

# Florida Gulf Coast University

## Guidelines on Graduate Faculty Appointment and Functions

### I. Purpose

The quality of the graduate degrees granted by Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) depends on the qualifications and expertise of faculty members involved in the university's graduate degree programs. These guidelines are developed to ensure that faculty members appointed with Graduate Faculty status meet the academic and professional standards expected of those participating in post-baccalaureate graduate degree programs. In addition, these guidelines are developed to ensure that FGCU's graduate degree programs meet the standards of the university's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

### II. Categories of Graduate Faculty Membership

The four categories of Graduate Faculty membership are: Member, Associate Member, and Adjunct Member. A FGCU faculty may be recommended by the Department Chair and/or Dean for Graduate Faculty membership on the basis of his or her college's Graduate Faculty appointment criteria and standards. Colleges are expected to evaluate candidates carefully and critically against their appointment criteria and standards before sending recommendations forward to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Graduate faculty, in all four categories, must reapply and renew one's graduate faculty status every five years.

Each college must develop and maintain written criteria and standards for Graduate Faculty membership. In doing so, a college may elect either to adopt the university's minimum criteria and standards listed below or to adopt detailed criteria and standards to accommodate program-level differences in criteria and standards. In such cases, colleges and programs shall adopt criteria that specify faculty credentialing requirements that evidence experience with independent scholarship or creative activity or specific professional expertise of value to the student's program. Evidence may include certification in the specific area of expertise, teaching experience in a post-secondary institution, scholarship, public recognition in the field. Faculty members must hold a doctorate in the discipline or a closely related discipline from an accredited institution. As an example, for the specialized programs, of Doctorate in Physical Therapy (DPT) program, faculty holding the terminal degree in their specialty are qualified to serve on DPT student committees commensurate with their credentials.

These college criteria and standards shall be reviewed by the unit's academic dean, the Graduate Affairs Team, and the Dean of Graduate Studies in the order indicated before being forwarded to the Provost. Each reviewer shall forward the proposed college criteria and standards with recommendations to the next reviewer, with the final determination made by the Provost. Criteria and standards that have received final approval shall be kept on file in the Office of Research & Graduate Studies and shall be reviewed every five years.

### III. Functions and Qualifications of Graduate Faculty

The university's minimum criteria and standards for Graduate Faculty membership are as follows:

#### A. Member status

1. Functions
  - a. Teach 5000-, 6000-, and 7000-level courses.
  - b. Serve as the committee chair, co-chair, or a member for doctoral dissertations, master's theses, or other graduate-level projects or exams.
  - c. Direct doctoral dissertations, master's theses, or other graduate-level projects or exams.
2. Qualifications
  - a. Faculty appointment and rank: full-time faculty appointment at Associate or Professor Rank.
  - b. Education: terminal degree in the field or in a closely-related discipline from an accredited institution.
  - c. Scholarly/creative activities: evidence of perpetual, professional, independent research activities or other appropriate scholarly/creative activities, as defined by the unit.
  - d. Teaching: evidence of effectiveness in graduate-level teaching.
  - e. Service: a track record of service contributions at the department, college, university and/or professional organizations related to one's academic field of specialization.

#### B. Associate Member status

1. Functions
  - a. Teach 5000-, 6000-, and 7000-level courses.
  - b. Serve as a committee co-chair, not the chair, or member for doctoral dissertations.
  - c. Serve as the committee chair, co-chair, or a member for master's theses, doctoral capstone, or other graduate-level projects or exams.
  - d. Direct doctoral dissertations, master's theses, doctoral capstone, and or other graduate-level projects or exams.
2. Qualifications
  - a. Faculty appointment and rank: full-time faculty appointment at Assistant Professor rank or higher.
  - b. Education: terminal degree granted by a graduate program in a closely-related discipline from an accredited institution.
  - c. Scholarly/creative activities: evidence of having made significant progress toward the development of perpetual, professional, independent research activities or other appropriate scholarly/creative activities, as defined by the unit.
  - d. Teaching: evidence of effectiveness in teaching at the college or university level.
  - e. Service: a track record of service contributions at the department, college, university and/or professional organizations related to one's academic field of specialization.

- f. In special circumstances a college chair or dean may recommend an instructor with a terminal degree to the associate member status based on the criteria set forth by the college.

