

THE BYLAWS OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY ASSEMBLY OF WINTHROP UNIVERSITY
(Ratified by Faculty Conference 4-21-75 and 9-27-77; amended 4-12-77, 4-05-79, 4-09-81,
4-20-88, 2-28-92, 2-13-98, 8-20-04, 4-24-09, 4-17-15, 4-17-20, 10-2-20, 4-22-22)

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Faculty Assembly of Winthrop University, hereinafter referred to as the Assembly.

Article II - Responsibilities

Section 1 The Assembly shall be responsible for: (1) its own organization and procedures as provided in these *Bylaws*; (2) the Winthrop University graduate academic programs, policies, and regulations, within limitations prescribed by the Faculty Conference of Winthrop University; and (3) such additional matters as shall be referred to it by the Faculty Conference of Winthrop University, by the President of Winthrop University, or by the Chief Academic Officer of Winthrop University.

Section 2 The Assembly shall create and instruct subordinate councils and committees, standing and select, and shall periodically review the major decisions of its subordinate bodies.

Section 3 The Assembly shall be the principal legislative body of the graduate faculty. All actions of the Assembly shall be subject to review by the President of the University. Any disapprovals shall be communicated to the graduate faculty with reasons therefore, within thirty days. By a majority vote, the Assembly may charge the Chair of Graduate Faculty Assembly to communicate concerns regarding such disapprovals to the Board of Trustees. (8-25-09)

Article III - Membership

Section 1 Membership in the Graduate Faculty Assembly is determined by the academic dean of the appropriate college in consultation with the department chair. The criteria for membership are that the faculty member (i) holds the terminal degree awarded in discipline. In some cases, experience may substitute for the degree; (ii) will contribute to graduate-level teaching and/or service to the institution. Determination of membership may be made upon hire or at any time thereafter as these two conditions are met. The appropriate college will keep records of the faculty member's status as member of the Graduate Faculty Assembly and will report membership status to the Dean of Graduate Education. If the eligibility of a person for membership is questioned, the Graduate Faculty Assembly shall be the judge of the qualifications of that person for membership. (Amended by Graduate Faculty Assembly, 4-22-22)

Article IV - Officers

Section 1 The Chair of the Assembly shall be elected biennially at a spring meeting by the Assembly from among its own membership. Only tenured faculty members of the Graduate Faculty Assembly are eligible to serve as Chair of the Assembly. A vacancy in the office shall be filled by election of the Assembly for the unexpired term. Deans, the Chair of the Graduate Council, and untenured members of Graduate Faculty Assembly shall be ineligible to serve as Chair. (Amended 4-24-09, 4-17-15, 4-17-20, 10-2-20)

Section 2 The electoral procedure for the Chair is as follows:

- A. **Nomination:** Graduate Council will nominate at least one person and announce the nominee(s) to the faculty prior to the opening of electronic voting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the meeting immediately prior to the opening of electronic voting, provided that the consent of the nominee(s) has already been obtained.
- A.1. In the case where only one nominee is provided by Graduate Council and there are no additional nominations from the floor, the Chair may declare the nominee elected by acclamation.
- B. **Voting: Voting members of Graduate Faculty Assembly will be sent an invitation to complete an anonymous electronic ballot following the meeting during which nominations for Chair are closed. Graduate Faculty Assembly shall use the Borda method to tally all votes.**
- B.1. Custody and counting of ballots shall be the responsibility of the secretary of Graduate Faculty Assembly, who will tally the votes with the assistance of a member of Graduate Council and a faculty monitor designated by the Rules Committee of the Faculty Conference. Neither the faculty monitor nor the Graduate Council member may be a candidate in that election.
- B.2. In all elections, voters shall rank the candidates in order of preference, with the favorite candidate receiving rank 1, the second favorite receiving rank 2, and so on.
- B.3. If there is a tie, the faculty monitors shall break the tie by a method of equal chance, e.g. coin flip.
- C. **Timeline:** Voting faculty members will have seventy-two hours to complete the electronic ballot before it closes.
- D. **Custody of Electronic Voting and Calculating Votes:** The faculty monitors shall develop and distribute the electronic ballot. Vote totals will be calculated by the faculty monitors as described in Section B above.
- E. **Notification and results:** As soon as votes are tabulated, both winning and losing candidates will be notified of the outcome by the Secretary of the Graduate Faculty Assembly. Complete election results will then be distributed to the faculty by the Secretary of the Graduate Faculty Assembly. (Amended 4-24-09)

