

# BY-LAWS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

Revised: 2021

School of Medicine  
Oregon Health & Science University

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Faculty Council School of Medicine OHSU, 7 October 2021

By-laws initially approved by the Faculty Council of the School of Medicine OHSU, March 1983 with amendments adopted in December 2005; revised by the Graduate Council School of Medicine (June 2009) and approved by Faculty Council School of Medicine OHSU, 3 September 2009. Revised in 2021 following creation and adoption of Academic Regulations.

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## ARTICLE I – FUNCTIONS OF GRADUATE COUNCIL

- Section A Graduate Council of the School of Medicine of Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) shall advise the Dean of the School of Medicine on all matters pertaining to education of graduate students toward Graduate Certificates, Master's and Doctor of Philosophy degrees within the School of Medicine. This advice shall include: standards for admission to a graduate program, graduate curricula, progress towards a degree, admission to candidacy, thesis/dissertation preparation and defense, and requirements for graduation.
- Section B Graduate Council shall be responsible for the standards listed under Article I, Section A, as applied to the graduate portion of combined degrees such as the M.D./Ph.D. or M.D./M.S. programs.
- Section C Graduate Council shall be responsible for providing the Dean of the School of Medicine the list of the candidates proposed for Graduate Certificates, Master's and Ph.D. degrees at the next commencement exercises.
- Section D Graduate Council shall be responsible for advising the Dean on appointments to the Graduate Faculty. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies shall maintain a list of Graduate Faculty and their departmental affiliations.
- Section E Graduate Council shall have the authority to appoint Graduate Faculty to thesis and dissertation advisory committees, thesis defense committees, and other committees concerning graduate education. The appointment of committee members shall be done in consultation with the chairs of their departments.
- Section F Graduate Council shall be responsible for administration of Conjoint Graduate Courses within the School of Medicine. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies with the approval of Graduate Council shall appoint Course Directors for the Conjoint Courses.
- Section G Graduate Council shall be responsible for establishing the stipend policy for graduate students within the School of Medicine.
- Section H Graduate Council shall approve curricular changes, including new course approval as well as curricular modifications. Curriculum changes and related policies can be found on the Provost's Office [Curriculum Modification Process](#) page.

## ARTICLE II – COMPOSITION OF GRADUATE COUNCIL

- Section A **Members.** Graduate Council shall be composed of one member from each graduate Program (see glossary), selected by the Program Director (see glossary), subject to the approval of the Dean of the School of Medicine. Two graduate students selected by the Graduate Student Organization of the School of Medicine shall also be members of Graduate Council. Each member of Graduate Council shall have one vote.
- Section B **Chair.** Graduate Council will be chaired by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the School of Medicine.

## ARTICLE III – MEETINGS AND QUORUM

- Section A **Regular Meetings.** Graduate Council shall hold regular monthly meetings during the Fall, Winter and Spring terms.

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Section B **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of Graduate Council may be called by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies or whenever three or more members request in writing that the Associate Dean convene a meeting. The agenda of special meetings shall be provided in advance to all Council members by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

Section C **Quorum.** Two-thirds of Graduate Council's members shall constitute a quorum at all Council meetings.

Section D **Minutes.** Minutes will be posted on OHSU's intranet website.

#### ARTICLE IV – THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Section A **Eligibility for Graduate Faculty Membership.** Any OHSU faculty member or faculty-level scientist, who possesses a Master's or Doctoral-level degree who demonstrates evidence of scholarly activity, and is a member of an approved academic graduate degree program within the School of Medicine shall be eligible for membership on the Graduate Faculty.

External faculty with involvement at OHSU, are eligible for Affiliate Graduate Faculty Membership. These faculty will have the same privileges and responsibilities as Graduate Faculty, but shall be limited to activities with the Graduate Program that sponsored them and their term shall be limited to 3 years (though it can be renewed at the Program's request).

Section B **Privileges and Responsibilities of all Graduate Faculty Members.** Graduate Faculty shall teach in graduate level courses, serve on oral thesis or dissertation examination committees and on advancement to candidacy examination committees, will interact with graduate students in seminars and conferences, and serve on other committees concerning graduate education. The mentor or advisor of a graduate student shall guide the student on matters concerning his or her capstone project, thesis, or dissertation. This will be done in consultation with an advisory committee of members of the Graduate Program's faculty and other experts.

