

Terms of Reference

1. Name

Oceanography Graduate Studies Committee

2. Type

Standing committee

3. Purpose

The Committee's main purpose is to facilitate the administration of the MSc and PhD programs in the Department of Oceanography and act as liaison with the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) via the Committee Chair, who also serves as the Department's Graduate Coordinator.

4. Scope

The following activities are within the Committee's scope:

- Reviewing applications for admission into the Department's graduate program, providing advice to potential supervisors on suitability of candidates, and recommending admission or rejection of candidates to FGS;
- Monitoring student progress in meeting program requirements and, in collaboration with supervisors and students, developing strategies to address potential challenges as deemed necessary and appropriate;
- Keeping track of Supervisory Committee Meetings and reminding students and supervisors to hold these meetings in a timely fashion and at an appropriate frequency;
- Reviewing and approving or rejecting sea time forms and waivers;
- Organizing an annual meeting of the Department's faculty to review student progress and identify and discuss potential weaknesses and areas for improvement in the administration of the graduate program;
- Advising faculty on FGS rules and regulations and acting as liaison when appropriate;
- Maintaining the Graduate handbook and updating it as appropriate and in consultation with the Department;
- Allocating FGS funding in consultation with the Department Chair and, when appropriate, the Department's faculty;
- Screening eligibility of candidates for awards administered by FGS (incl. Harmonized Graduate Scholarships) and administering and overseeing processes for Departmental awards (incl. Kathy Ellis book prize, Keith Thompson prize, Hayes scholarship, Sharma scholarship) through ad-hoc committees that are free of conflicts of interest.
- Reviewing and approving recommendations made by the annual ad-hoc committee for USRA awards.

5. Authority

The committee has the authority to review applications and make recommendations to FGS regarding graduate admissions and scholarships, to request updates from students and supervisors about students' progress toward meeting graduate program requirements, and to allocate FGS funding in consultation with the Chair.

6. Membership

The Committee consists of four voting members who are appointed by the Department Chair. The Department Administrator and Graduate Secretary serve as ex-officio (non-voting) members. One of the four faculty members is appointed by the Department Chair to serve as Chair of the Committee and as Graduate Coordinator.

Current membership:

- David Barclay (Chair, Graduate Coordinator, PO)
- Craig Brown (faculty member, GO)
- Dan Kelley (faculty member, PO)
- Hugh MacIntyre (faculty member, BO)
- Sharon Bellefontaine (ex-officio member, Administrative Officer)
- Christina Warren (ex-officio member, Graduate Secretary)

7. Quorum and Voting

Committee recommendations should be reached by consensus (by at least two voting committee members). In cases where consensus cannot be reached, recommendations will be based on a majority vote of all voting members of the Committee who were involved in or are apprised of the deliberations (two at a minimum). In the case of a tie, the committee will seek input from the Department Chair who can cast the tiebreaking vote.

8. Meetings

Meetings will be called by notice of the Committee Chair, at a location via mode (in person, hybrid, or online) agreed upon by the Committee. The Committee should meet at least monthly, with additional meetings as needed to address emerging issues. Minutes are to be prepared by the Committee Chair or their designate.

9. Reporting

The Committee Chair or designate reports to the Department Chair after each meeting by email and includes the minutes. The Committee Chair or designate provides an update to the Department at the monthly faculty meetings.

10. Deliverables

The Committee is responsible for compiling and updating a Best Practices document that serves as a reference for the Department and future committee members. The due date of this document is August 2025.

11. Review

The ToR will be reviewed annually by the Department Chair. The date of the next review is August 2025.

2024-08-21 Katja Fennel; revised 2024-09-16 KF