



## Graduate Program Directors (PDs) Guidelines

### I. Definition

The Program Director (PD) is the designated advocate for the needs of each graduate program and its graduate students and faculty, both within the department and in the College/School. The PD is the main point of contact and conduit for information from The Graduate School (TGS) to the wider community, and from graduate students and graduate faculty to TGS.

### II. Qualifications

Graduate PDs are nominated by their department chair, or when the program does not reside in a specific department, by their Dean, Center, or Institute director. The Dean of TGS will be notified of the selection. For programs academically homed in TGS, PDs will also have to be approved by the dean of TGS. The term of service is defined by each program and PDs are reviewed as part of the annual evaluation process by their direct supervisor, unless stated otherwise. Candidates for PD must be graduate faculty and a member of the department or program for which they are nominated to serve. They are expected to have experience and engagement with the teaching and training activities of graduate-level students.

### III. Responsibilities & Expectations

PDs are critical to the success and health of our programs and the progression of our students in partnership with TGS. In this capacity, they will have the opportunity to engage in several core functions related to graduate student enrollment and success, including but not limited to the following:

- Recruitment
  - PDs are encouraged to be engaged in the recruitment process. This could involve participating in graduate fairs at AU and beyond, hosting informational sessions, hosting on-campus events, attending national meetings/conferences, developing promotional and marketing materials, creating web content and social media postings, etc.
- The Application and Admissions Process
  - PDs should be familiar with all aspects of the application and admissions process and provide a level of oversight and involvement. This could include reviewing application materials, interviewing applicants, chairing/serving on admissions committees, and making recommendations on admissions decisions.
- Retention and Student Progression
  - PDs are encouraged to help develop and create a strong sense of community among students in their respective programs to increase engagement and

enhance retention. PDs oversee student progress and address any challenges that hamper their progress through regular feedback from major advisors and student advisory committees to detect issues or concerns. PDs should communicate student issues/concerns to TGS.

- PDs are encouraged to support student registration by working with students, program administrators, and TGS to verify correct student enrollment each semester.
- Faculty engagement
  - PDs are encouraged to engage with and collect feedback from faculty who teach in their program.
- Program and Curriculum
  - PDs are encouraged to review and update admissions requirements annually and assess degree requirements as needed to ensure that program goals are being met. This includes course review (course revisions, new courses, deleting obsolete courses, etc.) and updating Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). TGS will draft the SLO for the biomedical science program and seek PD's input and approval.
  - PDs have general oversight of the program and curriculum and serve as the point of contact for program reviews.
- Milestones and Degree Progression
  - PDs should track the completion of degree milestones and student progression to help ensure on-time degree completion. When necessary, PDs should work with students to identify resources needed to help students remain on track.
  - PDs are encouraged to identify barriers to student progression and advocate for the needs of the students/program.
  - PDs sign off on degree requirement forms.
- Partnership with TGS
  - The PD is the main point of contact for the program as well as a conduit for the flow of information from TGS to the wider graduate community (both faculty and students). PDs are encouraged to share information from TGS with all stakeholders, as well as communicate to TGS the concerns and successes of their graduate community.
  - PDs should be knowledgeable of TGS Student Handbook and the general organization of the University as it affects graduate students and serve as a resource for the students and faculty involved in their specific programs.

#### **IV. TGS Support**

***TGS supports PDs in all of their roles and responsibilities, particularly in the following areas:***

##### ***Recruitment***

TGS employs a dedicated Student Recruitment Coordinator who aids in recruitment efforts for all TGS programs. Currently, this position is held by Matt Brocato. While TGS takes an active role

in recruiting potential students, each PD will know best how to recruit and where to recruit for their individual field. TGS is happy to partner with programs to support their recruitment needs. For more information or questions on recruitment efforts, please email Matt Brocato, [mabrocato@augusta.edu](mailto:mabrocato@augusta.edu).

### *Application & Admissions*

The Graduate School admissions team works collaboratively with programs, AU Online, the International Office, the Registrar, and the Office of Graduate Admissions Operations (GAO) to support and oversee the graduate application and admissions policies and processes. Annually, TGS works with programs to update admission criteria as well as updates to the AU application and supplement(s).

TGS also works to promote and develop efficiencies in the application/admissions processes and adopt best practices. TGS provides training sessions for programs, works with programs and GAO to develop effective communications/communication strategies, maintains official graduate admissions criteria and policies on the TGS web pages, and advocates for both applicant and program needs. TGS serves as a resource for applicants (and inquiries) throughout the application and admission process. Decision recommendations from the program/academic college are routed through TGS for review and a final, official decision. The official admission decision notification is provided to applicants in a letter from the Dean of The Graduate School.

PDs serve as liaisons from their programs' admission teams to TGS (directly or indirectly) and should reach out to the TGS Admissions Team ([gradstudies@augusta.edu](mailto:gradstudies@augusta.edu)) with questions, suggestions, and/or requests regarding the application and admissions process.