

# **Graduate Group in Ecology Bylaws**

**Administrative Home:** Department of Environmental Science and Policy

**Revisions:** May 30, 1973; April 28, 1977; April 26, 1978; January 18, 1979, May 31, 1979, June 2, 1983, June 5, 1986, December 15, 1987, June 1, 1989, June 19, 1992, September 20, 1996, June 11, 1999, May 29, 2002, April 2004.

**Graduate Council Approval:** June 24, 2004

## **Article I. Objective**

The Graduate Group in Ecology (GGE) is organized to administer the graduate program in Ecology. The Group may consider and act upon any matters pertaining to that program. Ecology is the study of organisms, their interrelationships and their environments. The GGE functions as a mechanism for curricular structure in training students in ecology at UC Davis and fosters interactions and collaborations among faculty pursuing ecological research through different academic departments. The GGE offers the M.S. (Plan I and Plan II) and Ph.D. degrees.

## **Article II. Membership**

Members of the Academic Senate or Academic Federation, including Adjunct Faculty having strong interest and expertise in ecology whose appointment authorizes the direction of graduate work, may be elected to membership in the Group by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will vote on membership applications at its quarterly meeting, or via e-mail. A simple majority will determine approval of membership. The Chair of the appropriate Area of Emphasis (AOE) within the GGE may be consulted for an advisory opinion on applications. The Ecology membership at large will not be consulted.

- a) All members of the Academic Senate, the Academic Federation, and Academic Federation members with courtesy teaching appointment (e.g., lecturer or adjunct professor) holding the doctoral degree or equivalent and approved for membership have all rights, privileges, and responsibilities of membership.
- b) Academic Senate or Federation members holding the M.S., M.A., or equivalent have the same rights, but in order to serve as a major professor they must have an arrangement for a co-major professor having a doctorate.
- c) Academic Federation members who are not also members of the Academic Senate that are paid from soft funds, or whose appointment at the University is periodically renewable (i.e., not reasonably certain beyond periods of five

years) must enter co-major professor arrangements with an Academic Senate faculty in order to sponsor Ph.D. students.

### **Criteria for Membership:**

Applications for membership are reviewed by the Executive Committee to assure that applicants have a documented record of high-quality scholarly activity in ecology (re: training, expertise, and program focus). Factors considered here include (but are not limited to): Degree training, titles of recent publications, journals published in, titles of grant proposals, teaching of "ecology" courses (relatively broadly construed). Both the quality of the scholarship and its relevance to the field of ecology are evaluated.

Members are expected to contribute to the GGE in ways beyond supervising graduate students. Contributions may include: teach Ecology courses, serve on Executive, Admissions, Seminar, Guidance, ad hoc, Ph.D. qualifying examination, M.S. final examination or thesis, and Ph.D. dissertation committees, serve as AOE Chair or Advisor, and other service deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee. Service on M.S. final examination and thesis committees and on Ph.D. dissertation committees by the major professor does not discharge his/her responsibilities to the Group. Each member is also expected to offer an Ecology 290, or accepted substitute, once every four years.

Membership applications, or applications for membership renewal, that are denied may be appealed in writing to the Executive Committee. If necessary they may also be appealed to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### **Review of Membership**

Each faculty member's contributions to the GGE shall be reviewed once every three years for the purpose of identifying faculty members who are not providing a minimal level of service to the Group. This review will be conducted by the GGE Executive Committee. The review will focus on three areas: a) mentorship of GGE students, b) participation in the GGE workload in the classroom teaching mission of the Group and committee work (beyond serving as major professor), and c) professional productivity in the field of Ecology. Faculty whose record reflects poor performance in any of these areas will be subject to non-renewal or to a probationary period in which greater involvement must be demonstrated as a condition of continuing membership.

### **Emeritus Membership**

Emeritus faculty members are allowed to mentor their continuing students on the date of retirement to completion of their degrees but may not admit new students unless arrangements for a co-major professor are made. Emeritus faculty may serve on GGE committees. Emeritus faculty members are not voting members in that their votes are not solicited. Emeritus faculty members who inform the GGE in writing of their desire to vote will be allowed to do so.

### **Article III. Organization & Administration**

The Chair and Executive Committee shall be the administrative body of the Group.

The GGE shall establish from its membership an Executive Committee.

### **Article IV. Graduate Group Chair**

The graduate group chair nomination process is conducted in accordance with current Graduate Council and Academic Personnel Manual policies, APM Section UCD-245B. <http://www.mrak.ucdavis.edu/web-mans/apm/245b.htm>.

A “Nominating Committee” will be named by the Chair to solicit the names of nominees for Graduate Group Chair from the faculty and graduate students of the group. The names of the nominees indicating a willingness to serve will then be submitted to the Group’s faculty and graduate students for vote at the annual spring meeting or by e-mail. All votes and comments will remain confidential.

The Nominating Committee will forward the two top-ranked names to the Dean of Graduate Studies along with comments received on the nominees. The Group may express a preference and will indicate the basis for that preference. After interviewing the nominees the Dean of Graduate Studies will forward his/her recommendation to the Chancellor. The normal term of the Chair’s appointment is three years, however what is recommended will be based on the nominees’ willingness to serve and longer terms may be served with the approval of the Executive Committee and the Chancellor.

Duties of the Chair: The Chair serves as the Chair of the Executive Committee and is the Graduate Advisor for the group. The Group Chair shall annually inform the Office of Graduate Studies of the membership of the Group.

#### **Vice-Chair:**

A Vice-Chair shall be elected by the Group for a two-year term. Election is conducted at the Annual Spring meeting of the GGE or by e-mail. The Vice-Chair is the chair of the GGE Admissions Committee for the duration of his or her appointment. The Vice Chair will serve in the absence of the Chair.

