

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Graduate Council Rules of Order

Revised March, 2002

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE COUNCIL
RULES OF ORDER

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SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL RULES OF ORDER

I. Function and Authority

- A. The Graduate Council is an elected representative body of the graduate faculty. The Council is charged with the responsibility for developing and maintaining University policies that establish the minimum acceptable standards for graduate programs of study offered at Southern Connecticut State University. These policies encompass the areas of minimum acceptable academic qualifications for admission as a graduate student and the acceptable level of academic performance for continued matriculation.

- B. The Graduate Council, through its activities, encourages the various graduate and professional degree granting units to maintain a high level of quality and performance by both faculty and students and holds primary responsibility for the general direction of and long range planning of graduate education at Southern Connecticut State University.

- C. The actions of the Graduate Council are subject to the statutory rights, responsibilities and jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Governors and the University's faculty bargaining agents. The President or his/her designee has the responsibility for the review of all actions by the Graduate Council and the right to disapprove actions that infringe upon the implementation of approved Board policies.

II. Membership

- A. The Graduate Faculty
 - 1. To be designated a member of the Graduate Faculty, a member of the instructional faculty of Southern Connecticut State University: (1) shall be employed as a full-time faculty

member; (2) shall have earned the terminal degree appropriate to his or her discipline; (3) shall hold the rank of assistant professor or higher; and (4) shall have: a) taught a graduate class; or b) been active in the graduate program; or c) published research or engaged in public scholarly or creative activities within the last four years.*

2. A full-time member of the instructional faculty may be appointed to the Graduate Faculty during any academic year after review and recommendation by the Procedures Committee, and ratification by the Graduate Council, provided he/ she meets the criteria.
3. Members of the Graduate Faculty may forfeit membership on the graduate faculty if they fail to meet any of the criteria for membership as stated in Section II A-1. Prior to the publication of each graduate catalog, the Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the appropriate department Chairperson, shall verify graduate faculty membership in the voting unit. Anyone not verified is removed from the catalog.

***All faculty members of the University who were listed in the 1983-85 Graduate Catalog and had taught a graduate class and/or had been active in the graduate program in the preceding five years were recognized as members of the Graduate Faculty for 1985-87.**

B. The Graduate Council

1. The Graduate Council shall be composed of 25 elected members and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies who serves ex-officio in a non-voting capacity.
2. Only members of the Graduate Faculty may be elected as members of the Graduate Council.
3. Each elected member of the Graduate Council shall have a corresponding alternate. Only members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as alternative members of the Council.

4. Graduate faculty members and alternates will be elected to serve for a period of three years. One-third of the members will be elected each year. The term of office shall be for three years, commencing in the September following election.
5. If a member can no longer serve, the alternate will fill the unexpired term. If the member and the alternate can no longer serve, the voting unit shall elect a new member and alternate to fill the unexpired term.
6. The Faculty Senate, Library Services, Graduate Student Affairs Committee and UCF shall have observer status on the Council. Each unit shall determine its own representative.

C. Voting Units

1. The basic voting units for selection of Graduate Council members shall be the academic schools. Each academic school shall have at least one representative on the Graduate Council. Members of the Graduate Council shall be elected by the Graduate Faculty of their respective schools.
2. The Procedures Committee, in conjunction with the Dean of the Graduate School shall, at the December meeting, present to the Council recommendations for the equitable apportionment of the twenty-five (25) elected representatives among the academic schools for the next year. The total number of semester hours generated in graduate courses produced by each school during the current Fall and preceding Spring semesters shall be the basis for the apportionment. No voting unit shall constitute a majority of the Council membership. The Council shall vote on this recommendation.
3. Reapportionment of membership among the schools shall occur only as terms of elected members expire.
4. Prior to February 1st of each year, the Secretary of the Graduate Council shall notify the Procedures Committee and the Dean of each academic school of vacancies to be filled by that unit for the following academic year. The Graduate Faculty of each

academic school notified shall elect the designated number of members and alternates prior to March 31 and shall inform the Secretary of the Graduate Council in writing of the names of those elected.

5. The Procedures Committee of the Graduate Council shall establish written procedures for the representative election of members and alternates.

III. Officers

- A. The Officers of the Graduate Council shall be Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

1. Chairperson

- a. Election - The Chairperson shall be elected by majority vote of the Council at the meeting in May of each year. The Chairperson may be re-elected for one additional term, but shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. The Chairperson shall take office at the end of the last official meeting of the academic year in which he/she is elected. Any Council member who will be a Council member in the following academic year is eligible to be elected as Chairperson.
- b. Duties of the Chairperson shall include but not be limited to:
 - (1) presiding at all Council meetings;
 - (2) keeping membership informed of Council activities;
 - (3) formulating the agenda for meetings through the Graduate Dean;
 - (4) acting as official liaison between the Graduate Council and the Graduate School in all matters pertaining to Graduate Studies;
 - (5) calling regular and special meetings;
 - (6) making committee appointments when appropriate;
 - (7) conducting a meeting of the Executive Committee at least once each semester to coordinate the efforts of the Council membership.

