



## Faculty of Graduate Studies Council Terms of Reference

### 1. ESTABLISHMENT

The Faculty of Graduate Studies Council (the Council) is established pursuant to the Post-Secondary Learning Act (**PSLA**) and has those powers granted under the PSLA and these Terms of Reference (**TOR**), subject to the authority of the General Faculties Council (**GFC**).

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

#### Chair

Vice Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (ex-officio, voting)

#### Vice Chair

Faculty of Graduate Studies Senior Associate Dean or Associate Dean appointed by the Chair (ex-officio, voting)

#### Members

- President of the University of Calgary or their delegate (ex-officio)
- Registrar of the University of Calgary (ex-officio)
- All Associate Deans, Faculty of Graduate Studies (ex-officio)
- The Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) of each University of Calgary Faculty (if one) (ex-officio)
- All Directors of Graduate Programs (ex-officio)
  - If a program has two co-directors, one will be designated to be a voting member at FGS Council.
  - Non-departmentalized faculties may designate Graduate Program Directors for different degrees (e.g. MSW, PhD) and both can vote.
  - A Graduate Program Director of two programs shall have two votes.
  - An Associate Dean (Graduate Studies) who is also a Graduate Program Director shall have one vote.
- All Graduate Students' Association executive members

Graduate Program Directors or Associate Deans that are unable to attend a particular Council meeting may, and are encouraged to, designate an academic staff member from their graduate program as their delegate for that particular meeting to attend and vote in their stead.

The Council meetings are open to anyone who wishes to observe, with permission of the Chair.

## 2.1 Member Terms

Appointed members may be appointed for a term of up to 3 years, with eligibility for re-appointment for an additional term of up to 3 years.

The membership of an ex-officio member automatically terminates when the member ceases to hold the position by virtue of which they are a member of the Council.

## 2.2 Responsibilities of Members

Members are expected to:

- Familiarize themselves with the Council's role and these Terms of Reference
- Attend each regularly scheduled Council meeting, making every attempt to attend in person
- Review the meeting package prior to the meeting
- Engage in respectful, meaningful discussion and provide considered, constructive and thoughtful feedback and commentary, express opinions and ask questions to enable the Council to exercise its best judgment in decision making and advising in the best interest of the Faculty of Graduate Studies

## **3. ROLE**

The Council has authority to propose regulations pertaining to the governance of graduate degrees, certificates and diplomas at the University of Calgary and to approve faculty policies and other documents pertaining to graduate supervision and examinations at the University. The Council should be an effective voice of the academic community, initiating academic policy and priorities on matters relating to graduate education.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Council will fulfill its role primarily by carrying out the activities enumerated below.

The listed responsibilities shall be the common, recurring activities of the Council; however, the Council may carry out additional responsibilities and duties within its role.

The Council's primary responsibilities are as follows:

- a. To develop and recommend for approval by GFC the *Graduate Academic Regulations* in the *Academic Calendar*.
- b. To develop and approve policies relating to graduate education at the University of Calgary. To recommend to GFC the establishment, suspension, or closure of graduate programs, and any changes to existing programs.
- c. To advise the Dean of Graduate Studies on issues relating to graduate education at the University of Calgary. To receive and discuss annual work plans for the next academic year from its standing committees before the end of each academic year.
- d. Authorize the granting of degrees.
- e. Such other activities and responsibilities set out in the PSLA or delegated or assigned to it by the GFC or brought to it by the Chair from time to time.

## 5. POWERS

The Council is empowered to carry out its role and responsibilities subject to any conditions or restrictions that are imposed on it by the GFC.

The Council may delegate any of its powers, responsibilities and functions as it sees fit and may prescribe conditions governing the exercise or performance of any delegated power, responsibility or function, including the power of sub-delegation. The Council shall require as part of any delegation of its authority that any action taken under a delegated authority of the Council be reported to the Council. The Council may also, by resolution, alter or revoke the delegation of any of its powers, responsibilities and functions under this section.

The Council is ultimately responsible for the work and responsibilities of each of its delegates, standing or *ad hoc* committees, and working groups, if any.

