I. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Graduate Council (the Council) of The University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP) is responsible for recommending to the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and for reporting to the USFSP Faculty Senate, on matters pertaining to graduate courses, curricula, and instructional programs of USFSP. The Council shall advise the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on the development of future graduate programs of USFSP, to include reviewing and updating of the statement of academic goals and objectives of USFSP.

To this end, the USFSP Graduate Council will address itself to questions about graduate academic policies related to admissions criteria, academic standards, the curriculum, and graduation requirements. In addition, the Council may serve as a reference body to other USFSP councils and committees on matters of program policy and as a recipient of requests for the development of graduate courses or programs.

II. POLICIES

Members of the Graduate Council will be appointed by the Faculty Senate. Membership of the USFSP Graduate Council will consist of two tenure-track or tenured faculty representatives from the Colleges of Arts & Sciences, Business, and Education; one representative from the Library; one representative from the Regional Vice Chancellor’s office; and one graduate student representative. The graduate student representative will be nominated, on a rotating basis, by the Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences, Business, and Education to the Faculty Senate and will serve a one-year term; the graduate student representative will be a non-voting member until a graduate student representative body is active at USFSP. The representatives from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, the Library, and the Regional Vice Chancellor’s Office will serve two-year terms. The voting members of the Graduate Council will be the representatives from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and the Library.

The Graduate Council of USFSP will meet during the Fall and Spring semesters to discuss changes in academic policy and programs for graduate study at USFSP. In cases when the Council deliberates a specific proposal, the initiating party will be informed of the date and place of meetings when the proposal will be discussed. On that occasion the initiating party should be appropriately represented at the Council meeting. This representation shall consist of the persons initiating the specific proposal, or an appointed substitute. Such representation is not met by the Graduate Council representative from
the College that houses the initiating department or program, as members of the Graduate Council represent USFSP as a whole, rather than any specific college.

All meetings require a quorum, which shall consist of 70% of members of the Council, or 5 out of 7 members. A Council member who cannot be present may send a substitute and shall inform the Council Chair before the meeting of such substitute. The substitute shall have the same voting privileges as the absent Council member. If a member of the Council accumulates two unexcused absences of regularly scheduled meetings per year, that person shall automatically cease to be a member of the Council and will be replaced promptly by the Faculty Senate. The members of the Council may make suggestions to the Faculty Senate about the replacement. Excused absences are those where a member informs the Chair and arranges for a substitute, if possible.

The Chair of the Graduate Council will be elected by the members of the Graduate Council. Those who are eligible for the Chair position are the voting members of the Council. The Chair will serve a one year term.

Proposals shall pass when a simple majority of the members present votes in favor of the proposal. The Chair of the Council is allowed to vote along with all other council members. Proxies may not be counted as votes. All meetings and agenda will be announced one week in advance (if possible) and are open to interested persons in the USFSP community (as broadly defined). Visitors may speak at Council meetings upon recognition of the Chair.

The Council shall record minutes of each meeting. The minutes shall include the date, time, and location of each meeting, a list of members and guests present, and a discussion of the topics of the meeting. If a proposal is rejected during the Council meeting, a statement of reasons why the proposal was rejected shall be recorded. The minutes will be posted to the Faculty Senate web site and will be sent to Deans of the colleges as a courtesy.

III. PROCEDURES: CHANGE IN ACADEMIC POLICIES

The following general procedures shall be followed by the USFSP Graduate Council in considering changes to graduate academic policies at USFSP.

Step 1: Policy changes from an academic program or college of USFSP will be sent to the Chair of the USFSP Graduate Council. All program proposals must be received by the Chair 10 days before the meeting. All policy proposals will be reviewed on an as-needed basis. Council meetings for the 2010-2011 academic year are held on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Academic Affairs Conference Room, Bayboro Hall 204.
Step 2: The Chair will distribute all the proposals to the Council members no later than ten days before the next meeting. The Council will consider the proposal at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The initiator of the proposal shall be informed of the date, time, and place of the meeting that is called to hear the proposal.

Step 3: Graduate Council Action. After appropriate discussion and voting procedures the following action shall be taken.

A. Approval: Proposals shall pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes in favor of the proposal. A recommendation for approval will be given to the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate, with a statement of the reasons for the Council’s approval.

B. Disapproval: Proposals shall not pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to disapprove the proposal. If a proposal receives a vote of disapproval, the Council will return the proposal to the initiating party with a statement of the reasons for the Council’s negative vote.

C. Deferral: Proposals shall be deferred when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to defer the proposal or in the case of a tie vote. If a motion to defer voting on the proposal passes, the Council will outline the steps necessary to bring the proposal back for action by the Council. Necessary steps can include the need for more information by the Council so that a proper consideration of the proposal can be made.

Step 4: Decision of the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

A. Approval: Upon approval, the proposal shall be processed through the appropriate administrative authorities for implementation. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiator of the proposal shall receive copies of such approval.

B. Disapproval: A negative statement by the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall be accompanied by a statement from the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs citing the reasons for its rejection. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiator of the proposal should receive copies of the statement.

IV. PROCEDURES: NEW COURSE PROPOSALS AND SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES

The following general procedures shall be followed by the Graduate Council in considering new graduate course proposals.
It is incumbent upon the initiator of new course proposals to ensure that appropriate USFSP and State of Florida forms are acquired and used. Substantive changes include changes in the content or objectives (and therefore catalogue description) of the course.