2. Vice Chairperson

- a. Election - The Vice Chairperson shall be elected by majority vote of the Council at the May meeting of each year following the election of the Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson may be re-elected for one additional term, but shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. The Vice Chairperson shall take office at the same time the Chairperson takes office.
- b. Duties of the Vice Chairperson shall include but not be limited to:
 - (1) presiding (pro-tem) at Council meetings in the absence of the Chairperson;
 - (2) assisting the Chairperson in carrying out his or her responsibilities;
 - (3) serving as chairperson of the Academic Standards Committee.

3. Secretary

- a. Election - The Secretary shall be elected by majority vote of the Council following the election of the Vice Chairperson at the May meeting of each year. The Secretary may be re-elected for one additional term, but shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. The Secretary shall take office at the same time the Chairperson takes office.
- b. Duties of the Secretary shall include but not be limited to:
 - (1) taking official minutes of Graduate Council meetings;
 - (2) sending official notification of vacancies and receiving official notification of filling of vacancy;
 - (3) coordinating official correspondence of the Council;
 - (4) presiding (pro-tem) at Council meetings in the absence of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

B. Removal of Officers

1. A motion to remove from office any Council officer shall be introduced by a petition clearly stating the grounds for removal of the officer and bearing the signatures of not less than 30% of the Graduate Council membership.
2. A motion to remove from office any Council officer may be introduced at any regular meeting of the Council, but may not be voted upon until the next regular meeting. A motion to remove shall require the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the Graduate Council membership on a roll call vote.

IV. Meetings

A. Graduate Council Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Graduate Council shall be held on the first Monday of each month when classes are in session, beginning in October and ending in May. There will no meeting of the Graduate Council in January. An annual schedule of meetings in agreement with the official academic calendar shall be published on or before October first of each year.
2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Council as deemed necessary. Special meetings of the Council also shall be called by the Chairperson at the request of at least one-third of the Council members. The call to such meetings must be issued at least one week in advance and must clearly state the purpose of and justification for the meeting.
3. A majority of the voting membership of the Graduate Council shall constitute a quorum.
4. The usual order of business shall be:
 - a. Call to order.
 - b. Disposition of minutes.
 - c. Announcements.
 - d. Reports of Committees.

- e. Old Business.
 - f. New Business.
 - g. Adjournment.
5. Each member shall be entitled to one vote and a simple majority of those voting is required to pass any motion. Absentee ballots are not permitted. Any member may request a secret ballot. Such a request shall be honored.
 6. All meetings of the Graduate Council shall be open to any interested member of the university community.
 7. Minutes of all meetings shall be taken by the Secretary of the Graduate Council, reviewed by the Executive Committee and the Chairperson of the Graduate Council, and mailed to all members and alternates, the Registrar, the Faculty Senate President, Departmental Chairpersons, Deans, Vice Presidents and the President.

B. Graduate Faculty Meeting

1. There shall be a scheduled meeting of the Graduate Faculty at least once each year at which time the Chairperson of the Council and Council Committees shall report to the faculty on activities of the Council and committees and respond to comments and questions from the faculty.
 - a. This meeting shall be held during the month of May.
 - b. Any member of the University community may request time on the agenda by presenting a written request identifying the topic and the amount of time requested at least three weeks before the scheduled meeting time.
2. Any group of twenty-five members of the Graduate Faculty that includes representation from a majority of the voting units may petition the Chairperson of the Council for a special meeting of the Graduate Faculty on a specific issue

or proposal. Such a meeting must be scheduled within 30 days of receipt of valid petition.

V. Graduate Council Committees

There shall be the following Standing Committees of the Graduate Council. Each member of the Graduate Council shall serve on one and may serve on more than one Standing Committee as appointed by the Chairperson of the Graduate Council and approved by the members of the Council.

A. Standing Committees

1. Executive Committee

a. Membership: Chairperson of the Council, Vice Chairperson of the Council, Secretary, Dean of Graduate Studies (Ex officio), and Chairpersons of all Standing Committees.

b. Duties:

Coordinate the activities of the Council and act for the Council in matters of exigency.