## 6. COUNCIL MEETINGS

### 6.1 Schedule

The Council will meet during the period from September to June in each year (the **Meeting Year**) in accordance with a meeting calendar provided to members. Additional regular or special meetings may be called by the Chair.

### 6.2 Notice

Members will be provided with a schedule of meeting dates for regularly scheduled meetings in advance of each Meeting Year. Except in the case of an emergency meeting, notice of meetings that do not appear in the schedule will be provided at least two days in advance of the meeting date. Meeting details will be communicated to members by the Secretary as soon as they are available before each meeting.

The accidental omission or irregularity of any notice of any meeting, or the non-receipt of any notice by any of the persons entitled to notice, does not invalidate any proceedings at a meeting.

### 6.3 Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas will be formulated by the Chair and reviewed and approved in accordance with the Council's procedures.

A member intending to introduce a new matter at a meeting shall give written notice of the matter and any materials for the Council's consideration, to the Chair and the Secretary at least eight days in advance of the meeting at which it is intended to be introduced.

Notwithstanding the paragraph above, a matter may be introduced to a meeting of the Council without the specified notice thereof having been given and without it having been included in the agenda if the matter is communicated in advance to the Chair, and its introduction to the meeting is approved by the Chair.

If a person who is not a member or a guest approved by the Chair wishes to address the Council at any meeting, such person may do so if he or she has received the prior permission of the Chair.

#### 6.4 Materials

As much as possible, meeting materials will be provided to the Council electronically one week in advance of a scheduled meeting.

#### 6.5 Absence of Chair

In the event that the Chair is unable to attend a meeting of the Council, the Vice-Chair will chair the Council.

If neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair is present within fifteen (15) minutes of the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting, the meeting will be canceled.

#### 6.6 Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Council is a number equal to one-third (1/3) of the members of the Council.

If quorum for a Council meeting is not present within ten (10) minutes of the time fixed for the commencement of the meeting, the Chair of the meeting may:

1. Adjourn the meeting; or
2. Cancel the meeting.

#### 6.7 Conduct of Meetings

In the sole discretion of the Chair, Council meetings may be held in person or by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.

The Chair, or in their absence, the Vice Chair, shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of meetings of the Council. Meetings will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and these Terms of Reference or, where applicable laws or these Terms of Reference are silent on the matter, as determined by a ruling of the Chair, acting reasonably. The Chair may consult the Secretary and look to Roberts Rules of Order for guidance on the conduct of meetings, however, none of these sources shall be considered determinative and the Chair retains the discretion to make a final determination on the matter, subject to challenge as provided below.

The Chair's ruling shall bind all members of the Council except where a motion challenging the ruling has been duly moved, seconded and carried by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at the meeting, whereupon such ruling shall cease to have force and effect. In this event, a member may propose a new ruling and provided it is duly moved, seconded and carried by a majority of the members present at the meeting; it shall bind all members of the Council.

#### 6.8 Electronic Participation

In the event that a Council meeting is held by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility, members may participate in the meeting by means of the telephonic, electronic or other communication facility made available by the Secretary. A person participating in a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting and may vote through the telephonic, electronic or other method of communication being used.

## 6.9 Voting at Meetings

Only Council voting members may move, second and vote on motions.

Motions will be decided by a show of hands, a roll call (voice), consensus, or otherwise in such manner that clearly evidences a member's vote and is accepted by the Chair of the meeting. Voting by proxy is not allowed.

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and eligible to vote, or consent without objection is required to pass a motion. The Chair does not have a second or casting vote. Abstentions do not count in favour of or against the motion

A declaration by the Chair of the meeting that a motion has been carried and an entry to that effect in the minutes shall be prima facie evidence of the action taken. Any member may ask at the time of the vote that the member's individual vote or abstention be recorded in the minutes.

Elections will be decided based upon the number of votes in favour of each nominee in descending order, the first elected person being the nominee with the most votes. Additional elected persons will be the person(s) with the next highest number of votes in descending order until all elected persons have been determined. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast for more than one nominee (a tie), the Chair (or the Vice Chair where the Chair is in a conflict of interest) will cast a vote to break the tie.

## 6.10 Resolutions in Writing

Resolutions in writing are only suitable for straightforward motions or where it is not feasible or practical to call a meeting of the Council and should be used infrequently. Resolutions in writing may be circulated for approval via facsimile, electronic mail or electronic poll.

