

Suggested Responsibilities for Graduate Program Directors

Graduate Program Directors (GPD) play a vital role in making graduate programs successful. While the specific responsibilities vary from program to program, there are a number of “typical” responsibilities associated with this role*. In most cases, GPDs will:

- supervise and coordinate the administration and governance of graduate studies within the graduate program for which he or she is responsible;
- serve as the point of contact for the program’s recruiting and admissions activity;
- serve as a point of contact for graduate students enrolled in the program;
- serve as or appoint an advisor for students admitted to the program until one has been selected;
- act as a liaison between students and faculty in the program in regards to policy and procedures;
- serve as the program’s representative on collegiate and/or university governance committees, as appropriate;
- serve as a liaison between the program faculty and the college administration, referring issues as appropriate;
- informing the faculty of graduate education related policies, deadlines, and programs as appropriate;
- sharing recommendations, nominations, and other information between the faculty and the appropriate collegiate dean(s).
- receive, arrange for the review of, and monitor the progress of student applications and academic petitions;
- enforce regulations of the university, the relevant collegiate unit(s) and the degree program.
- oversee the maintenance of graduate student records and whatever student evaluation process is used by the program;
- provide periodic reports on the program and data to the collegiate dean(s);
- carry out such other responsibilities as specified by the college and the Graduate School;
- facilitate and publicize professional development activities for graduate students within the program.

To be effective in this role, Graduate Program Directors need the support of their program and department chair. In some programs, GPDs are given a course release, while in others they are provided with a stipend or summer funding. Although the remuneration varies, it is important to note that faculty in the GPD role should, whenever possible, be tenured.

*This statement is a recommendation by the Graduate School and has not been approved by the Graduate Council as of September, 2014.