

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES CONCERNING
GRADUATE STUDENT PARTICIPATION
IN PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

To the extent that graduate students are training for future assumption of faculty roles, and to the extent that some of their training is in the nature of an apprenticeship, it is appropriate that they become aware of problems and procedures of program governance and participate in them wherever appropriate and practicable, generally through direct participation of student representatives to the relevant faculty bodies.

Possible duties and responsibilities of the graduate student representatives are enumerated below. This list is not intended to be universal or exhaustive, but rather to identify areas of participation which would normally be expected to be addressed by all programs, with each specific program adding modifications or supplements appropriate to its own particular needs.

1. Curriculum planning and specification of program degree requirements. Since graduate students are directly engaged in the process of graduate education, it is expected that they might have recommendations to make concerning modification of existing courses, addition of new ones, and spelling out of degree requirements and procedures formulated by the program (as contrasted with graduate-school wide requirements which are not under the direct control of individual programs). Their recommendations should be solicited on a continuing basis at a time most appropriate for their consideration in planning for the coming year.

To the extent that graduate students play a role as Teaching Assistants or instructors in undergraduate instruction, it may also be appropriate to solicit their recommendations concerning undergraduate curricular matters as well. It is also appropriate to have advanced graduate students participate in pre-enrollment and course selection advising of junior graduate students.

2. Departmental colloquia and other non-credit academic activities. It is expected that graduate students would be involved in planning and conduct colloquia; conceivably this activity might be one for which graduate students have primary responsibility.
3. Budget planning and provision of services to graduate students. Depending upon the specific program, there may be need for provision of specific needs of graduate students which would be reflected as periodic or continuing items of the program budget (e.g., office space, research costs, computer time, etc.). It is appropriate that graduate students review these needs on a regular basis. It is also possible and desirable that in some programs they be involved directly in such activities as inventorying of equipment and/or supplies.
4. Selection for admission and evaluation of graduate student progress. This is an assigned responsibility of the graduate faculty in the program. It is not deemed appropriate that graduate students should ever play a part in evaluation of progress of individual students.

Their role in formulation of requirements is addressed in item one. It is not appropriate for students to participate in the selection of incoming students.

5. Evaluation of graduate faculty. Acting upon recommendations for promotion and tenure is another faculty responsibility in which student participation is deemed inappropriate. However, to the extent that evaluation of teaching competence is a regular part of the reappointment and promotion process, it is appropriate that graduate students may participate in devising and implementing procedures for regular course evaluation in graduate courses.
6. Hiring and recruitment. It is desirable to have student participation in the hiring process, where this is feasible and appropriate circumstances can be arranged, and to have potential new faculty members meet graduate students in the course of an interview. Student recommendations should be included in the material considered by the committee. Although student participation is appropriate and their recommendation should be solicited, formal recommendation of faculty appointment is the exclusive responsibility of the Search Committee and departmental faculty.
7. Participation in program governance and attendance at program faculty meetings. Graduate student representatives should attend program faculty meetings and participate within the limits defined by this statement of principles. It might be helpful if agendas could be set so that matters in which their participation is appropriate could be addressed first and they could leave before consideration of remaining items in which they are not entitled to participate. (I.e., See 4 and 5 above.)
8. Departmental assignment of assistantships. While it is regarded as inappropriate to have students participate in the selection process, it is appropriate and even desirable to solicit student preference prior to actual assignment.
9. Policy on assistantships and financial aid. While programs may solicit student opinion on such policy, the establishment of policy on assistantships and financial aid is the sole responsibility of the faculty.