

# LGS Faculty Governance By-Laws

Whereas the Council of Graduate Schools states<sup>1</sup>:

*Each institution should have a group of faculty members active in graduate programs, who are elected or appointed to a graduate council that has legislative authority over academic matters pertaining to graduate degree programs (e.g., curriculum proposals, university-wide standards for academic conduct of graduate programs, admissions of students, creation of new programs, overall policies and procedures for the effective administration of graduate degrees, etc.). The graduate council also can act as an advisor to the dean on administrative issues that pertain to graduate education, such as priorities for resource allocation. Faculty who serve on the council should reflect the range and diversity of disciplines offering graduate degrees, but it is important that they understand that their responsibility is to represent the interests of graduate education as a whole, not of specific departments or programs.*

We, the Faculty of the Laney Graduate School, as empowered by the Board of Trustees, do hereby adopt these rules and by-laws for faculty governance of the Laney Graduate School.

## **I. Objective**

To provide an effective means for the faculty to discharge its responsibilities for instructional programs as set out by the university by-laws; to improve communication among administrators, faculty representatives, and faculty at large; to foster informed deliberation on the part of faculty and Directors of Graduate Studies (Program Directors), representatives of the faculty, and the administration on issues affecting graduate education.

## **II. General Provisions**

### **A. Faculty Governance, Composition and Duties:**

1. The Laney Graduate School Executive Council will be comprised of nine members, three from each division: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. At the May meeting of the Executive Council, it will elect a Faculty Chair-Elect who is completing his/her first year on the Council and will serve as Faculty Chair-Elect during his/her second year. The Faculty Chair-Elect will become Faculty Chair at the beginning of his/her third year. The Faculty Chair and Faculty Chair-Elect will assume their responsibilities at the September meeting of the Executive Council. The Faculty Chair will be empowered to convene meetings of the Executive Council without the Dean but the only official policy-making meetings shall be those chaired by the Dean. The Faculty Chair-Elect will assist the Chair/Dean in duties deemed necessary and serve as Chair in the absence of both the Dean and Faculty Chair at any meeting of the Executive Council. The Executive Council will meet once a month during the academic year unless by a majority vote it chooses to meet at more frequent intervals. An electronic meeting of the Executive Council may be called during the summer months in the event of extraordinary or urgent circumstances. The Executive Council may take votes electronically on an as-needed basis. Actions of the Executive Council are adopted if approved by a majority of all members of the Executive Council, not just those present and voting. The Executive Council will serve to advise the Dean on overseeing and setting policies for the Laney Graduate School.

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Graduate Schools, Organization and Administration of Graduate Education, 2004, p. 12 – 13.

2. The graduate faculty, observing that the university by-laws provide that the faculty holds responsibility for decisions pertaining to curriculum while the Deans are responsible for administration of programs, recognizes that in practice these domains are closely intertwined. Accordingly the Laney Graduate School Executive Council with input and advice from the Dean will decide matters concerning:

Approval of new programs and courses;

Maintaining, revising, and implementing discipline appropriate standards of quality for admission, instruction, and student research in the Laney Graduate School.

The Dean will consult with the Executive Council who represent the LGS Faculty to review and provide advice and recommendations concerning:

Evaluating priorities in allocating stipend and tuition budget funds;

Program development and planning for the Laney Graduate School over multiple years;

Program review and evaluation;

Suspension, suspension of admissions, or closing of graduate programs.

The Dean of the Laney Graduate School is not a voting member of the Executive Council.

3. The Dean, in consultation with the Faculty Chair of the Executive Council, will set the agenda of Executive Council meetings.

4. The Executive Council will be composed of members elected by electronic ballot by the graduate faculty from among members of the graduate faculty. Nominations will be made by the Executive Council after consultation with program Chairs, the Directors of Graduate Studies (Program Directors), and the LGS Appointments Committee. Decisions on a final set of nominees will be approved only at a second meeting of the Executive Council after the meeting at which the list was proposed. The Executive Council is encouraged to submit a list with at least two nominees for each vacant seat. Terms of service will be staggered, such that one third of the members will be newly elected each year and members will serve for three-year terms. The Executive Council will supply information about relevant experience and service of nominees to the faculty. Current members of the Executive Council and the final semesters of their terms will be listed on the graduate school governance web page.

