Mission Statement
The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences provides an individualized, diverse and multidisciplinary learning environment for students to develop the knowledge, skills and creativity necessary to succeed in the evolving biomedical disciplines.

Note. In 2011, the Basic Science Departments were moved from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) to the School of Medicine (SOM). Owing to this change in faculty reporting lines for the majority of the Graduate Faculty, and the accompanying changes in Health Science Center faculty governance, the role of the Graduate Faculty Assembly (GFA) is being reconsidered. Until the role of the GFA is resolved, all administrative aspects of the graduate programs that are reported to the GSBS Dean will go through the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC). All GFC members are strongly encouraged to seek wide input from their constituency within their programs including faculty, students, and staff, as appropriate.

Article 1. Names
The name of the main policy making and governing body constituted by this document shall be the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) of The University of Texas Health (UT Health), San Antonio Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). Individual graduate programs shall be administered by their Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS), as described in Article 4. The individual student Research Supervisory Committee (RSC) oversees the thesis/dissertation research project of the graduate student and is discussed in Article 5.
Article 2. Administration of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Section 1. General

The graduate dean, and the associate deans or assistant deans who may be appointed upon his/her recommendation shall conduct the administration of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS).

Section 2. Dean of the Graduate School Of Biomedical Sciences

The graduate school dean shall be the chief executive and administrator of the graduate programs at the GSBS and shall chair all meetings of the graduate faculty council. The graduate dean is appointed by the president of The UT Health San Antonio. During the absence of the dean, the Associate Dean will serve in his/her place.

Article 3. Purposes and Responsibilities of the Graduate Faculty Council

Section I. Membership of the Council

A. Ex Officio Members (non-voting except as specified)

• Dean of the GSBS. Serves as Chair of the GFC, and shall vote only in case of a split decision. The Dean shall designate a chair pro tem to serve in his/her absence.

• Associate Dean(s) of the GSBS

• Assistant Dean(s) of the GSBS

• Assistant Vice President for Student Services

• Registrar

B. Voting Members

• The Chair of the COGS from each Ph.D. and MS program. Each will have one vote.
In the absence of a voting GFC member, an eligible alternate with the right of vote (Graduate faculty and member of the particular program) may be appointed by the absent member.

C. Non-Voting Members

• One student representative elected by the Graduate Student Association (GSA), typically the President of the GSA.

• One elected faculty representative from each proposed graduate program in the GSBS. The program must have been approved by the GFC, but may still be awaiting Coordinating Board approval. (Disapproval of the proposed program by the Coordinating Board would terminate this position on the GFC.)

Section II. Faculty and Academic Issues

The purpose and objectives of the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) is to foster, support, and maintain excellence in all aspects of teaching and research at the GSBS through approved graduate programs. The GFC shall formulate, discuss, and make recommendations on issues concerning the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of the Graduate School Faculty.

Section III. Administrative Issues

The GFC is formed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System and exercise their authority within those rules. The Council shall act as the principal policy-making body of the GSBS in relation to academic issues. The Dean of the GSBS, as chief administrative officer, shall be responsible for approval and implementation of all policy decisions, subject to the approval of the President of UT Health San Antonio.

Section IV. Function of the Council
A. Legislative Responsibilities

The GFC is the designated legislative body of the GSBS with the responsibility to recommend all candidates for degrees and this authority derives from the Texas Board of Regents. The GFC will not limit its review to consideration of whether candidates have fulfilled all requirements of various committees of the Graduate School, but will in addition base its recommendations on its own evaluation of the quality of the work. Furthermore, the GFC will function in such a manner as to support and promote the stated mission of the GSBS.

B. Educational Responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the GFC to establish and maintain policies, rules and regulations in those matters concerning graduate education which are common to all programs administered by the GSBS. These matters shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

• General academic requirements for admission to graduate study and degree candidacy, Compact and Milestone agreements, continuation of studies, and awarding of a degree.

• Standards of student professional conduct.

