

Graduate Council Overview

(Updated September 21, 2026)

Graduate School Location

208 Hovey Hall

309-438-2583

<http://grad.illinoisstate.edu/>

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Graduate Council:

The Graduate Council is the representative body of the graduate faculty. Council members deliberate and set policy on all matter of graduate education and advise the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives on matter related to graduate education, graduate student success and internationalization. Each council member sits on one of four standing committees: Membership/Student Development, Curriculum, Equity Diversity & Inclusion, or Research. Members are elected by the graduate faculty. Two graduate students serve on the Graduate Council. Selection criteria for members are articulated in Article VI of the by-laws. The AVP chairs the Graduate Council.

Graduate Council meeting materials are sent via e-mail to Graduate Council members. They are also posted online: <http://grad.illinoisstate.edu/faculty/council/materials.shtml>. Grad Council members will receive the meeting agenda approximately 3-4 days prior to the meeting.

Duties of the Graduate Council according to the bylaws include:

- 1.To receive the reports and to approve or reject the recommendations of the standing committees;
- 2.To advise the committees in carrying out their duties;
- 3.To appoint ad hoc committees when they are necessary;
- 4.To make recommendations to the faculty on regulations and procedures;
- 5.To receive communications on matters relating to the Graduate School;
- 6.To advise and to make recommendations to the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives;
- 7.To review matters which are to be taken to the Graduate Faculty;
- 8.To cooperate with other offices under the jurisdiction of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Graduate Council Administration:

Bylaws: The Graduate Council operates according to its established bylaws

(<http://grad.illinoisstate.edu/faculty/council/>). The bylaws were updated and approved by the Graduate Council, Graduate Faculty, and Academic Senate in the spring of 2023.

Meetings: The Graduate Council meets three times per semester - in September, October, November, February, March, and April. Meetings are typically on Wednesdays, 2-3:00 p.m. You should have received the meeting invitations for the coming academic year. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please let the Graduate Faculty Services Coordinator, Boris Escalona, know so that we can ensure we have a quorum for the meeting.

Committee responsibilities: There are four standing committees of the Graduate Council and the Executive Committee. Membership.

Executive Committee membership & responsibilities

A. The Graduate Executive Committee shall consist of the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives and the chairpersons of the four standing committees of the Graduate Faculty.

B. Duties of the Graduate Executive Committee shall be as follows:

1. To consult with the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives whenever necessary;
2. To take specific actions as directed by Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives, the Graduate School, Graduate Council or the Graduate Faculty;
3. To fill vacant seats on the Graduate Council.
4. Review department/school graduate handbooks.

Membership and Student Development Committee responsibilities:

A. The Membership and Student Development Committee shall consist of eight members: one member from each of the 6 colleges with graduate programs (Colleges of Applied Science & Technology, Arts & Sciences, Business, Education, Mennonite College of Nursing, and Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts), one graduate student, and the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives. The Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will serve as a non-voting member unless there is a tie vote in which case the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will cast the final vote.

B. Duties of the Membership and Student Development Committee shall be as follows:

1. To review the specific criteria and procedures established by each department/school for determining Graduate Faculty membership every five years or as needed, as

prescribed in Article IV, Section 3, and recommend their findings to the Graduate Council for approval.

2. To solicit nominations for Graduate Council annual elections and establish the ballot for distribution by the Graduate School staff.

3. To review the Graduate School Bylaws every 5 years or as needed and recommend their findings to the Graduate Council for approval.

4. To review non-research related student awards.

5. To make recommendations in regard to application, evaluation and award procedures for scholarships and fellowships under this Committee's purview, but remaining within the guidelines of the scholarship or fellowship founder, donor, or grantor.

6. To review and make recommendation on scholarships and fellowships within the Graduate School, including, but not limited to, the Ada Belle Clark Welsh, Lela Winegarner, Ora Bretall, Illinois State Foundation, and Donald F. McHenry awards.

7. To review and make recommendation on the fall and spring rounds of graduate faculty membership nominations.

8. To recommend student developmental workshops and other services based on needs of graduate students. This will include consultation with student groups, such as Graduate Student Association (GSA) and Graduate School Advisory Council (GSAC).