A resolution of the Council consented to in writing by a majority of the members entitled to vote on it, whether by signed document, facsimile, electronic mail or any other method of transmitting legibly recorded messages, shall have the same force and effect as if it had been passed at a Council meeting duly called and held. Such resolution may be in two or more counterparts which together are deemed to constitute one resolution in writing. A resolution passed in this manner is effective on the date stated in the resolution or, if a date is not stated, on the latest date stated on any counterpart or the latest date on which the required number of affirmative votes is communicated to the Secretary.

The procedures for approval of resolutions via electronic mail or electronic poll are as follows:

Resolutions will be sent to members, or members will be notified of an electronic poll, via the facsimile, e-mail address, or telephone number on file with the Secretary;

- The resolution will expire in the time set in the message; however, the Chair or the Secretary may extend the deadline once by up to a maximum of seven days;
- An affirmative vote of a majority of members who are eligible to vote is required to pass a resolution; The Secretary is responsible for tallying the votes and informing the Council of the outcome
- Written resolutions may not be amended; however, the member who proposed the resolution may withdraw it at any time prior to receipt of the necessary approval or the expiry time, if one, or with the approval of all of the members who voted on the resolution;
- If the resolution does not receive the required votes by the deadline (as extended, if applicable), it does not pass

### 6.11 Open and Closed Meetings

The Council may hold open and closed meetings or sessions of the Council in compliance with the in compliance with applicable laws. Accordingly, materials related to an open meeting or session of a Council meeting may be available to the public through the Secretary upon request, and subject to the discretion of the Secretary, or the direction of the Chair.

Open meetings or open sessions of meetings of the Council may be attended by the public, subject to the limitations of space.

Closed meetings or closed sessions of meetings of the Council will be attended by the Secretary unless specifically excused by the Chair, and by those guests who are invited to remain for the closed session or a portion thereof. If the Secretary is excused by the Chair from a closed session, the Chair will appoint one of the members present to act as secretary for the session, which member shall record any discussions, decisions and actions of the Council pertaining to Council business done in closed session, and will provide a signed record to the Secretary for the official records.

### 6.12 Invited Guests and Visitors

Guests may be invited to attend and speak at a meeting with the approval of the Chair given in advance of the meeting or, in the sole discretion of the Chair of the meeting, during the meeting.

Visitors in attendance at a meeting to observe Council proceedings may speak only if expressly invited to do so by the Chair of the meeting. All visitors are expected to maintain the decorum prescribed for parliamentary galleries and no person is allowed to use a camera or a recording device in a Council meeting. In the event of a breach of these rules or a disturbance, the Chair may eject persons from the meeting or adjourn the meeting.

### 6.13 Council Records

Minutes of the proceedings of all Council meetings and records of all decisions of the Council made outside of a meeting will be created and presented to the Council for approval or information, as applicable, at its next subsequent meeting.

The Council shall keep as permanent records, minutes of all Council meetings, a record of all actions taken by the Council without a meeting, and a record of all actions taken by a committee exercising the authority of the Council. The Council shall maintain its records in a form capable of conversion into written form within a reasonable time.

The official records of the Council will be maintained under the custodianship of the Secretary and shall be available for inspection in the Secretary's office by any member of the Council at any time during regular office hours upon reasonable advance notice to the Secretary.

Access to the official records of the Council by persons other than members will be determined in accordance with applicable legislation and University policies in effect from time to time.

### 6.14 Certification of Records

The Chair, the Secretary or such other person designated by the Council for the purpose may, in a written certificate, certify that:

- a. A writing referred to in the certificate is a true copy of all or part of a minute of the proceedings

of a meeting of the Council or a resolution of the Council; and

- b. The minute or resolution or part thereof is or is not in effect as at a date stated in the certificate.

A certificate made under this section shall, in relation to the Council, be prima facie proof of the facts stated therein without proof of the signature or capacity of the person signing the certificate.

If the person making the certificate is not the Secretary, that person shall make and deliver to the Secretary an executed copy of the certificate as soon as reasonably possible.

