

GRADUATE COUNCIL GUIDELINES

Western Kentucky University

(Approved 10/9/25)

Article I: Purpose

The Graduate Council, serving as a Standing Committee of the Senate, is the official representative voice of the graduate faculty and graduate students. Graduate Council membership is comprised of three graduate faculty and one graduate student representing each of the academic colleges at Western Kentucky University. Membership also includes one full-time graduate faculty member from WKU Libraries. In addition, the Senate Executive Committee shall appoint one senator to serve as a voting member of the Graduate Council. Faculty representatives must be members of the graduate faculty and employed full-time by WKU. Ex-officio members include the Executive Director for Graduate Studies and one graduate student representative from the Student Government Association (SGA). The elected chair of the Graduate Council will automatically be a member of University Senate (if not already an elected departmental or at-large Senator).

The Graduate Council has general supervision and control over all matters of graduate instruction, including admission and degree requirements, curricula, and general academic regulations. The Graduate Council reports its curricular and policy actions to the University Senate who reports to the Provost with recommendations for implementation or appropriate disposition.

Among the primary responsibilities of the Graduate Council are:

- 1) to advise the Executive Director for Graduate Studies on matters relating to the administration of graduate faculty, programs, and students including:
 - a. research initiatives involving graduate faculty and graduate students
 - b. standards governing graduate student admission, financial support, and degree completion
 - c. qualifications required for membership on the graduate faculty and participation in the graduate program, including the supervision and direction of theses and dissertations
- 2) to receive, review, and act upon new or revised Graduate Program and curricula proposals
- 3) to monitor graduate issues and concerns and make policy, proposals, and resolutions concerning Graduate Studies research curricula and other issues and policies impacting the quality of graduate education at WKU
- 4) to respond to requests about graduate matters from the Provost, Executive Director for Graduate Studies, Senate, or Council of Academic Deans and serve as liaison between Graduate Council and the University administration
- 5) to follow the established policy and procedures as established by the Graduate Council Guidelines, Graduate Studies, and as published in the WKU Graduate Catalog.

The Chair of Graduate Council shall submit a report setting forth the consent and action items as

approved by the Graduate Council to the Chair of the Senate Executive Committee at least seven days prior to the Executive Committee's meeting for approval to include the report on the Senate agenda. Upon approval by the graduate faculty members of the Senate Executive Committee, the report shall be included on the Senate agenda for the next scheduled Senate meeting. Upon approval by the graduate faculty members of Senate, the report shall be forwarded to the Provost.

Article II: Organization and Administration

Section 1: Membership

Graduate Council membership is comprised of three graduate faculty and one graduate student representing each of the academic colleges at Western Kentucky University. This membership also includes one full-time graduate faculty member from WKU Libraries. In addition, the Senate Executive Committee shall appoint one senator to serve as a voting member of the Graduate Council. Faculty representatives must be members of the graduate faculty and employed by WKU. Ex-officio members include the Executive Director for Graduate Studies and one graduate student representative from the Student Government Association (SGA). Each Graduate Council member has one vote. If unable to attend, members shall select an alternate member of the graduate faculty or graduate student respectively, to serve and proxy vote.

Section 2: Selection and Terms

Members are selected through an election process determined by each college. The faculty representatives serve three-year terms and the graduate student representatives serve a one-year term. Elections shall be staggered so approximately one-third of faculty members are elected each year. Members may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The full-time graduate faculty member representing WKU Libraries is to be appointed by the Dean of Libraries for a one year term that is renewable at his/her discretion. All terms begin July 1 through June 30.

Section 3: Meetings

Graduate Council shall meet once each month of the academic year. Meetings will be conducted under Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure.

Section 4: Quorum

A quorum shall consist of a minimum of 50% +1 of the voting members. A majority vote of the members present for a quorum shall determine all actions.

Section 5: Agenda and Minutes

Agendas for upcoming meetings will be distributed at least three business days prior to monthly meetings.

Article III: Officers

Graduate Council officers shall be members of the Graduate Council as well as the graduate faculty and must be employed by WKU. Officers serve a one-year term and shall include a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary. Meetings shall be presided over by the Chair. The Vice Chair presides in the absence of the Chair and is the Chair-elect. In the event that neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair can

preside over a meeting, the members present may select a member to preside. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all graduate council meetings and keep a membership list and record of attendance. The Vice Chair and Secretary will be elected at the last monthly meeting of the academic year for the upcoming academic year.

Article IV: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees

- 1) Executive Committee shall initiate and guide the work of the Graduate Council. Membership of the Executive Committee shall include the Chair, Vice Chair, immediate past Chair (ex-officio), Secretary, Chair of the Curriculum Committee, Chair of the Policy Committee, Chair of the Research Committee, and the Executive Director for Graduate Studies (ex-officio).
- 2) The Curriculum Committee shall review graduate program and curriculum proposals and make recommendations to the full council. Membership of the Curriculum Committee shall include a minimum of three council members elected by the full membership with a minimum of three colleges represented but no more than two representatives per college.
- 3) The Research Committee shall review research initiatives and make recommendations to the full council, as appropriate. Membership of the Research Committee shall include a minimum of three council members elected by the full membership with a minimum of three colleges represented but no more than two representatives per college.
- 4) The Policy Committee shall review policy and make recommendations to the full council. Membership of the Policy Committee shall include a minimum of three council members elected by the full membership with a minimum of three colleges represented but no more than two representatives per college.

Committee Chairs are elected at the first graduate council meeting of the academic year.

Section 2: Ad Hoc Committees

As determined by Graduate Council in consultation with the Executive Director for Graduate Studies, the Chair of Graduate Council may form additional committees or task forces. Ad hoc committees may not exceed one year in operation.

Article V: Amendments

These Guidelines may be amended at any regular or special Graduate Council meeting, provided members receive at least five (5) working days written notice prior to such a meeting that describes the amendment and its purpose. To approve an amendment to the Guidelines, a vote of 50% +1 of the entire Graduate Council is required.