Section 3 The Chair of the Graduate Council shall be the presiding officer of the Assembly when the Chair is absent or chooses not to preside. (Amended 4-20-88)

Section 4 The Secretary of the Assembly shall be appointed by the Chair.

Section 5 The Parliamentarian of the Assembly shall be appointed by the Chair.

Article V - Meetings

Section 1 The Assembly shall prescribe for itself a suitable schedule of regular meetings. At least one meeting shall be held each semester, and special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chair of the

Assembly or of the Graduate Council or of ten percent of the members of the Assembly. (Amended 4-24-09)

Section 2 A quorum shall consist of 25 members of Graduate Faculty Assembly.

A. At the beginning of each meeting of the chair of Graduate Faculty Assembly shall determine if a quorum is present. If a quorum is not present, the conference shall be able to conduct business subject to the following conditions:

A.1. Seventy-five percent of the faculty in attendance shall vote that business should be conducted.

A.2. Final action on all substantive proposals (as distinguished from amendments and procedural actions) shall require the approval of two-thirds of those present and voting.

Article VI - Graduate Council

Section 1 The Graduate Council shall be responsible to the Assembly for appropriate reports and recommendations concerning academic programs, policies, and regulations specific to the graduate program. It shall have the authority to act on recommendations from a college to change graduate curricular requirements as specified in Article XII below. Such actions, with the exception of decisions on graduate petitions, shall be communicated promptly to the graduate faculty and may be modified or reversed by the Assembly. Meetings of the Graduate Council and its subordinate committees shall be announced to the graduate faculty members in advance and, except when considering graduate petitions, shall be open to all members of the Assembly. Following each meeting of the Graduate Council, a report of its actions shall be communicated promptly to the members of the Assembly. (Amended 9-27-77, 4-20-88, 4-24-09, 4-17-15)

Section 2 The Graduate Council shall be responsible for recommending to the Assembly a suitable schedule of regular council meetings, for calling special meetings of the Assembly, for inviting guests to meetings of the Assembly, for updating these Bylaws on the Faculty Conference website following any approved changes, and for recommending to the Assembly appropriate changes in the organization and procedure of the entities established under the authority of these *Bylaws*.

Section 3 The Chair of the Graduate Council shall be elected by the voting members of the Graduate Council, from the voting members of the Graduate Council, and shall have served on the Council at least one year. Each year the voting members of the Graduate Council shall elect from among their own members the vice chair, who shall preside when the chair is not present. The Chief Academic Officer or designate shall serve as a member, without vote. A representative of the Graduate School office shall serve as Secretary, without vote. A representative selected by the Winthrop Library faculty shall serve as a member, without vote. The graduate faculty member elected by the Assembly to serve on the Committee on University Curriculum shall serve as a member, without vote. The President of the University, upon the recommendation of the Chief Academic Officer, shall appoint three voting members of Graduate Council, each from a different major academic division of the University. Each academic division of the University consisting of five or more Graduate Faculty Assembly members shall have one voting member, elected by members of the academic division. Administrative officers shall not be eligible to serve on the Graduate Council. Department chairs are eligible to serve on Graduate Council. The term of the Chair shall be one year and the term of voting members three years. (Amended 2-28-92,

2-13-98, 8-20-04, 4-24-09)