• Criteria for thesis or dissertation research, its supervision, and its defense.

• Ensure that the graduate programs are assessing and updating, as appropriate, the effectiveness and quality of their curriculum.

C. Consideration of Course Proposals, Modifications, and Inactivations of Graduate Courses

It shall be the responsibility of the GFC to review any proposal for a new graduate course or major changes to an existing graduate course, including changes in credit hours, scheduling, or request to inactivate a course from the catalogue. The GFC may reject the proposal, return it for modification, or transmit it to the Dean of the GSBS with recommendation for approval. The Dean of the GSBS may act on a proposal so transmitted by the GFC by rejecting it, returning it to the GFC for modification, or transmitting the proposal to the registrar for implementation.
D. Consideration of New Graduate Programs or Modifications of Existing Programs

It shall be the responsibility of the GFC to review any proposal for a new graduate program or substantial modification of an existing program. The GFC may reject the proposal, return it for modification, or transmit it to the Dean of the GSBS with recommendation for approval. The Dean of the GSBS may act on a proposal so transmitted by the GFC by rejecting it, returning it to the GFC for modification, or taking it to the UT Health Dean’s Council for further consideration.

E. Periodic Review of Graduate Programs

As per the requirements of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), each accredited graduate program must be externally reviewed every six years. The final summary of the review must be presented at the GFC and approved, before transmittal to the GSBS Dean, the Vice-president for Academic, Faculty, and Student Affairs, and the finally to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

F. Consideration of Recommendations Submitted by Program COGS

It shall be the responsibility of the GFC to review and act upon recommendations submitted by COGS of each program as listed below. The Council may reject the recommendation, return it for modification, or transmit it to the Dean of the GSBS with recommendation for approval. Recommendations which must be submitted by COGS shall include, but not be limited to, the following matters:

• Admission to a graduate program of an applicant whose credentials do not meet minimum requirements established by the GFC (i.e., waivers).

• Granting of all graduate degrees, with report on the final oral examination, when appropriate.

• Proposal for new graduate courses or major changes to existing courses.

Section V. Meeting of the GFC

A. Regular Meetings
Regular meetings of the GFC shall be held monthly throughout the year. Members of the GFC may submit items for the agenda to the Dean of the GSBS no later than 8 days prior to the next meeting. Written notice of the agenda of the regular GFC meeting shall be sent to the council members by the Dean of the GSBS no later than 1 week prior to the date of the meeting. In addition, the agenda shall be distributed by email to all members of the graduate faculty no later than 1 week prior to the date of the meeting.

B. Special Meetings

A special meeting of the GFC may be called by the Chair, or upon the request of three voting members of the GFC. Written notice with the agenda of the special meeting shall be sent by the Chair to the GFC members no later than three days in advance of the meeting.

C. Quorum

A majority of the voting membership of the GFC shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of its business.

D. Minutes

Minutes are distributed for review with the agenda prior to the meeting and then voted on and approved at the following meeting. Once approved by GFC at its next meeting, the minutes are to be distributed by email within 3 days to all members of the graduate faculty. The original copy of the minutes shall be permanently filed in the office of the Dean of the GSBS.

E. Guests

The Dean of the GSBS or members of the GFC may invite any interested individual to attend a meeting as a guest. Guests shall have the privilege of the floor, but shall not have the right to vote.

Article 4. Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS)
Section I. Membership and Officers of COGS

Each approved program shall have a COGS consisting of:

• Chair

• A minimum of four additional members from the Graduate Faculty of the program

• A student representative from within the program (optional). Under certain circumstances, such as when students are being specifically discussed, the student will not be present.

Section II. Functions of COGS

A. Responsibilities

The Committee on Graduate Studies of each graduate program shall have the primary responsibility for the conduct and administration of the program including, but not limited to, the following:

• Establishing specific requirements for admission, either in addition to, or more stringent, than the general requirements of the GSBS.

• Establishing procedures for review of applications to the graduate program.

