

**Interdisciplinary Humanities Bylaws**  
**Revised: Spring 2024**  
**Approved by GC: July 19, 2024**

**Article I: Administrative Home**

The administrative home of the Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Program is the School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts.

**Article II: Objective**

The Graduate Group in the Interdisciplinary Humanities is organized to establish and administer a program of instruction and research leading to the M.A. and Ph.D. in conformance with the regulations of the Graduate Council and the Division of Graduate Studies at the University of California, Merced. The Graduate Group is responsible for establishing standards and requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees and certifying satisfactory completion by candidates. The Group function is to provide a focus for graduate training in the Interdisciplinary Humanities by facilitating the research interactions among and between graduate students and faculty. The focal areas of the program are interdisciplinary approaches to the humanities and its allied fields.

The mission of the group is to enable its graduates to apply comparative humanistic analytical and theoretical approaches to the study of societies and cultures in relation to power and difference through social practices and cultural expressions across time and space.

**Article III: Membership**

There are two types of membership in the core faculty.

1. Department membership: Departments may elect to have IH as their primary Graduate Group affiliation. Senate faculty in those Departments who meet the other criteria for membership will be core faculty unless they opt out. These Departments are referred to in what follows as “primary departments”.
2. Individual membership: Senate faculty in departments which have other primary affiliations are welcome as full members of the core faculty.

Core faculty are expected to teach graduate seminars in accordance with the IH course rotation, contribute to both required and elective courses, and participate actively in program governance.

Faculty membership and faculty participation in teaching, advising and governance will be evaluated every five years.

If a Primary Department develops its own Graduate Program, faculty in that department will have the option to remain as individual members of IH without any application process.

Members of the University faculty whose departments are not primary members who wish to be appointed to the core graduate faculty in IH must submit a CV and a written request to the Chair of IH. The letter of request should indicate: the individual’s qualification to participate in the program, proposed course offerings, and proposed affiliation with one or more IH specializations. Materials will be evaluated by the IH Executive Committee. Applicants whose expertise and commitment are deemed by a majority of the Executive Committee to be consistent with IHGG objectives will be recommended for a vote by the entire core membership and will admitted to the group if their application receives a two-thirds affirmative vote from the core membership.

Faculty will be expected to participate actively in the program. Each faculty member is responsible for providing the Executive Committee with appropriate documentation of performance.

Criteria for membership:

- 1) An active research program indicated by significant and relevant publication,
- 2) contribution to graduate mentorship and training by student advising and by formal graduate teaching,
- 3) participation as needed in IHGG governance.

#### **Article IV: Organization and Administration**

The responsibility for administration is shared by the Primary Departments, working through the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee of the Group will consist of the Chair of IH, along with four to six members who will serve rotating terms of three years. The members of the Executive Committee will be the Chair of IH, representatives of the Primary Departments who serve as department Graduate Coordinators; and the chairs of the IH Committees (see Article VII: Committees) serve on the Executive Committee. Department coordinators may serve as Committee Chairs. The Executive Committee will appoint the Chairs of all other IH committees and may constitute ad hoc committees as needed to accomplish the work of the Unit.

Graduate Coordinators for departments are responsible for working with the IH Chair on TA assignments, and coordinating course rotations with the Chair of the Ed Policy committee, and ensuring that departments are aware of developments in IH.

#### **Article V: Graduate Group Chair**

The Graduate Group chair is appointed for a term of up to three years. When a Graduate Group Chair vacancy occurs, or is anticipated, the Graduate Division sends the appropriate graduate group faculty a call for nominees for Graduate Group Chair. The Graduate Dean will consult with the faculty; in addition, the Executive Committee will conduct an informal poll of the faculty. After consultation with the graduate group faculty and Lead School Dean, the Graduate Dean appoints the Graduate Group Chair and communicates the appointment with the graduate group faculty and Lead School Dean.

The Chair's responsibilities to the graduate group membership are to:

- 1) Call and preside at meetings of the Executive Committee,
- 2) Preside over Group meetings,
- 3) Appoint committees and chairs in consultation with the Executive Committee,
- 4) Act as the administrative liaison between the group, the School, and the Graduate Division.
- 5) Coordinate the appointment of TAs with Department Graduate Coordinators

In the Chair's role as liaison between the graduate group and the Graduate Division, the Chair performs the responsibilities enumerated by the Graduate Division, which include:

- 1) Oversee the progress of graduate students through the program, including satisfaction of degree requirements and advancement to candidacy, in coordination with group advisors, faculty and staff

- 2) Represent the group faculty in all matters related to the degree program(s) to the lead dean, the graduate dean, Graduate and Research Council, and School Executive Committee(s)
- 3) Determine resource needs and administer program budget, in consultation with group faculty, lead dean, and graduate dean
- 4) Oversee graduate student recruitment, graduate program website, admissions, and financial aid, in consultation with group faculty, lead dean, and graduate dean
- 5) Determine graduate course offerings each semester, including curriculum changes, in consultation with group faculty, and school staff and faculty involved in course scheduling and teaching assignments
- 6) Determine graduate course resource needs for equipment, staff support, and other resources, in consultation with faculty and lead deans
- 7) Serve as graduate group Faculty Accreditation Organizer by overseeing annual program assessments and periodic program review, to monitor and maintain academic excellence
- 8) Consult with deans in selecting and reviewing graduate support staff
- 9) Coordinate participation of the graduate group in School and University program activities, including graduate student fellowship and award programs
- 10) Develop and maintain a plan for promoting diversity among matriculated graduate students
- 11) Manage and respond to program feedback and inquiries from faculty, students, staff, and reviewers.
- 12) Share responsibility for program-wide planning and policy with the Vice Chair.

