**School of Graduate Studies**

**Clayton State University**

**Graduate Affairs Committee By-Laws**

**Approved on March 15, 2015**

**Mission**

The School of Graduate Studies at Clayton State University strives to maintain a standard of excellence in graduate education by offering quality programs that are relevant and responsive to the needs of the communities served by our institution.  The School of Graduate Studies is committed to providing students an environment in which they gain knowledge in intellectual inquiry, critical analysis and creative problem solving while developing their professional integrity.

The mission of the Graduate Affairs Committee is to insure that the graduate programs offered by Clayton State University are of the highest quality and are consistent with academic standards of comparable graduate programs throughout the state, region, and nation.

**I. Goals and Responsibilities**

**A. Purpose**

The primary purpose of the Graduate Affairs Committee is to act upon graduate level curricular matters that are referred to it by academic departments.

The Graduate Affairs Committee is empowered, for courses numbered 5000 or higher, to approve a program proposal, reject and return a proposal to the originating department, or amend and approve the proposal.  It must approve all members of the graduate faculty.  Other responsibilities include program planning, curricular control, student appeals, and policy-making for the School of Graduate Studies.

**B. Duties**

Duties of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall include:

* Develop and implement policies and procedures for the improvement of the operation of the School of Graduate Studies.
* Recommend amendments to existing policies and procedures related to the School of Graduate Studies.
* Determine outcomes of student appeals.
* Develop and regularly review criteria for membership in the graduate faculty.
* Review application for regular graduate faculty status.  Review proposals for new graduate programs and for the addition, suspension and deletion of courses.
* Review and assess existing graduate programs.

**II. Membership of the Graduate Affairs Committee**

The Graduate Affairs Committee shall consist of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies who serves as Chair, each of the graduate program coordinators/directors, and one elected graduate faculty representative from each academic college, two Faculty Senate members, and the Library.  In addition there are non-voting ex-officio members of the Graduate Affairs Committee. The term of office for elected members of the Graduate Affairs Committee is based upon a two-year rotation.

**A. Chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee**

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (or designee) shall serve as chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**B. Membership**

The Graduate Affairs Committee shall be comprised of voting and non-voting members. All members of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall have equal voice in the debate of its business. Only voting members, however, shall have the power to vote on matters before the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**1. Voting Members**

Voting members shall include:  Program coordinators/directors, elected representatives (one from each college and one from CSU Library, one-year terms), faculty senate representatives (must have graduate status) and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. If a program has multiple concentration coordinators rather than a single program director, then the respective Dean must designate one concentration coordinator as the administrative member of GAC.

**2. Non-Voting Members**

Non-voting members shall include student representatives, ex-officio members, and non-administrative concentration coordinators.  Ex-officio members are the Provost and other appointed ex-officio members as deemed appropriate.

**C. Proxy Voting**

Members may vote by proxy upon written notice to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Proxy votes must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies prior to the scheduled meeting of the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**D. Officers**

The Officers of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall be comprised of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary.

**1. Appointment and Election of Officers**

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, or designee, shall serve as Chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee. Subject to the rules governing a quorum, the Vice Chairperson shall be elected by a majority of the voting members present preferably at the last regular meeting of the academic year for the Graduate Affairs Committee. The Vice Chairperson shall hold office for a term of one academic year and may be re-elected annually but for no more than five consecutive terms. The Secretary is appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

**2. Duties of the Chairperson**

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, as Chairperson, shall preside over all meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee and shall represent the Graduate Affairs Committee before all University officers and/or assemblies.

**3. Duties of the Vice Chairperson**

In the absence of Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside over meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee. Upon delegation by the Chairperson or in the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall serve as a designee of the Chairperson in the representation of the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**4. Duties of the Secretary**

The secretary of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall keep a record of the minutes of meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee and of its committees. The secretary shall certify the authenticity and assure the safekeeping of the Graduate Affairs Committee’s by-laws and minutes. The secretary is responsible for keeping the record of appointments of graduate faculty and elections of the Vice Chairperson. The secretary shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Chairperson.  The secretary will either be the Graduate Coordinator or a designee of the Chairperson.

**III. Meetings**

The monthly meeting date and time of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall be determined by the Graduate Dean and Graduate Affairs Committee members at the beginning of each semester.  The Chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall preside over meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee.  All meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall be open to the public except during executive sessions.  The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern participation at meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**A. Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee or by the Chairperson upon request of any member of the Graduate Affairs Committee for the transaction of only such business as stated in the call for the meeting.

**B. Agenda**

An agenda of the matters to come before the Graduate Affairs Committee shall be sent to each member of the graduate faculty in advance of the meeting.  Any member of the graduate faculty may suggest items to be placed on the agenda, but the final arrangement of the agenda shall be left to the discretion of the Chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee.  Members of the graduate faculty desiring matters to appear on the agenda should submit them to the office of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies preferably at least one week before the Graduate Affairs Committee meeting.

**C. Minutes**

Minutes for meetings of the Graduate Affairs Committee shall be produced and distributed.  They shall consist of a detailed record of actions taken by the council, including (1) the full text of all motions, (2) who made the motions, (3) who seconded the motions, (4) the disposition of the motions.  Minutes to the meetings will be kept on file in the School of Graduate Studies office and a copy submitted to the Provost.

**D. Number of Meetings**

Meetings shall be convened by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies as necessary to implement the mission and business of the Graduate Affairs Committee. Graduate Affairs Committee meetings will be scheduled by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

**E. Notice of Meetings**

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies shall provide timely notice of meetings to all of the members of the Graduate Affairs Committee. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies shall have the discretion, however, to convene emergency meetings on less than two weeks notice where the failure to meet could impair the business of the Graduate Affairs Committee.

**F. Called Meetings**

Upon receipt of a signed petition of two thirds of the voting members, a member may require the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies to schedule a called meeting of the Graduate Affairs Committee. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies with the advice and consent of representatives from among the petitioners shall set the agenda for such meetings.

**G. Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the Graduate Affairs Committee. Votes of the majority of those comprising a quorum at any meeting shall be considered passed and binding on the Graduate Affairs Committee with the exception of changes to the By-Laws.

**IV. Amendment or Repeal of By-Laws**

Subject to the rules governing a quorum, the Graduate Affairs Committee By-Laws may be amended, revised, or repealed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members of the Graduate Affairs Committee.