5. The Executive Council will consult with Chairs (where designations for graduate program faculty align with departments) and DGSs as part of its deliberations. Policy changes affecting the curriculum of the Laney Graduate School will require favorable votes by a majority of members of the Executive Council. In those matters that in the opinion of the Laney Graduate School Executive Council concern the curriculum, a positive decision by the executive council will follow an advisory vote by the DGSs and consultations with Chairs and DGSs. The DGSs will have at least one-month prior notice of such votes. The Executive Council Faculty Chair or a designated representative may attend the periodic DGS meetings and report on decisions taken by the council and on the agenda for future meetings. These reports are for the purpose of informing the DGSs, and through them the programs, of Executive Council activity, and to solicit proposals and ideas on issues for the agenda of the Executive Council.

6. Minutes of Executive Council meetings will be distributed in timely fashion to DGSs, and Chairs. All documents associated with Council meetings will be archived electronically and be available to Council Members, DGSs, Chairs, and Program Directors.

## **B. Graduate Faculty**

1. The Dean will convene a general meeting of the graduate faculty once a year late in spring semester and report on the state of the Laney Graduate School. The Dean and the Faculty Chair of the Executive Council will inform the faculty of important decisions taken in the past year and respond to questions and comments from the floor.
2. The Executive Council by majority vote, the Dean, or one fifth of the members of the graduate faculty may convene a general meeting of the graduate faculty at any time.
3. The graduate faculty, meeting as a whole or by electronic ballot, may make decisions on any question falling within the competence of the faculty. For voting to be valid on any item, fifty percent of the graduate faculty must be present for the vote or fifty percent of the graduate faculty must cast a vote if done electronically. For an item to be approved, greater than fifty percent of those voting must cast a positive vote.

**Natural Sciences:** Biomedical Engineering, Biostatistics, Chemistry, Clinical Research, Epidemiology, Environmental Health Sciences, Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (GDBBS), Mathematics and Computer Science, Nursing, Physics.

**Social Sciences:** Anthropology, Behavioral Sciences and Health Education (BSHE), Business, Development Practice, Division of Educational Studies, Economics, Health Services Research and Health Policy (HSRHP), History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

**Humanities:** Art History, Bioethics, Comparative Literature, English, Film Studies, French, Graduate Division of Religion (GDR), Graduate Institute of Liberal Arts (ILA), Islamic Civilizations Studies, Jewish Studies, Music, Philosophy, Spanish.

### **Directors of Graduate Studies (Program Directors)**

Each program shall have an individual faculty member who has primary responsibility for the graduate program and serves as liaison for the program to the Laney Graduate School. These individuals hold the title of Director or Director of Graduate Studies. The title Program Director can be used interchangeably, as well.

Those individuals who have primary responsibility for the graduate program are appointed with a process that requires approval of the LGS Dean. For programs comprised of faculty that align with a department, the DGS is recommended to the Dean by the chair and once approved by the Dean, appointed by the chair. For programs that are divisional, or interdisciplinary, or are comprised of faculty from several departments or schools, or are structured with multiple areas of study or sub-programs, the divisional director is appointed by the LGS Dean. Each Director or DGS shall serve for a renewable term of 3 years. For doctoral programs with sub-program or sub-plan structures, faculty responsibilities and leadership for the sub-programs or sub-plans are solely determined by faculty participating in those sub-programs or sub-plans.

A list of the current Directors of Graduate Studies (Program Directors) will be maintained on the Laney Graduate School website.

### **Appointments Committee**

The Appointments Committee will consist of three elected members, one from each of the divisions (humanities, social sciences, natural sciences) and two members appointed by the Dean. Elected and

appointed members will serve a term of two years. The Appointments Committee will advise the Dean on the membership and composition of all award and fellowship committees for the Laney Graduate School and any other committees that may be necessary to the business of the Laney Graduate School.

Current members of the Appointments Committee, and the final semesters of their terms, will be listed on the graduate school governance web page.

### **University Senate and Faculty Council Representatives**

The Laney Graduate School is represented by two faculty members on the University Senate and Faculty Council Representatives are elected by the faculty and serve three-year terms. An elected LGS member of the Faculty Council will sit as a non-voting member of the LGS Executive Council *ex officio* to enhance communication between the Faculty Council and LGS Executive Council. The LGS Executive Council will designate a representative to serve as *ex officio* members of other University Faculty governing bodies when requested. Current representatives, and the final semesters of their terms, will be listed on the graduate school governance web page.

### **Amendment**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be sent in writing to the LGS Executive Council Faculty Chair by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Prior to the annual meeting of the graduate faculty, the proposed amendments will be circulated electronically for comment to the DGSs and the graduate faculty. Voting on proposed amendments will occur either at the annual meeting of the graduate faculty or electronically.

For voting to be valid on the amendment of these bylaws fifty percent of the graduate faculty must be present for the vote or fifty percent of the graduate faculty must cast a vote if done electronically. In order for the amendment to pass, a two-thirds majority of graduate faculty who vote must cast a vote in favor of the amendment.