## **Article V. Committees**

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of eight voting members: the Group Chair, Vice-Chair, and four faculty members elected by the Group, and two GGE graduate students appointed by the Chair upon recommendation by the Ecology Graduate Student Association (EGSA). The Group Chair shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. In addition, the Chair of the Awards Committee shall be an *ex officio, non voting* member.

Candidates for membership may be self nominated, or nominated by the membership at large. Election to membership to the Executive Committee will take place at the Annual Meeting. The two candidates with the majority of votes, of eligible members present, will be elected to the Executive Committee for a two-year term. Two members shall be elected each year. All Executive Committee members shall take office on July 1 following election or earlier if a vacancy exists, but the two-year term of office will in any case be counted from July 1 following election. The Group Chair is empowered to fill vacancies by appointment for the unexpired terms of members of the Executive Committee.

Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at least once per quarter at the call of its Chair. Additional meetings may be called as needed.

#### **Duties of the Executive Committee:**

As deemed necessary by the Executive Committee or in response to membership concerns, the Executive Committee will provide consideration of changes in policy governing the GGE and make recommendations of "minimum requirements for degrees". The Executive Committee is responsible for: evaluation of faculty applications for membership; faculty membership renewals; approval of changes to the GGE curriculum; approval of changes to the structure of Areas of Emphasis within the GGE; as necessary, evaluation of any issues brought to the attention of the Executive Committee by the membership.

The Executive Committee is responsible for appointment of subcommittees, decisions on faculty membership, specification of GGE curriculum, and matters in which authority has been delegated by the Group. Actions may be subject to approval by 50+% of the group at the request of three GGE members.

#### **Areas of Emphasis (AOE):**

Members have the right to form Areas of Emphasis upon approval by the GGE Executive Committee. The AOE's provide centers for curricular focus within ecology and also reflect the interests and expertise of the faculty members. AOE's must have a chair, an individual recommended from the AOE faculty and approved by the GGE Chair. Each

AOE also has a graduate adviser appointed by the AOE and GGE Chairs, and submitted for approval by the Chair to the Guidance Committee. Each AOE has a defined curriculum. AOE's are subject to the bylaws of the GGE but may also have their own bylaws and procedures, provided that they are not in conflict with the provisions of the GGE as a whole. AOE's are formal groups within the GGE, and the creation of AOE's are subject to approval by the GGE Executive Committee and AOE's are not viable without such approval. The termination of AOE's will be at the discretion of the members of the AOE and the Executive Committee. AOE's will conduct a self-review every ten years based on a request for information from the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee will use the information to approve continuation of the AOE.

### **Admissions Committee:**

The Admissions Committee will be composed of at least three faculty members and one student representative. The Chair of the committee will be the Vice-Chair of the graduate group, and the Vice-Chair will appoint the remaining members to the committee. Committee members will be recommended for a two-year term. One student representative will be selected to serve by the Vice-Chair for a one-year term.

### **Awards Committee:**

The Awards Committee will be composed of at least four faculty members and one student representative, with members self-nominated and appointed by the GGE Chair. The Chair of the committee will be decided by vote of the committee members. Sub-committees will be appointed by the Awards Committee as needed. Appointments to the committees and sub-committees are for one year. One student representative will be selected to serve by the Vice-Chair for a one-year term.

## **Article VI. Student Representative**

Unless otherwise specified, Student Representatives are elected representatives of the Ecology Graduate Students Association (or designee), approved and appointed to appropriate committees by the GGE Chair. The Representative(s) will serve as a voting member of the Executive Committee in all matters except those under the jurisdiction of the Academic Senate. Student representatives to the Admissions and Awards Committees will be voting members of those committees. Student representatives may be excused from committee meetings as necessary (e.g., confidential matters, group financial issues, collective bargaining issues, etc.).

## **Article VII. Graduate Advisers**

Each AOE will select an AOE curriculum adviser(s), according to their student population. (Ratio of graduate students to advisers is 15:1.) The GGE Chair receives nominations from the AOE Chair and will forward those nominations to the Graduate Studies Associate Dean of Programs, who will recommend to the Chair of Graduate Council for appointment. Term of appointment is two years.

Duties of Graduate Advisers: The Graduate Advisers are responsible for assuring that each student in the program meets the curriculum requirements for the specific degree objective. Graduate Advisers have latitude in interpreting curriculum requirements relative to the experience and academic background of each student. Each Adviser will convene during each student's first year (quarter) a guidance Committee consisting of the Adviser, the Major Professor, and one other GGE faculty member. The guidance committee shall meet together with the student to complete a Guidance Committee report that specifies the coursework required for that student, and in the case of Ph.D. students, the coursework that will be required in support of qualifying examination topics.

### **Article VIII. Meetings**

The Group Chair shall call an annual meeting for the purpose of electing officers and conducting other business. The Chair shall be privileged to call other meetings in the interest of the Group and shall be required to do so at the written request of three or more members.

The position of Secretary of the Executive Committee will be performed by the GGE Administrative Assistant. The duties of the Secretary shall be to record the minutes of the meetings and to forward minutes to the Executive Committee.

### **Article IX. Quorum**

A quorum for the purpose of modifying by-laws or establishing graduate group policy must be greater than 50% of the faculty members who are eligible to vote. Passage of proposals requires more than 50% of the members who actually vote. Votes may be by e-mail.

### **Article X. Amendments**

All proposed amendments and revisions to the bylaws must be submitted in writing as a summary of the extant bylaws and proposed modifications together with a justification for change, to the Executive Committee, which will then circulate the proposal to the GGE faculty for one week by e-mail, then subject to vote and passage by 50+% of those voting, and then sent to the Graduate Council for review and approval.