate Council does not have an appeals or grievance process. Faculty and graduate students should work through the grievance processes in their Departments and Programs as well as through appropriate university processes.

VI. Amendments to this Document

This governance document can be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of voting members. GSAS will ensure that a current version of this governance document is up to date on the GSAS Faculty portal.

Approved by the Graduate Council, February 4, 2022.