

# 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, June 24, 2004  
**Graduate Council Approval:** February 25, 2016

## 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

### A. Criteria for Membership

1. Faculty having active research, 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.
2. Members must: hold an appropriate academic title as (a) a member of the Academic Senate of the University of California (includes Professors, Lecturers with Security of Employment, Professors in Residence, Professors of Clinical “\_\_\_”, Professors Emeritus/a, and Research Professors), (b) Adjunct Professor, (c) Lecturer (without Security of Employment) or (d) Lecturer Without Salary. Academic staff with primary appointments as Cooperative Extension Specialists or in the Professional Research series are not eligible to be members of graduate programs unless they also hold an appropriate instructional title (normally Lecturer Without Salary).
3. All members of the graduate group are eligible to vote.

### B. Application for Membership

1. Interested faculty may submit an application for membership to the GGE Executive Committee, indicating a willingness to contribute to the Group as defined below in Section B.2. A CV should be enclosed. Applications for membership are reviewed by the Executive Committee to assure that Candidates have a documented record of high-quality scholarly activity in ecology (re: training, expertise, and program focus). Factors considered 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.

The Executive Committee will vote on membership applications at its quarterly meeting, or via e-mail. The Chair of the appropriate Area of Emphasis (AOE) within the GGE will be consulted for an advisory opinion on applications prior to review, but the Ecology membership at large will not be consulted. A simple majority will determine approval of membership. Membership shall be in accordance with Academic Senate and Graduate Council guidelines.

2. Members are expected to contribute to the GGE in ways beyond supervising graduate students. Contributions include: the teaching of Ecology courses, service on committees (Executive, Admissions, Seminar, Guidance, ad hoc, Ph.D. qualifying examination, M.S. final examination or thesis, and Ph.D. dissertation), service 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.

### **C. 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 who inform the GGE in writing of their desire to vote will be allowed to do so.

### **D. 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 contribution 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), c) professional productivity in the field of Ecology, and d) administrative service to the Group. 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.

### **E. Membership Appeal Process**

Membership applications or applications for membership renewal that are denied may be appealed in writing to the Executive Committee. Applicants denied membership or renewal of membership make a final appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

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

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

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

Members have the right to form Areas of Emphasis upon approval by the GGE Executive Committee. The AOE provides centers for curricular focus within ecology and also reflect the interests and expertise of the faculty members. AOE 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 Chair, and submitted for approval by the Chair to the Executive Committee. Each AOE has a defined curriculum (GGE degree requirements should be updated and approved by the Graduate Council upon revision). AOE is 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 is a formal group within the GGE. The creation of AOE is subject to approval by the GGE Executive Committee. AOE is not viable without such approval. The termination of AOE will be at the discretion of the members of the AOE and the Executive Committee. AOE 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.

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

#### **A. Chair Appointment Process**

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 name(s) of nominee(s) for Graduate Group Chair from the faculty and graduate students of the group. The name(s) of the nominee(s) and an indication of their 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 at least one name to the Dean of Graduate Studies along with comments received on the nominee. If the Group Nominating Committee submits more than one name, it may express a preference and will indicate the basis for that preference. After interviewing the nominee 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, Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Chancellor.

**B. 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, and is responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Office of Graduate Studies. The Chair provides overall academic leadership for the program, develops and implements policies for the program, and represents the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators. The Chair calls and presides at meetings of the Executive Committee and meetings of the entire program. The Chair is responsible for managing the budget of the program, submitting course change or approval forms, nominating Graduate Advisers for appointment, and for the accuracy of all publications related to the program.

**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 for no more than one quarter.

**Article V. Committees**

**A. The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of ten voting members: the Group Chair, Vice-Chair, an elected member from the Joint Program in Ecology with SDSU (JDPE), Chair of the Awards Committee, 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.

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, with the two year terms alternating amongst the four members. The JDPE member will be elected by JDPE faculty at SDSU for a two year term. 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. Executive Committee members may be re-elected for a second term, but must take a "break" after two consecutive terms.

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, and matters in which authority has been delegated by the Group.

#### **B. 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. All members are voting members.

##### **Duties of the Admissions Committee:**

The committee will review admission application standards, and review applications for admission. The Committee will recommend admission of candidates for the MS and PhD, applications for Double Major or Change of Major from other Graduate Programs at UC Davis.

#### **C. Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee will be composed of at least three faculty members and two student representatives. Members are self-nominated and appointed by the Awards Committee Chair. The Chair of the Awards committee will be decided by vote of the Executive Committee. Sub-committees will be appointed by the Awards Committee as needed. Appointments to the committees and sub-committees are for one year. The Chair of the Awards Committee shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee. All members have voting rights within the Awards Committee.

##### **Duties of the Awards Committee:**

The Awards Committee will review, rank applications, and submit nominations for: travel awards, block grant support for entering and continuing students, University fellowships, and Jastro Research Awards.

#### **D. The Diversity Committee**

The Diversity Committee will be composed of seven voting members (4 students, 2 faculty, 1 student affairs officer). Committee members will be self-nominated and appointed by the Diversity Committee Chair. The Committee Chair and Vice Chair will be self-nominated and ratified by vote of the Executive Committee. Committee appointments will be for two years, renewable. The Diversity Committee Chair may be either a student or a faculty member, and shall be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

##### **Duties of the Diversity Committee.**

The Diversity Committee will work to foster appreciation for the value of diversity in the GGE, to create and sustain a supportive and inclusive environment for all members, and to diversify our membership. Specific duties of the Diversity Committee will be to 1) support enrolled students by providing information resources and social events, 2) increase awareness of diversity issues and opportunities for outreach by providing student and faculty trainings and webpage management, and 3) identify methods to increase student and faculty diversity in the GGE and present these methods to the Executive Committee for consideration of adoption.

#### **E. Guidance Committees**

Each student's Graduate Adviser will convene during each student's first quarter, a Guidance Committee consisting of the Area of Emphasis Adviser, the Major Professor, and one other GGE faculty member. The guidance committee shall meet with the student to complete a Guidance Committee report that specifies the course work required for that student and in the case of Ph.D. students, the course work that will be required in support of the qualifying examination topics. The guidance committee shall meet a second time, for Ph.D. students only, to nominate a qualifying examination committee.

#### **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.). The Chair of any committee with student members must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about other students, personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during ranking of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students.

#### **Article VII. Graduate Advisers**

Graduate Advisers are appointed in compliance with the policies and procedures of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies. Each AOE will nominate 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 Office of Graduate Studies, 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 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 in the spring quarter each year. 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. Members will be notified of annual meetings by e-mail at least two weeks in advance, and those away from campus during the meeting may participate by early or post vote.

The position of Secretary of the Executive Committee will be performed by the GGE Graduate Program Coordinator. 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**

On graduate program matters other than amendment/revision of bylaws: passage requires a 50+% supporting vote of the members voting. Thus, passage of such motions will require support by a minimum of 25+% of the membership. On amendments and revision of bylaws: passage requires a 2/3rds supporting vote of the members voting. Thus, passage of such motions will require support by a minimum of 1/3rd of the membership. Votes can be done by email.

### **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. Anonymous voting can occur via anonymous survey responses, using a survey website. Polls will close after seven days. Provided a quorum is met, the modifications are then subject to vote and passage by 2/3rds of those voting, and then sent to the Graduate Council for review and approval.