

**BYLAWS and OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
**Department of Biology Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee**  
**Texas A&M University**

These Bylaws were approved by a vote of the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Biology and adopted on January 21, 2025.

## **I. MISSION**

The mission of the Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee in the Department of Biology is to select and recruit excellent graduate student candidates from the pool of applicants for each of the various departmental graduate programs.

## **II. GRADUATE RECRUITING/ADMISSION COMMITTEE**

- (1) Membership and Terms of Office.** The Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee is composed of six graduate faculty and two students in the Department, as well as the Assistant Program Director and the Associate Head for Graduate Studies. Elected faculty members serve a 3-year term, and elected graduate students serve a 2-year term, starting each year on July 01. Student membership guidelines are outlined in the Biology Graduate Student Association (BioGSA) bylaws.
- (2) Election.** Faculty are elected by a majority of voting faculty from a slate of nominees. The Department should strive to elect members to ensure that membership reflects diversity in rank and discipline. Graduate student members are elected by vote of the graduate students, as outlined in the BioGSA bylaws.
- (3) Committee Chair.** The committee chair is elected by the rest of the committee and must be a tenured faculty member whose home department is Biology. In the event that the committee cannot identify a chair, the Department Head may appoint a committee chair from among the membership.
- (4) Voting.** All members have voting rights, with the exception of the Associate Head for Graduate Studies and the Assistant Program Director who serve as *ex officio* members. The minimum quorum size for voting will be 5 voting members.

## **III. MEETINGS**

The Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee will have meetings as needed to carry out the responsibilities described below. The Chair will appoint a secretary responsible for keeping minutes on the discussion items and decisions of the committee. Minutes will be archived on a server accessible to all current GRAC members. Reports of committee activities will be presented to Faculty at Faculty meetings, as necessary.

## **IV. DUTIES**

Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee's duties, in conjunction with the Department Head and Graduate Office, encompass evaluating applications, interviewing prospective students during recruiting weekend, supporting the yearly

Departmental Student/Postdoc Research Conference, and making recommendations on admissions, among other duties as detailed below.

**(1) Graduate Admissions into our Ph.D. programs (Biology and Microbiology)**

Duties include working with the Department Head and Graduate Office to:

- (i) Develop criteria for admissions with feedback from the department.
- (ii) Organize and evaluate applications for admission to the graduate programs and generate a ranked list of candidates for interviews.
- (iii) Interview applicants during the graduate recruitment events, in conjunction with other faculty in the Department.
- (iv) Plan the Student and Postdoc Research Conference during the graduate recruitment event in conjunction with departmental staff, including the selection and assignment of posters and talks and coordination of judging and awards.
- (v) Solicit feedback from departmental faculty and graduate students regarding applicants following interviews and recruitment activities as part of the process in making committee recommendations for admission in the form of a ranked list of applicants who meet the criteria for acceptance into one of the two PhD programs to the Graduate Office.
- (vi) Provide recommendations for which applicants should be nominated for merit and diversity fellowships to the Graduate Office.
- (vii) Distribute information about the matriculating class to the Faculty.

**(2) Graduate Admissions into our M.S Non-Thesis programs (Biology and Microbiology)**

Duties include working with the Graduate Office and MS Committee Chairs to:

- (i) Develop criteria for admissions with feedback from the department.
- (ii) Evaluate applications and provide recommendations for admission in the form of a ranked list of applicants who meet the criteria for acceptance to the Graduate Office.

**(3) Graduate Admissions into our M.S Thesis programs (Biology and Microbiology)**

Duties include working with the Graduate office to:

- (i) Develop criteria for admissions with feedback from the department.
- (ii) Evaluate applications and provide recommendations for admission in the form of a ranked list of applicants who meet the criteria for acceptance to the Graduate Office.

**(4) Atypical Admissions**

All admissions occurring off-cycle will be evaluated following the same criteria as regular admissions.

- (i) Evaluate candidates who qualify for and apply for early admission.
- (ii) Evaluate candidates requesting transfer from outside programs into one of our programs, as well as transfers within our programs.
- (iii) Evaluate MD/PhD students from the TAMU School of Medicine entering the Biology Department's PhD programs.

- (iv) In cases where a direct recruit (e.g., transfer student, direct admit student) is rejected, provide an explanation to the Graduate Office that can be shared with the recruiting faculty member.

**(5) Recruitment efforts.** The Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee is tasked with assisting the Graduate Office in overseeing the development and coordination of recruiting activities geared towards broadening and increasing the recruitment of high-quality candidates in the applicant pool for the Biology Department graduate programs. The committee will be responsible of overseeing and coordinating:

- Recruitment through local Research Experiences for Undergraduate (REU) programs by attending recruitment events such as REU poster sessions.
- Outreach opportunities at conferences.
- Visits to undergraduate institutions in Texas with pools of potentially strong applicants.

## **V. BYLAW CHANGES**

Any Faculty member can propose bylaw changes and must first be reviewed by the Graduate Recruiting and Admission Committee, followed by department leadership, before being presented to the departmental Faculty. Final approval requires a majority vote by the Biology Graduate Faculty.

## **VI. PROMULGATION**

A copy of the approved bylaws, policies, and procedures will be posted on the departmental website.