#### **Article VI: Vice Chair**

Appointment: Once the Executive Committee is constituted, a Vice Chair is selected from among the Executive Committee. The Vice Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee with designated responsibilities which may be compensated. This role will balance program representation across humanities areas, such that disciplinary range is represented by the Chair and Vice Chair.

Responsibilities: The Vice Chair shares responsibility for program-wide planning and policy with the Chair. Ideally the Vice Chair also serves as Chair of one of the standing committees.

#### **Article VII: Committees**

##### **A. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall, in consultation with the faculty, determine and implement policy for the good of the Group, establish and guide the educational requirements of the Group, and represent the interests of the Group to the University and other agencies. The Executive Committee will assist the chair in oversight of the program as a whole. It also guides strategic planning, and membership. The latter involves reviewing applications from faculty who wish to be part of the Group, reviewing membership of the Group every five years, and terminating membership in the Group for existing members who no longer qualify. The Executive Committee also takes on the work of other committees in the event that the committee is not functioning.

Membership:

- (a) Primary Department Graduate coordinators
- (b) Chairs of 3 IH committees, who may be but are not necessarily department Graduate Coordinators

- (c) As needed, the chair of the IH Graduate students may be invited to advise the committee

**B. Admissions & Fellowships:**

The Admissions and Fellowship Committee develops recruiting materials for the Group, reviews applications for admission, makes recommendations for admission to the Chair. The committee also reviews applications for internal fellowships from IH graduate students, making recommendations. , Finally, it recommends the allocation of the Block Grant.

**Membership:** The Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee; each Primary Department will have a representative on the committee. Other members may be appointed as needed.

**C. Advising & Professionalization:**

Its responsibilities include, monitoring progress toward degree, , and making recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Studies in cases requiring adjudication. All student petitions and progress reports must be reviewed by the Graduate Advising Committee as well as by the student's own committee.

**Membership:** The Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee; each Primary Department will have a representative on the committee. Other members may be appointed as needed.

**The graduate students will nominate one of their number to consult with the** A non-committee to aid in the design of professional development opportunities.

**D. Educational Policy**

The Educational Policy Committee evaluates and guides the educational program of the Program,; , determining changes in programmatic requirements of the graduate group, reviewing applications for new courses and new specializations, guiding required annual and periodic assessment practices, and managing course rotation. Educational Policy is also responsible for coordinating the IH seminar series and brown bag lunches.

**Membership:** The Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee; each Primary Department will have a representative on the committee, and other members are appointed as needed. A student representative serves as a non-voting member of the committee. The Student Representative will be elected from current students in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Program. Students will serve a one year term and may be elected for a second year.

**Article VIII: Student Representatives**

A graduate student representative will be included in all deliberations that revolve around issues having to do with educational policy and curriculum, as well as event planning and student needs. The student representative will be elected from current graduate students within the Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Group. There are standing student representatives to the Educational Policy

Committee and to the Advising and Professionalization Committee. Students will serve a one-year term and can be re-elected for a single second term.

The Chair of any committee with student members must excuse the student representative from meetings during discussion about other students, applicants, personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, for disciplinary issues related to students, and other executive session discussions at the discretion of the committee chair.

#### **Article IX: Graduate Advisors**

Initial graduate advisors are assigned to incoming students at the time of admission. The student may, as their interests and understanding of the field develops, decide to change advisors. Graduate Advisors are expected to meet **at least** once a semester with their graduate students. They are expected to provide advice on both academic and professional development, including proper professional behavior. Advisors are also expected to ensure that students are making satisfactory academic progress, and to work with the Chair of IH or the Chair of the Advising and Professionalization Committee to deal with either issues of satisfactory progress or any conflicts they have with students.

#### **Article IX Student Bylaws**

Changes to the Interdisciplinary Humanities student bylaws must be reviewed and approved by the Interdisciplinary Humanities Executive Committee to ensure that they comply with programmatic standards.

#### **Article X: Meetings**

The membership of the Group should meet at least once each fall and spring term. Faculty will be given at least one week's notice of the meeting, and meetings will be hybrid. The Group chair is responsible for calling all regular and special meetings of the membership. The Executive Committee should meet on a monthly basis or as needed.

A petition for a special meeting of the faculty may be submitted to the Chair at any time, as long as it has the support of one-quarter of the faculty.

#### **Article XI: Voting Policy**

Issues that require a vote of the membership need to have a quorum of at least 50% of the total voting membership present if the vote is to be held at an IH meeting. Any matter requiring a vote and not decided at a meeting will be voted on by electronic ballot. All votes other than those on bylaws require a simple majority.

#### **Article XII: Amendments**

Amendments to the By-Laws require approval by two-thirds of the voting members of the group. Written notice of the proposed amendment shall be sent to each member at least five working days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be discussed. All amendments must also be submitted to Graduate Council for review and final approval.