The terms of the voting members of the Graduate Council shall be staggered as determined by regulations adopted by the Assembly. If a member ceases to serve, his or her successor shall be appointed or elected for the unexpired term only. A voting member may not serve more than two complete terms in succession. No faculty member shall be eligible to serve as a voting member unless he/she has served

two years as a graduate faculty member at Winthrop University immediately preceding his or her service. The Chair of Graduate Council must have at least two years as a graduate faculty member as well as one year service on Graduate Council. (Amended 4-17-15)

Two graduate students representing the graduate student body at Winthrop University shall be members of the Graduate Council. One of the student members shall be appointed from one college and the other appointed from another college for their terms of service. The student members shall be appointed by their respective Deans for a period of one academic year and shall serve without voting privileges; if a student member should cease to serve before completing a one-year term of office, that student's Dean shall appoint a replacement from the same academic unit to serve to the end of the academic year. Appointments shall start from an alphabetical listing of the Colleges (Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, and Visual and Performing Arts). Student members shall be appointed according to the alphabetical listing on a rotating basis. (Amended 4-05-79, 4-09-81, 4-20-88)

Section 4 All councils, committees, or entities at Winthrop University, to the extent of their responsibilities in the area of graduate academic affairs, not otherwise responsible to a major academic division, shall report to the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council shall approve, modify, or disapprove any programs, policies, or regulations made by such entities in the area of graduate instruction.

Section 5 The Graduate Council may meet in joint session with the Academic Council of the Faculty Conference to discuss matters of mutual concern when called to do so by the Chairs of the two councils. When such joint meetings take place, the Chair of the Academic Council shall preside. The two councils may establish joint committees and councils to pursue matters of mutual concern and may establish rules for joint activities, except that if voting takes place it shall be done separately by council.

Section 6 The voting members of the Graduate Council shall serve as a graduate petitions committee to hear petitions from graduate students. (Amended 9-27-77, 4-24-09)

Article VII – Committees

Section 1 The Assembly shall establish and regulate any committees it deems appropriate.

Section 2 Each committee of the Assembly, standing or select, unless otherwise provided, shall elect its own Chair and Secretary, shall meet at the call of the Chair or any two members, and shall report at least once each academic year to the Assembly as scheduled by the Graduate Council. Any committee actions may be modified or reversed by the Assembly. All committee meetings shall be open to all members of the Assembly unless the committee specifically votes to meet in executive session. Membership on standing committees shall be for staggered three-year terms as determined by the regulations of the Assembly, and vacancies shall be filled by election for the unexpired term only.

Article VIII - Constituent Committees

The members of the Assembly who are appointed from each major academic division of the University shall be eligible for membership in a graduate faculty committee of that division. Each such committee shall be responsible for the graduate academic programs of its division within limitations prescribed by the Assembly. The following are recognized as major academic divisions of the University: the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business Administration, the Richard W. Riley College of Education, the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and the Winthrop University Library. (Amended 4-09-81, 4-20-88, 4-17-15)

Article IX - Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the Assembly, the Graduate Council, and all committees created under the authority of these *Bylaws*, in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the relevant *Bylaws* or special rules of order. All continuing special rules of order established by the Assembly shall be printed in the *Faculty Manual* of Winthrop University.

Article X - Amendments

These *Bylaws* can be amended at any regular meeting of the Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the members voting, provided that the proposed amendment has been placed on the agenda by vote of the Assembly at the previous meeting.

Article XI - Ratification

Section 1 These *Bylaws* shall be operative beginning August 15, 1975, provided they are first approved by the Assembly and ratified by the Faculty Conference of Winthrop University.

Section 2 All programs, policies, and regulations enacted under earlier *Bylaws* shall be valid and operative until changed.