9. To hold a standing monthly meeting.

Research Committee membership & responsibilities:

A. The Research and Creative Activity Committee shall consist of five members: four at-large members and the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives. The Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will serve as a non-voting member unless there is a tie vote in which case the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will cast the final vote.

B. Duties of the Research & Creative Activity Committee shall be as follows:

1. To review and make recommendation on research related awards within the Graduate School.

2. To serve on the University Research Council.

Curriculum Committee membership & responsibilities:

A. The Graduate Curriculum Committee shall consist of eight members: one member from each of the 6 colleges with graduate programs (Colleges of Applied Science & Technology, Arts &

Sciences, Business, Education, Mennonite College of Nursing, and Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts), one graduate student, and the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives. The Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will serve as a non-voting member unless there is a tie vote in which case the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will cast the final vote.

B. Duties of the Graduate Curriculum Committee shall be as follows:

1. To coordinate the graduate curriculum in general.
2. To provide consultation on any budget decision which would affect funds for graduate curriculum development.
3. To periodically review and analyze existing graduate courses and programs.
4. To coordinate efforts in planning intercollegiate graduate programs.
5. To provide consultation to departments, colleges, and other faculty groups who are planning new additions to the graduate curriculum.
6. To study trends in graduate curriculum.
7. To work with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee as appropriate to coordinate courses and programs.
8. To work with the Academic Planning Committee and the Council for Teacher Education to improve all areas of the graduate curriculum.
9. To communicate to the university community graduate curriculum developments on and off campus.
10. To review and approve or disapprove of all proposals for new graduate courses and programs and for changes in existing graduate courses and programs or minor changes in existing courses involving course title, content, prerequisites, or number within a given level need not be reviewed by the committee, if accepted by the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives.
11. To develop procedures for the evaluation of all graduate curriculum proposals and communicate the procedures to the University community.
12. To establish relationships with each college curriculum committee.
13. To hear appeals from an academic department or equivalent whenever the academic department disagrees with a decision of a college curriculum committee or dean on graduate curriculum matters.
14. To report to the Academic Senate on curriculum matters that span between the undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees.

Equity Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee membership & responsibilities:

A. The EDI Committee shall consist of nine members: one member with graduate faculty status from each of the 7 colleges (Colleges of Applied Science & Technology, Arts & Sciences, Business, Education, Mennonite College of Nursing, Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, and Milner Library, one graduate student, and the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives. The Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will serve as a non-voting member unless there is a tie vote in which case the Associate Vice President of Graduate Education and Internationalization Initiatives will cast the final vote.

B. Duties of the EDI Committee shall be as follows:

1. To review and award EDI tuition scholarships
2. To develop, coordinate, or collaborate on EDI professional development opportunities for graduate students and graduate faculty.
3. To review the impact of graduate policies and procedures on promoting EDI.

Graduate School Programs & Services:

Copyright: A copyright officer resides in Milner Library to help students and faculty through the copyright maze. She will assist you in determining if permission-for-use is required; if so, from whom and how to obtain permission. Students writing a thesis or dissertation are required to go through the copyright officer, but faculty do not realize they can seek help for their research as well. Help locating and obtaining alternative resources are also provided.

Student Workshops: The Professional Development Series is comprised of monthly workshops designed to help graduate students increase their chances of success both as a current graduate student and as a future professional. Workshops include such topics as salary negotiation, the academic job search, and the thesis/dissertation process.

<https://grad.illinoisstate.edu/events/workshop/>

Student Groups: Graduate School staff work with student groups to enhance services for graduate students. These include the Graduate Student Association, the Graduate Student Advisory Council and the Black Graduate Student Association, among others.

Thesis/Dissertation Assistance: The Graduate School provides online and in person resources to help students navigate the thesis and dissertation process from proposal to final deposit. Students and faculty can make an appointment with the Thesis and Dissertation Associate to discuss the process one-on-one.

Graduate Faculty Status: New tenure track faculty members will automatically become an Associate member of the graduate faculty when onboarded by Human Resources if their terminal degree transcript is on file. More information on associate and full graduate faculty status and their rights and responsibilities can be found at: grad.illinoisstate.edu/faculty/.

University Research Symposium: Held each spring the [University Research Symposium](#) offers an exciting opportunity for graduate and undergraduate students to present their scholarship, research, and creative activity to the campus community.