**Step 1: Program Approval:** The proposal shall first be approved by the appropriate academic program at USFSP.

**Step 2: College Curriculum Committee, College Council and Dean Approval:** The proposal shall next be approved by the appropriate College Curriculum Committee, College Council, and the Dean of the college in accordance with the constitution of the college.

**Step 3: USFSP Graduate Council:** The appropriate party according to the college constitution will send the proposal to the Chair of the USFSP Graduate Council on or before the 15th of the month during the Fall and Spring semesters in order for the Council to consider the policy changes at the following month’s meeting. Documentation that the constitutional process has been followed within the initiating college must accompany the proposal. The Chair of the Council will inform the initiating party of the proposal of the date, time, and place of the meeting that will consider the proposal one week before the meeting, if possible.

**Step 4: Graduate Council Action:** After appropriate discussion and voting procedures the following action shall be taken.

A. **Approval:** Proposals shall pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes in favor of the proposal. A recommendation for approval will be given to the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate, with a statement of the reasons for the Council’s approval. The initiating party of the proposal will be given a copy of the statement.

B. **Disapproval:** Proposals shall not pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to disapprove of the proposal. The initiating party of the proposal will be given a copy of the statement of the reasons for the Council’s negative vote.

C. **Deferral:** Proposals shall be deferred when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to defer the proposal or in the case of a tie vote. If a motion to defer voting on the proposal passes, the Council will outline the steps necessary to bring the proposal back for action by the Council. Necessary steps can include the need for more information by the Council so that a proper consideration of the proposal can be made.

**Step 5: Decision of the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.**
A. **Approval**: Upon approval, the proposal shall be processed through the appropriate administrative authorities for implementation. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiating party of the proposal shall receive copies of such approval.

B. **Disapproval**: A negative statement by the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall be accompanied by a statement for the reasons for its rejection. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiating party of the proposal shall be given copies of the statement.

V. **PROCEDURES: NON-DEGREE PROGRAM PROPOSALS AND MAJOR RESTRUCTURING OF COURSE OFFERINGS**

The following general procedures shall be followed by the USFSP Graduate Council in considering Non-Degree Programs and Major Restructuring of Current Course Offerings.

**Step 1**: The Academic Program or Interested Faculty initiates the proposal

**Step 2**: The College Curriculum Committee, College Council and the Dean of the College approve the proposal in accordance with the constitution of the college.

**Step 3**: **USFSP Graduate Council**: The appropriate party according to the college constitution will send the proposal to the Chair of the USFSP Graduate Council on or before the 15th of the month during the Fall and Spring semesters in order for the Council to consider the policy changes at the following month’s meeting. Documentation that the constitutional process has been followed within the initiating college must accompany the proposal. The Chair of the Council will inform the initiating party of the proposal of the date, time, and place of the meeting that will consider the proposal one week before the meeting, if possible.

**Step 4**: **Graduate Council Action**: After appropriate discussion and voting procedures the following action shall be taken.

A. **Approval**: Proposals shall pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes in favor of the proposal. A recommendation for approval will be given to the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate, with a statement of the reasons for the Council’s approval. The initiating party of the proposal shall be given a copy of the statement.

B. **Disapproval**: Proposals shall not pass when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to disapprove of the proposal. The initiating party of the proposal shall be given a copy of the statement of the reasons for the Council’s negative vote.
C. **Deferral**: Proposals shall be deferred when a simple majority of the voting members present votes to defer the proposal or in the case of a tie vote. If a motion to defer voting on the proposal passes, the Council will outline the steps necessary to bring the proposal back for action by the Council. Necessary steps can include the need for more information by the Council so that a proper consideration of the proposal can be made.

**Step 5:** Decision of the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

A. **Approval**: Upon approval, the proposal shall be processed through the appropriate administrative authorities for implementation. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiating party of the proposal shall receive copies of such statement of approval.

B. **Disapproval**: A negative statement by the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall be accompanied by a statement for the reasons for its rejection. The Council, the Faculty Senate, and the initiating party will be given copies of the statement.

**VI. PROCEDURES: NON-SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN COURSES**

The following general procedures shall be employed by the USFSP Graduate Council in considering changes of a non-substantive nature to academic course offerings. Because non-substantive changes in course offerings are minor in relation to the other duties of the Graduate Council, it is only necessary that the Council receive notice from the appropriate administrative heads for the following courses of action. A notice is considered to be received by the Council if it is sent to the Chair of the Council. No further action is necessary by the Council. The aforementioned actions, not requiring Council approval, are as follows:

A. Minor rewording of catalog descriptions of courses.
B. Additional topics to be offered under Selected Topics or Variable Topics courses.
C. Cross-listing of courses
D. Course title changes requiring no substantive change in course content
E. Change in course credit hours (in varying hour courses)
F. Changes in prerequisites to courses
G. Course deletions from the catalog
H. Program deletions from the catalog
I. Changes in the grading system for courses
J. Changes in course level between upper and lower level courses
In all of the foregoing cases, the office of the Dean of the College shall forward the approved changes to the Graduate Council. It is incumbent upon the Dean of the College to also notify the USFSP Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs as well as appropriate administrative agencies concerning the change, for proper implementation.