

Administrative Structure

Responsibilities of the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Assistant

Associate Chair for Graduate Studies

The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies is a faculty member who administers the Graduate Program. The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies serves as a liaison (a) between the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and department staff by serving as the department's representative on Graduate Faculty Council, (b) among graduate committees in the department through serving as a member, and (c) between department staff and individual students through consultation with students and their supervisors or supervisory committees about aspects of students' programs.

The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies reports to the Chair, oversees graduate student recruitment, selection, and orientation; helps arrange and adjudicate applications for grants, scholarships and awards; manages the yearly evaluations of graduate students; conducts the PSYCO 502 seminar; guides policy on graduate program development; and is a member of FGSR Council. In addition, the Associate Chair sits on the standing committees relevant to the graduate program (e.g., Selection, Assistantship, Curriculum, Recruitment, Scholarship), and is invited to Chair's Advisory Committee when issues relevant to the Graduate Program are discussed.

The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies ensures that the graduate program is implemented according to department design and within the regulations of FGSR by (a) using PSYCO 502 as forum to communicate program ideals and basic goals and values of professional and ethical development and (b) monitoring the flow of departmental and university forms related to course registration and attainment of research landmarks that help ensure communication between students and their supervisory committee is effective. The Associate Chair, along with the Graduate Program Assistant, prepares materials for the Student Evaluation Meeting in May. The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies chairs this meeting. The Associate Chair also provides information to graduate students about scholarship and training opportunities and undertakes other relevant activities as needed.

Graduate Program Assistant

The Graduate Program Assistant assists the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and also acts as the liaison between students and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. Major activities entail providing administrative support, maintaining graduate student records, and managing matters relevant to assistantships, bursaries, travel grants, and other awards.

Psychology Graduate Policy Documents

Administrative Structure

The Assistant's duties are varied. They include responsibility for all aspects of the recruiting process, establishment and maintenance of students' academic and financial records, preparation and presentation of materials for examinations, scholarship applications, and special projects. The Assistant compiles statistics for the department, faculties, and outside agencies. Preparation of material for the May graduate evaluation meeting and minute-taking are an important part of the Graduate Program Assistant's duties. Also significant is the Assistant's contributions to The Graduate Assistantships Committee, Graduate Scholarships Committee and the Graduate Recruitment Committee.

Graduate Program Committees and Their Functions

Departmental staff are responsible for the quality of the graduate program. Throughout the year, however, some responsibility is delegated to departmental committees that perform critical functions. The Associate Chair for Graduate Studies serves as a member of all committees to ensure effective communication and coordination of effort.

Selection

The membership of the Graduate Selection Committee is determined by the Department Chair so as to ensure representation from each of the major research areas in the Department. The committee is chaired by the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

The primary responsibility of this committee is admission of new graduate students to the program. The Department's policy is one of selective admission of promising students to areas of research strength within the department. The continuing viability of the graduate program in different research areas may also be considered. The task of the committee is fivefold: (a) identifying and ranking all meritorious applicants whose career goals are well suited to program goals and areas of research strength within the department; (b) identifying faculty members willing to serve as first-year supervisors for these candidates; (c) recommending admissions to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research; and (d) communicating to applicants concerning their admissions status.

The number of new admissions is determined in consultation with the Department Chair.

This committee is also responsible for developing policy proposals regarding graduate selection for consideration by Department Council and undertakes other relevant activities as needed.

Assistantships

Membership normally includes the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, the Administrative Professional Officer, and two graduate students selected by their peers. Other members may be added at the discretion of the Department Chair.

The primary responsibility of this committee is the assignment of the teaching and research assistantships funded by the University and administered by the Department. This committee is also responsible for developing policies regarding financial support of graduate students for consideration by Department Council and undertakes other relevant activities as needed.

Curriculum

Membership normally includes two faculty members, a graduate student selected by his or her peers, and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. The committee is chaired by the Associate Chair. Other members may be added at the discretion of the Department Chair.

The primary responsibility of this committee is development of policies regarding the graduate curriculum for consideration by Department Council. The committee is also responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of those policies and undertakes other relevant activities as needed.

Recruitment

Membership normally includes two members of the academic staff, one of whom serves as chair, the graduate program assistant, and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. The committee is chaired by the Associate Chair. Other members may be added at the discretion of the Department Chair.

The primary responsibility of this committee is development of and implementation of an effective recruitment strategy for attracting new graduate students. Major components of that strategy include (a) production and distribution of printed materials, (b) development and maintenance of web site information, (c) development and implementation of effective departmental responses to inquiries about graduate study, applications, and letters of admission and (d) publicizing the program as appropriate. The committee undertakes other relevant activities as needed.

Scholarships

Membership normally includes two faculty members plus the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, who serves as Chair. Other members may be added at the discretion of the Department Chair.

A primary responsibility of this committee is the evaluation and ranking of scholarship applications throughout the year as may be required by the university or various provincial and federal funding agencies. After the Student Evaluation Meeting in May, the committee also awards any remaining tuition scholarships to students already in the program, based on merit as evidenced by indices of scholarly and professional development.

Scholarly and Professional Development for Graduate Students Through Service on Departmental Committees and Department Council

For graduate students, being nominated and selected by one's peers to serve on department committees can be important introduction to scholarly and professional service. The department has enabled these opportunities with the idea that participation would provide students with insights and knowledge that will be useful for career development. In addition to those opportunities mentioned previously, two graduate students serve as representatives to Department Council.

In addition, on November 18, 1985, Department Council approved a motion that gave the chairs of hiring search committees the option of inviting graduate students to participate on search committees. The motion left to the chair of each search committee the choice about whether participation by a graduate student was appropriate and, if so, which graduate student would be invited to participate. The constraints on participation were outlined as follows: (a) the student should be in the Department's PhD program, (b) the student should have substantial interests in the area of the search, and (c) the student should not be in competition with applicants for positions elsewhere. The student member is to have all the same responsibilities of other committee members, with the exception that he or she be allowed to read confidential letters of recommendation only at the discretion of the Chair.

In most cases, student members are not expected to "represent" other graduate students in some republican sense; instead, they are expected to participate fully as individuals and to provide, to the extent possible, insights and evaluations that might be overlooked by faculty members. Faculty members serving on committees with these students attempt to structure committee tasks so that students' participation functions as an introduction to service without compromising students' achievements in research and publication.

Revision History

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