Section C **Application to the Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty.** Application to Graduate Faculty shall originate from the Director of an approved graduate program by submitting a new graduate faculty application to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. Nominations must also have the written approval of the Director of the faculty member's primary administrative unit (i.e., the OHSU or School of Medicine unit with primary responsibility for administering salary). Confirmation of the nomination to the Graduate Faculty will occur by a majority vote of Graduate Council who will recommend appointment by the Dean of the School of Medicine.

Section D **Graduate Student Mentors and Advisors and Their Appointments**

1. Responsibilities of Graduate Student Mentors and Advisors. It is a privilege to mentor Graduate Students. The mentor or advisor of a graduate student shall advise and guide the student on matters concerning his or her Program. This may be done in consultation with an advisory committee of members of the Graduate Faculty and other experts. If the student's Program requires a Master's thesis or Doctoral dissertation, the mentor shall also be responsible for directing the student's thesis or dissertation research. Some programs require that the mentor provide support for the student and the thesis or dissertation research. "Mentor" typically refers to the faculty on record while "Advisor" can be anybody who serves in a broader support and advising role.
2. Guidelines for Appointment as Graduate Student Mentors or Advisors. The determination of whether a faculty member should serve as a student's mentor or advisor is the decision of the

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student's graduate studies Program Director and should be made according to the following guidelines.

- a. The mentor must be a member of the Graduate Faculty of OHSU and hold an equal or higher degree than the student's proposed degree.
  - b. The mentor must demonstrate active research scholarship within his or her discipline through peer-reviewed presentations and publications.
  - c. The mentor or advisor must be capable and willing to accept responsibility for advising and guiding graduate students in academic matters.
  - d. When a thesis or dissertation is required by the student's Program, the mentor must be capable and willing to accept responsibility for directing the student's thesis or dissertation research.
3. Research and Thesis/Dissertation Credits. Instructors for Research (501/601) and Thesis/Dissertation (503/603) credits must be members of the Graduate Faculty who have been approved to serve as mentors or advisors by the student's graduate program.

Section E **Duration of Graduate Faculty Membership.** Appointment to the Graduate Faculty, once approved, will continue unless specifically revoked by the Program Director, the head of the faculty member's primary administrative unit, or by the Dean of the School of Medicine. It is the responsibility of each graduate Program to maintain a current list of Graduate Faculty, and report annually to Graduate Studies where a master list will be maintained. Affiliate Graduate Faculty will be appointed for renewable, 3 year terms.

Section F **Status of Emeritus and Retired Graduate Faculty.** Emeritus and retired faculty shall retain their appointment on the Graduate Faculty unless this appointment is terminated by the Program Director or the director of the faculty member's primary administrative unit. These faculty shall be allowed to serve on graduate student advisory and final examination committees but may no longer serve as mentors for graduate students unless specifically approved by Graduate Council.

## ARTICLE V – GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Section A **Graduate Program.** Any educational program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy, Master's degree, Graduate Certificate or equivalent graduate degree at OHSU.

Section B **New Graduate Programs.** A program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy, Master's degree, Graduate Certificate or equivalent in a discipline not previously approved by OHSU.

Section C **Proposals for New Graduate Programs.** [Proposals for new graduate programs](#) must follow protocols outlined by the Provost's Office.

Section D **Appointment of the Director of an Interdepartmental Program.** The Director of an interdepartmental program shall be appointed by the Dean of the School of Medicine upon the recommendation of the program and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

## ARTICLE VI – CURRICULUM CHANGES OF EXISTING GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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Section A **Course requirements** for a specific degree are the responsibility of each graduate Program. However, changes of the customary frequency of offering of courses should be done in consultation with Graduate Council to avoid disruption of other graduate programs.

Section B **Curriculum changes** involving addition of new courses, deletion of courses, course numbers, and changes of greater than one credit in credit hours of courses, must be submitted to Graduate Council for review and recommendation for final approval by the Associate Dean. New course and course change proposals should be submitted via the [new course proposal form](#). The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will notify the Registrar of new courses that have been approved by Graduate Council.

