

## Benefits of the Graduate Faculty Governance Revision

Sept. 12, 2018

1. **End the “second Faculty Senate” model.** Until about a decade ago, GFC was the final stop for graduate policy making, so functioned like a Graduate Faculty Senate. It made sense for it to be especially large and inclusive. Since 2007, all policies affecting all programs go to Senate, so GFC no longer needs to duplicate that form or function.
2. **Reduce the size of GFC.** Currently GFC requires 23 elected faculty; last year we could only fill 19 of those seats.
3. **Eliminate double duty.** Double duty on GFC and one of its standing committees discourages participation. GFC is known as an onerous assignment. GFC and its three subcommittees currently have 53 seats, but those are filled by just 36 people. In the new structure we’ll have closer to 50 seats, filled by 47 people. So fewer seats to fill, spread across more elected faculty.
4. **Approve routine matters faster.** Under the subcommittee model, all business from Fellowships, GPR, and GCC must also be approved by GFC. These usually go through as automatic consent items, and it’s very rare that anyone raises questions about them. Having two stages of approval can delay passage by a month.
5. **Reduce strain on administrative staff supporting Grad School governance.** By eliminating that last step of approval, the Grad School staff will no longer have to shepherd hundreds of documents through a second governance step.
6. **Make criteria for elected members more flexible.** The current model requires strict proportional representation by school or college, which is labor intensive and difficult for the Secretary to manage. The new model moves to a divisional distribution, and in all committees except for Fellowships, leaves the Secretary some discretion to identify candidates across divisions. (For instance, a committee that requires 12 members might require only 2 from each division.)
7. **Maintain coordinated policy making.** Even without the subcommittee structure, policies that would apply generally to all programs still must be approved by GFC. For example, GPR could not, on its own, change program review procedures across the board, but it could recommend such changes to GFC. We do not want four separate committees making general policy in an uncoordinated way.
8. **Free up GFC for more serious policy work and investigation.** The current structure exhausts GFC members with routine work. The new GFC will have more time for serious policy considerations, investigations into national best practices, consultation with the rest of the Graduate Faculty, and diligent maintenance of existing policies.