2. Curriculum Committee

a. Membership: Eleven Council members appointed annually by the Council Chairperson and apportioned to voting units on the basis of the preceding fall and spring graduate semester hour productivity report; however, each voting unit shall have a least one representative.

b. If there is a change in the number of representatives from the voting unit serving on the Curriculum Committee due to reapportionment, then the Chairperson of the Graduate Council shall adjust the membership accordingly.

- c. Committee Chairperson: The members of the Committee shall elect a Chairperson at the first Committee meeting of the year. The Chairperson is limited to two consecutive terms.
- d. Duties:
 - (1) Recommend to the Graduate Council operating procedures for the submission of new and revised courses, concentrations and programs.
 - (2) Review proposals for new and revised courses, concentrations and programs and present recommendations to the Council.
 - (3) Recommend curricular ideas and innovations to the Graduate Council.

3. Procedures Committee

- a. Membership: Three Council members appointed annually by the Council Chairperson.
- b. Committee Chairperson: The members of the Committee shall elect a Chairperson at the first committee meeting of the year.
- c. Duties:
 - (1) Make recommendations to the Council for equitable membership among the voting units according to parameters established by the Council.
 - (2) Recommend criteria and changes in criteria for the qualifications, nomination and acceptance of Graduate Faculty.

- (3) Review nominations and make recommendations for new members of the graduate faculty to the Graduate Council.
- (4) Make recommendations to the Council on all matters pertaining to the Rules of Order of the Council or, if appropriate, any standing rules the Council or a committee of the Council may seek to adopt that will affect the organization and business of the Council.
- (5) Make recommendations to the Council pertaining to formal interaction with other university committees, organizations and offices.
- (6) Present a slate of nominees and conduct the election of officers annually.
- (7) Advise the Council on all matters pertaining to elections, recall and referendum matters, coordinating with the Faculty Senate in any referendum that is required.

4. Academic Standards Committee

- a. Membership: Eleven Council members appointed annually by the Council Chairperson.
- b. Committee Chairperson: The Vice Chairperson of the Graduate Council will serve as Chairperson of the Academic Standards Committee.
- c. Duties:
 - (1) Recommend the minimum academic standards that should be enforced in the School of Graduate Studies.

- (2) Recommend procedures for enforcing the implementation of the minimum academic standards.
- (3) Review existing courses, concentrations and programs on a rotating schedule and present recommendations to the Council.

B. Ad Hoc Committees

The Council may direct the Chairperson to establish ad hoc committees to perform specific tasks. The Chairperson and members of such committees will be appointed by the Council Chairperson. An ad hoc committee will cease to exist when its duties are completed.

C. General Duties of Committees

1. All standing committees will present a report, when appropriate, at each meeting of the Council and provide a written summary to the Secretary for the minutes when appropriate.
2. Any ad hoc or other special committee will present a report when appropriate, at a meeting of the Council with a written summary to the Secretary for the minutes.
3. At the end of the academic year, each standing committee shall submit to the Graduate Office, as a matter of record, a brief written report which will:
 - a. Summarize the activities of the committee;
 - b. Evaluate the degree of progress made;
 - c. Identify areas of strength and weakness;
 - d. Suggest an agenda in priority order for the following year.

VI. Graduate Faculty Initiatives

A. General

Members of the Graduate Faculty are encouraged to bring matters to the Council through their elected representatives. The Council shall consider such proposals and take appropriate action.

B. The Graduate Council shall be bound to consider for enactment:

1. Faculty Initiatives

- a. Proposals which have been petitioned with no less than 10% of the total Graduate Faculty, including two signatures from each of the voting units signing the petition.
- b. Proposals recommended by a majority vote of the Graduate Faculty at the annual Graduate Faculty Meeting.

2. Faculty Referenda

Any Graduate Faculty member may petition the Graduate Council to conduct a Graduate Faculty referendum with respect to any action taken by the Council. Signatures of at least 10% of the Graduate Faculty, including two signatures from each of the voting units, are required to initiate a referendum.

- a. The Procedures Committee, in coordination with the Faculty Senate, shall conduct the referendum.
- b. A 50% plus one vote of the total Graduate Faculty in favor of the referendum is required to rescind any Council action.

VII. Changes in the Rules of Order*

- A. Changes in the Rules of Order may be proposed at a regular or special meeting of the Graduate Council, provided:

1. Council members have received written notice of each of the proposed changes at least one week prior to the meeting.
 2. A two-thirds majority of the total Council membership approves the changes.
- B. Changes become effective on approval by the Faculty Senate and University President or his/her designee.

***Initial implementation of these Rules of Order followed approval by the Faculty Senate, a majority of the Graduate Faculty, and the University President.**