Minor changes in the description of previously approved courses (including, but not limited to, course titles, change in credit hours of one hour or less, change in course director, or change in class size) may be made without resubmission for approval. Graduate Council must approve significant changes in the content of a previously approved course. All minor and major changes must be documented in periodic review and report to Graduate Council

Proposed changes in Journal Club (course number 506/606) and Seminar (course number 507/607) courses may be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. It is generally expected that the specific topics covered in these courses will vary from term to term. If the content of a 506/606 or 507/607 course remains the same for more than two terms, the program must request Graduate Council approval of the course under a unique course title and number.

Section C Graduate Council shall conduct a review of each graduate program every 5 years.

## ARTICLE VII – STUDENT CONDUCT

Section A **Professional Conduct Policy.** Graduate Council shall establish a [Professional Conduct Policy](#) that applies to all students enrolled in School of Medicine graduate programs. This policy must describe conduct expected of all graduate students, conduct considered to be meritorious, and conduct considered to be unacceptable. Further, this policy must establish procedures for addressing complaints of unacceptable student conduct or other concerns related to violations of OHSU policies, including procedures for recommending or imposing sanctions. In cases where suspension or dismissal is the recommended sanction, the Professional Conduct Policy must defer to policies and procedures described in the remaining sections of this Article.

Section B **Suspension or Dismissal of Students from a Graduate Studies Program.** Students may be suspended or dismissed from graduate programs only by the Dean of the School of Medicine.

1. **Suspension/Dismissal Procedure.** To recommend suspension or dismissal of a student, a graduate program shall inform the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in writing of the reasons for its recommendation. The Associate Dean may return the recommendation to the Program for further consideration, deny the recommendation or appoint a committee to evaluate the recommendation. The suspension/dismissal review committee will include at least three members of the Graduate Faculty. The Associate Dean will select one of the committee members to serve as chair. The chair of the committee will convene a meeting to evaluate the proposed recommendation for suspension or dismissal. The student shall be informed in writing at least 10 weekdays prior to the meeting of the time and place of the meeting and the reasons that led to the consideration of a recommendation for suspension or dismissal. The chair will supervise a meeting to review matters relevant to the recommendation for suspension or dismissal. In addition to the committee members and representatives of the student's Program,

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the meeting may be attended by the student and an advisor of his or her choice. The advisor may counsel the student concerning responses to questions or recommend questions to be asked of the committee. The advisor will not be permitted to speak on behalf of the student or to participate in any other manner not approved by the committee. The committee may, at any time, request additional information or documentation from the student and/or others and may request that individuals appear before it during the hearing process, to provide information. The chair may recess the meeting whenever he or she considers it appropriate. All committee sessions, except for the committee's deliberations will be tape-recorded.

At the completion of the hearing, the committee will deliberate in private and recommend a decision concerning suspension or dismissal. The standard for decision making shall be the preponderance of evidence. A recommendation should be reached within 20 weekdays of the conclusion of the hearings process. The committee will prepare a report summarizing the committee's findings and decision concerning suspension or dismissal. The findings and recommendation of the committee will be communicated in writing to the Dean and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies of the School of Medicine and to the Program Director. The decision of the Dean will be the final action of the School of Medicine. The Dean shall reach a final decision concerning suspension or dismissal within 10 weekdays of receipt of the committee report. A copy of the decision will be sent to the student and members of the suspension/dismissal committee, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, and the Program Director. Suspension and dismissal may be appealed to the Provost. A suspended or dismissed student may not register while such an appeal is pending.

Suspended students are not eligible for the privileges and services provided to currently enrolled students, including registering, attending class, receiving a stipend or health insurance, or using other University services or facilities. The suspension may be specified for any length of time. If a student is suspended, fees will be refunded in accordance with the refund schedule adopted by OHSU. The conditions of suspension take effect immediately after the student has been informed of the decision. If an appeal is filed, the imposition of the suspension will be stayed until the conclusion of the appeal process. However, if a pending misconduct hearing or appeal may result in suspension, awarding of an academic degree sought will be postponed pending the outcome of the hearing. Upon expiration of the period of suspension, the student may submit in writing to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies a request for permission to re-enroll in the Graduate Studies Program. The request should include a description of the student's activities since the suspension went into effect and should include a letter of support by the Program Director. If the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies decides that the terms of suspension have been met, the student may re-enroll. If the terms of suspension have not been met, the student may be subject to dismissal proceedings.