Article XII – Curricular Review

Section 1 **Renaming a course, changing a course description, adding a course, dropping a course, renumbering a course, adding or changing prerequisites or corequisites to a course, adding a designator, changing a designator, dropping a designator, changing a grade mode on a course.** Any recommendation that renames a course, changes a course description, adds a course, drops a course, renumbers a course, adds or changes prerequisites or corequisites to a course, adds a designator, changes a designator, drops a designator, or changes a grade mode on a course shall be reported to the Graduate Council for information purposes only. Such recommendations shall be communicated promptly in the report of the Graduate Council to the members of the Assembly. If no graduate faculty member places the recommendation on the agenda of the Assembly for further discussion within seven calendar days of receiving the report, then the curriculum action is automatically approved as an action of the Assembly. (Amended 4-17-15)

Section 2 **Changing graduation requirements in a degree program with no change in the overall number of semester hours required by the program.** A recommendation that changes the graduation requirements in a degree program with no change in the overall number of semester hours

required by the program shall be reported to the Graduate Council. If the Graduate Council approves the recommendation, such approval shall be communicated promptly in the report of the Graduate Council to the members of the Assembly. If no graduate faculty member places the recommendation on the agenda of the Assembly for further discussion within seven calendar days of receiving the report, then the curriculum action is automatically approved as an action of the Assembly.
(Amended 4-17-15)

Section 3 Changing the overall number of semester hours required by a degree program, adding a degree program, dropping a degree program. A recommendation that changes the overall number of semester hours required by a degree program, adds a degree program, or drops a degree program shall be reported to the Graduate Council. If the Graduate Council approves the recommendation, the recommendation shall be placed on the agenda of the Assembly.

Section 4 Courses enrolling undergraduate and graduate students. A recommendation that falls under Section 1 of this article and involves a course that enrolls both undergraduate and graduate students shall be reported by the college curriculum committee both to the college faculty assembly and to the Graduate Council. If both of these bodies approve the recommendation, it shall be forwarded to the Committee on University Curriculum and shall be approved or denied in the manner described in the *Bylaws of the Faculty Conference of Winthrop University*. If both of these bodies deny the recommendation, it is denied. If one of these bodies approves the recommendation and the other denies the recommendation, it is denied, but the Committee on University Curriculum may (but is not obliged to) suggest means for producing a recommendation that could be approved by both bodies.

Section 5 Teacher education courses. A recommendation that affects educator preparation programs or courses used in these programs shall be reported to the Educator Preparation Committee after it is approved by a college faculty assembly. A recommendation that falls under Section 1 of this article (except for recommendations to add or change prerequisites or corequisites to a course) shall be reported to the Educator Preparation Committee for information only. A recommendation that adds or changes prerequisites or corequisites to a course or that falls under Sections 2 or 3 of this article shall be reported to the Educator Preparation Committee. If the committee approves the recommendation, it shall be reported to the Graduate Council and shall be approved or denied in the manner described in the appropriate section of this article. (Amended 4-24-09, 4-17-20)

Section 6 Electronic Voting. Curriculum action requiring a vote from the Graduate Faculty Assembly may be placed on an electronic voting forum. Curriculum placed on the electronic forum may be voted on electronically if no recommendation for further discussion is registered within 7 days of initial posting to the online forum. Any recommendation for further discussion would cause the curriculum item to be placed on the agenda of the next GFA meeting where the matter would be discussed and voted on by members. Actions involving 500-level courses may also require approval by the appropriate divisions of Faculty Conference.

Table III: Process for Approving Matters Relating ONLY to Graduate Curriculum

Curriculum Action	College Graduate	EPC Votes	Graduate Council Votes	Graduate Faculty Assembly Votes
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	Faculty Votes			
Rename a course or change course description; Add, drop, or renumber a course; Add, change or drop a designator	Yes	No; Sent forward for information only	No; Sent forward for information only	No
Add or change a pre-requisite or corequisite	Yes	If applicable	No; Sent forward for information only	No
Change graduation requirements in a degree program (no change in overall # of hours)	Yes	If applicable	Yes	No
Change # of hours needed to complete a degree program; Add or drop a degree program	Yes	If applicable	Yes	Yes