

Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Group Bylaws

Article I: Administrative Home

The administrative home of the Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Group 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 Group span the breadth of the humanities and its allied fields.

Article III: Membership

Core membership shall be opened to humanities faculty who agree to teach graduate seminars in accordance with IHGG course rotation, contribute to both required and elective courses, and participate actively in program governance. In return, core members will receive priority for teaching preferences, will be permitted to chair student committees, and will vote on admissions and other group matters. Affiliate members may teach courses and sit on student committees, but they may not chair committees. They may opine on admissions and other IHGG matters, but they do not have voting rights.. All new humanities faculty will be presumed core members, with “opt out” option.

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

Members of the University faculty outside of the humanities wishing to be appointed to the core or affiliate graduate faculty in the IHGG must submit a CV and a written request to the Chair of the IHGG. The letter of request should indicate: the individual’s qualification to participate in humanities graduate education, proposed course offerings, and proposed affiliation with one or more IHGG specializations. Materials will be evaluated by the IHGG 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. The Committee will conduct a review of the entire membership every five years using the following metrics: 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 in IHGG governance.

Article IV: Organization and Administration

The Executive Committee of the Group will consist of five elected members who will serve rotating terms of three years, with annual elections to replace termed-out members. Three of those members are Chairs of IH Committees (see Article VII: Committees) The Group chair will also serve as a member of the Committee. The Humanities Advisory Council chair is an ex officio member of the Group. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee to prepare an annual slate of nominees that will be put before the membership for election to serve on the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will make appointments to all other IHGG committees and may constitute ad hoc committees as needed to accomplish the work of the Unit.

Article V: Graduate Group Chair

The Executive Committee will solicit the names of nominees for the group chair and present to the group's faculty for vote a list of nominees willing to serve. All votes will remain confidential. In the event that no candidate obtains a simple majority of votes, a run-off vote will be conducted between the top two candidates from the initial vote. The vote is advisory to the Graduate Dean. Once a majority candidate has been identified, notification and approval of the appointment will proceed in accordance with university and Senate rules. The chair is appointed by the Graduate Dean following recommendation by the graduate group. The normal term of appointment will be three years.

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 Division of Graduate Studies.

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 selection process follows. From an advisory vote from the program faculty, the Vice Chair is appointed by the Chair 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

The graduate group Chair will govern the business of the graduate group. The Executive Committee, the Graduate Advising Committee, the Curriculum Committee and the Admissions and Fellowships Committee are the standing committees of the IHGG. The chair of each standing committee is also a member of the Executive Committee, and the committees will generally have two additional members. The Chair and the Executive Committee, at their discretion, may constitute additional ad hoc or standing committees to recommend actions to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will review committee formation and appointments on an annual basis.

1) 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 EC will make appointments to the

other committees. The Executive Committee also guides strategic planning activities and membership activities. The latter involves reviewing applications from faculty who wish to be part of the Group, reviewing membership of the Group every five years, approving or denying applications for membership, and terminating membership in the Group for existing members who no longer qualify.

2) Graduate Advising Committee

Graduate advising functions are performed by a standing Graduate Advising Committee with members appointed by the Executive Committee to staggered two year terms. Its responsibilities include advising students on initial enrollment, serving as interim major professors as needed, assisting students in identifying their major professor(s), approving programs of study, monitoring progress toward degree, reviewing the results of oral and final examinations, 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.

3) Educational Policy Committee

The Educational Policy Committee evaluates and guides the educational programs of the Group: reviewing programs, scheduling and assigning teaching assistant appointments, 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.

4) Admissions and Fellowship Committee

The Admissions and Fellowship Committee develops recruiting materials for the Group, reviews applications for admissions, makes recommendations for admissions to the Dean of Graduate Studies, explores graduate student support mechanisms, and allocates intramural financial assistance.

Article VIII: Student Representative

A graduate student representative will be included in all deliberations that revolve around issues having to do with educational policy and curriculum. The student representative will be elected from current graduate students within the Interdisciplinary Humanities Graduate Group. Students will serve a one-year term and can be re-elected for a single second term.

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 each fall and spring term. The Group chair is responsible for calling all regular and special meetings of the membership. The Executive Committee should meet on a bi-weekly basis or as needed.

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.

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