## ARTICLE VIII – STUDENT GRIEVANCES

- Section A Students have the right to grieve matters related but not restricted to the following areas: rights of authorship on scientific publications, student-mentor relationships, laboratory safety concerns, and grading policies. Students may not grieve disciplinary action, grades (including failure of the qualifying exam or failure of the oral thesis/dissertation exam), dismissal or other action taken under the Professional Conduct Policy. If the grievance involves discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability, it will be referred to the office of Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity.
- Section B **Informal Procedure.** Students who wish to grieve a matter are encouraged to first discuss the problem with the individual(s) directly involved in the issue and see whether the matter can be

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resolved informally. Students who do not feel comfortable doing so, or otherwise choose not to, should discuss the potential grievance with the Program Director. If the student feels that the situation is such that the Program Director cannot be approached, the student should communicate with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. The individual who is initially approached will meet with the grievant and/or the person or persons complained against and try to reach an informal resolution of the matter.

**Section C** **Grievance Hearing.** If the parties are unable to resolve the issue to their mutual satisfaction through the informal resolution process, the grievant may file a written grievance with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies within 20 business days after the termination of the informal grievance resolution procedures. The document should describe the nature of the grievance, the circumstances under which the grievance took place, previous efforts to resolve the problem and the nature of the redress the grievant is seeking. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will appoint, within 20 business days, a committee consisting of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty and one graduate student. The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies will designate one of the members to serve as chair of the committee. The committee will first meet within 10 business days of its appointment, if feasible. The committee will set a time and place for the grievance hearing and send written notification to the parties involved. The hearing may consist of a series of meetings between the committee and individuals involved in the grievance or a single meeting with all parties present. At any stage of the proceeding, each party to the grievance may be accompanied by an advisor of that party's choice. The advisor will not be permitted to speak on behalf of the party or participate in any other manner not approved of by the committee. The committee may, at any time, request additional information or documentation from the grievant and/or others, and may request that individuals appear before it during the hearing process to provide information. All committee sessions, except for the committee's deliberations, will be tape-recorded.

At any stage of the proceeding, the committee may attempt to resolve the grievance. If an acceptable resolution is reached, the committee will prepare a Statement of Understanding for all parties to sign. A copy of the statement will be provided to the parties and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

If a resolution is not reached before the conclusion of the hearings process, the committee will deliberate in private and reach a decision with respect to the grievance. A decision should be reached within 20 weekdays of the conclusion of the hearings process. The committee will prepare a report summarizing the committee's factual findings, the committee's conclusions based on the evidence presented at the hearing and the committee's recommended solution or determination of the grievance. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, the Dean of the School of Medicine, the student's Program Director and to the parties to the grievance. The Dean shall reach a final decision on the grievance within 10 business days of receipt of the report. A copy of the decision will be sent to the parties, members of the grievance committee, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and the Program Director. The Dean's decision may be appealed to the Provost in accordance with OHSU policy.

## ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

**Section E** **Manner of Presentation.** Any member of Graduate Council may initiate proposals for amending, repealing, or adding new By-Laws. Such proposals must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.



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Section F **Notice of Intended Amendments.** The Associate Dean for Graduate Studies shall supply each member of the Council copies of the proposed amendments at least one week prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.

Section G **Adoption of Amendments.** Adoption of the proposed amendments shall require a majority of affirmative votes of Council members present following discussion of the amendments at the meeting. Final approval of amendments to the By-Laws is contingent upon approval by the School of Medicine Faculty Council and Dean.

**ARTICLE X – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

All proceedings at the meetings of Graduate Council and any questions of order not provided by these By-Laws shall be governed by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

**APPROVAL OF BY-LAWS**

Approved by Graduate Council School of Medicine: 8 June 2021

Allison D Fryer, PhD Associate Dean Graduate Studies



Approved by Faculty Council School of Medicine OHSU: 7 October 2021

George Mejicano, MD Senior Associate Dean Education (for the Dean School of Medicine)

**GLOSSARY**

**Program.** The word “Program” shall refer to a department, interdepartmental committee or other School of Medicine administrative unit that has received approval from the Faculty Council and has been accredited to offer an educational program leading to a Graduate Certificate, Master’s or Ph.D. degree. A Program with a single administrative structure that oversees training for more than one degree shall be considered to be one Program.

**Graduate Program Director** shall refer to the Graduate Faculty member leading an Academic Graduate Program with authority and accountability for the operation of the program. The director should have education and administrative experience and specialty expertise, and their appointment must be approved by the Dean.