## **7. COMMITTEES**

### **7.1 Establishment**

The Council may, by resolution, establish standing or ad-hoc committees with such responsibilities, authorities, membership and operational rules as it considers appropriate. The Council may also, by resolution, dissolve any committee.

### **7.2 Rules and Procedures**

Except where otherwise specified in these Terms of Reference, the responsibilities, authorities, membership and operation of a committee shall be set out in terms of reference approved by the Council or its delegate. Parameters on delegation can be found in Section 5. Powers to these Terms of Reference.

Committees shall report their activities and decisions to the Council at such times and in such manner as required by the Council.

## **8. WORKING GROUPS**

The Council may create working groups that report to the Council directly or through the Chair, to facilitate the accomplishment of its responsibilities. The terms of reference and membership of any working group shall be determined by the Chair, taking into consideration any recommendations made by the Council. Working group members may be drawn from outside the Council.

## **9. OUTSIDE ADVISORS**

The Chair is authorized to retain outside advisors with particular expertise to advise the Council if the Chair determines in their sole discretion that doing so is essential to the Council in carrying out its responsibilities.

## **10. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR**

In addition to the other responsibilities of the Chair set out in these Terms of Reference, the Chair shall provide leadership to enable the Council to effectively carry out its role and responsibilities, act as a spokesperson for the Council, act as the liaison between the Council and the GFC and other University or external groups or individuals, and will generally oversee the Council's activities. The Chair shall also oversee the engagement of any outside advisors.

The Vice Chair will carry out any or all of the Chair's responsibilities at the request of the Chair or in the event that the Chair is absent or unable to carry out their responsibilities, will have those additional powers and duties assigned by the Chair and the Council from time to time.

**11. SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL**

The Secretary to Council shall be the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies or designate.

**12. SPOKESPERSON**

The Chair, or in their absence or inability to act, the Vice Chair, is the only person authorized to speak for the Council.

**13. COUNCIL ASSESSMENT**

The Council shall carry out an assessment of its performance and operations no later than three years following its last assessment in accordance with a process approved by the Council or its delegate.

**14. AUTHORIZATION AND EXECUTION**

All documents or instruments in writing requiring execution on behalf of the Council shall be signed by the Chair or those authorized signatories specified in, and in accordance with, a written authorization of the Council.

All documents or instruments authorized and signed on behalf of the Council as provided herein shall be valid and binding on the Council.

**15. VALIDITY OF NOTICES**

“Business Day” for the purposes of this section means a day other than a day that the University of Calgary is closed or a Saturday, Sunday, statutory or civic holiday in Calgary, Alberta.

Any notice or communication required or permitted to be given or made hereunder will be sufficiently given or made for all purposes if delivered personally, sent by electronic mail or facsimile or sent by ordinary mail within Canada to the last address listed in the records of the Secretary. Any such notice or communication if sent by facsimile or other means of electronic communication shall be deemed to have been received on the day of sending, and if delivered by hand shall be deemed to have been received at the time it is delivered to the applicable address. A document sent by mail will be deemed to be received on the fifth Business Day after the day on which it is mailed. In proving the notice or communication was mailed, it shall be sufficient to prove that such document was properly addressed, stamped and posted.

**16. REVIEW AND CHANGES TO THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Council at least once every three years and any changes it considers necessary will be recommended to the GFC or its delegate for approval.

Anything done pursuant to, or in reliance on, these Terms of Reference before they were amended, replaced or repealed is conclusively deemed to be valid for all purposes.

**17. GENERAL**

Headings

The headings used throughout these Terms of Reference are inserted for reference only and are not to be considered in construing the terms and provisions of these Terms of Reference or to be deemed in any

way to clarify, modify or explain the effect of such terms or provisions.

Conflict with Terms of Reference

In the event of a conflict between the provisions of these Terms of Reference and the provisions of applicable legislation, the provisions of the applicable legislation shall govern.

Invalidity of Provisions

The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of these Terms of Reference shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of these Terms of Reference

**18. EFFECTIVE DATE**

These Terms of Reference will be effective on the date that they are approved by the GFC or its delegate. All prior or existing Terms of Reference of the Council are repealed as of the effective date of these Terms of Reference.

**Approved Date: November 19, 2025**