• Establishing academic curricula consistent with the approved program goals of the graduate program.

• Reviewing research supervisory committee (RSC) reports on student progress towards the degree.

• Reviewing thesis and dissertation research proposals and the composition of the RSC.

• Assigning a member to attend the final oral presentation of each degree candidate and reviewing the recommendation of the student’s RSC.

• Reviewing and making recommendations to the Dean of the GSBS concerning the qualifications of potential new members of the Graduate Faculty.
• Reviewing the roster of members of the Graduate Faculty for continuations and deletions. Each faculty member’s credentials should be evaluated periodically.

• Establishing, maintaining, and distributing Program Guidelines/Handbook to all students and faculty.

B. Recommendations from COGS to the GFC

The COGS of each graduate program shall submit to the GFC, recommendations on matters which require approval by both the GFC and the Dean of the GSBS prior to implementation. Such matters include, but are not limited to, the following:

• Admission to a graduate program of an applicant whose credentials are below those minimum requirements established by the GFC (waivers).

• Dissertation research proposals and RSC composition.

• Granting of all graduate degrees, with report on the final oral examination, when appropriate.

• Proposals for new graduate courses or major changes to existing courses.

• Reviewing the UT Health SA catalog entry for the individual programs and the overall description for the GSBS, prior to publication.

C. Recommendations to the Dean

The COGS of each graduate program shall submit to the Dean of the GSBS recommendations on matters which require approval of the Dean prior to implementation. Such matters include, but are not limited to:

• Admission of students who meet the minimum criteria previously established by the GFC.

• Rejecting an applicant to a graduate program.

• Granting a leave of absence to a student in the program.

• Granting membership to the Programmatic Graduate Faculty.

• Admitting a student to candidacy for a degree.
• Terminating student classification (withdrawals and dismissals) for an individual.
• Revisions of the guidelines of the graduate programs.

Article 5. Student Research Supervisory Committee (RSC)

Section I. Membership and Officers of the RSC

Each student pursuing an MS or PhD degree will have a Research Supervisory Committee comprised as described below. In either the case of the MS or PhD degrees, as described below, each program will decide if the Chair of the RSC is to be the Supervisor, or one of the other members selected from among the graduate faculty within the program.

A. Master of Science (MS)

• The supervising professor, also a member of the program's graduate faculty, designated as Supervising Professor and Chair of the Supervising Committee.
• 2 Members of the graduate faculty within the program
• 1 member outside the program or discipline and with the appropriate scientific expertise

B. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

• The supervising professor, also a member of the program's graduate faculty.
• Three Members of the graduate faculty within the program (two members are to be graduate faculty within the program, and one member is faculty of the UT Health SA in a supporting area outside of the program, but need not necessarily be a member of the graduate faculty)
• One member outside UT Health San Antonio and with the appropriate scientific expertise.
Section II. Functions of the RSC

A. Responsibilities

The role of the RSC is to provide feedback and guidance to the student to ensure progression towards their degree in a timely manner. Specific responsibilities include:

• Critique and approval/denial of research proposal

• Hold regular committee meetings, at least twice per year.

• Attend the thesis/dissertation defense and approve/deny the degree to the program COGS.

• Members are also expected to provide feedback to the student on the dissertation.

• Provide guidance to the student as needed and requested by student and/or mentor.

B. Recommendations to COGS

• Results of the defense of the student’s research proposal.

• If proposal is successful, recommendation for admission to candidacy.

• Successful defense of the thesis/dissertation and recommendation for the designated degree, if appropriate.

Article 6. Rules of Procedure

Robert’s Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall govern the conduct of all meetings.
Article 7. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the GFC present, provided that the proposed amendment is submitted in writing to all member of the Assembly at least thirty days prior to such a meeting. Amendments may be proposed by Council resolution or by two thirds majority.

Article 8. Approval of ByLaws

The provisions of this instrument shall become effective upon its adoption by the majority vote of the current Graduate Faculty.