### **C. Adjunct Member status**

1. Functions
  - a. Teach 5000- and 6000-level courses.
  - b. Compatible with one's highest graduate degree, an Adjunct Graduate Faculty may serve as a committee member, but not the committee chair or co-chair, for doctoral dissertations, master's theses, or other graduate projects or exams.
2. Qualifications
  - a. Appointment in one of the following categories: visiting faculty employed on a full-time basis; faculty employed on a part-time basis; lecturers and instructors; non-teaching staff members; retired/resigned faculty; other qualified professionals with expertise in a scholarly discipline or professional field.
  - b. Education: terminal degree granted by a graduate program in a closely related discipline from an accredited institution, or extensive and sustained professional experience in a closely related field.
  - c. Teaching: college-level teaching experience and/or extensive and sustained professional experience in a related field.

### **IV. Formation of a Thesis/dissertation Committee**

A master's thesis committee or a doctoral dissertation committee must be comprised of a minimum of three Committee Members, including the Committee Chair, with experience and expertise in closely related fields. For the master's thesis committee, at least two committee members, including the committee chair, must be with Graduate Faculty Member or Associate Member status. For the doctoral dissertation committee, at least three committee members, including the committee chair, must be with Graduate Faculty Member or Associate Member status. Requirements for additional committee members may be set by individual programs or colleges as long as such requirements are included within the program policies and are published and distributed to all students.

Formation of a thesis/dissertation committee is initiated by mutual agreement between the student and the faculty advisor who usually serves as the Committee Chair. Based on the recommendation of the academic dean, the Dean of Graduate Studies will review and certify the appointment of the Committee Chair and members.

### **V. Procedures for Appointment to the Graduate Faculty**

A unit graduate faculty committee will review and recommend to the academic dean appointment to graduate faculty status. The academic dean must submit a written recommendation, accompanied by an updated copy of the faculty member's curriculum vita, to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and final approval. (Pursuant to FGCU Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 8: Appointment, especially sections 8.4: Appointment Types; and 8.5: Change in Appointments).

- A. Adjunct Member status: The academic dean's written recommendation also must include a list of the specific teaching assignments and/or other academic responsibilities slated for the prospective Adjunct Member. An Adjunct Member appointment shall continue for five years from the date of final approval. Request for renewing an Adjunct Member appointment must follow this same process.
- B. The faculty members are reviewed regularly for reappointment to Graduate Faculty status. The following procedures shall govern this process:
  - 1. A Member or Associate Member with a continuing contract appointment must be reviewed every five years. The unit graduate faculty committee shall conduct an assessment of the faculty member's eligibility for reappointment to the Graduate Faculty, based on the college's appointment criteria and standards, and shall submit a written recommendation for Graduate Faculty reappointment or non-reappointment to the unit's academic dean. The academic dean's written recommendation, accompanied by an updated copy of the faculty member's curriculum vita, must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and final approval.
  - 2. A Member or Associate Member with a fixed-term multi-year appointment must be reviewed in the penultimate contract year in conjunction with his or her successive appointment review. The unit graduate faculty committee's preliminary successive appointment evaluation of the faculty member must include an assessment of his or her eligibility for reappointment to the Graduate Faculty, based on the college's appointment criteria and standards. Additionally, the department/division supervisor must submit a separate written recommendation for Graduate Faculty reappointment or non-reappointment to the unit's academic dean. The academic dean's written recommendation, accompanied by an updated copy of the faculty member's curriculum vita, must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and final approval.
  - 3. A Member or Associate Member with a tenure appointment must be reviewed every five years. The unit graduate faculty committee's preliminary sustained performance evaluation of the faculty member must include an assessment of his or her eligibility for reappointment to the Graduate Faculty, based on the program's appointment criteria and standards. Additionally, the department/division supervisor must submit a separate written recommendation for Graduate Faculty reappointment or non-reappointment to the unit's academic dean. The academic dean's written recommendation, accompanied by an updated copy of the faculty member's curriculum vita, must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and final approval.

## **VI. Resignation, Retirement, and Termination of Graduate Faculty Membership**

- A. A Member, Associate Member, or Adjunct Member, may resign voluntarily from the Graduate Faculty by submitting a letter of resignation to the Dean of Graduate Studies, with copies to his or her supervisor and academic dean.

- B. A Member or Associate Member who resigns or retires from the university is automatically terminated from membership in the Graduate Faculty unless the faculty member's academic dean recommends that the faculty member retain his or her membership as an Adjunct Member. In such cases the academic dean's written recommendation must specify a renewable period of up to five years for continued membership. The academic dean's written recommendation, accompanied by an updated copy of the faculty member's curriculum vita, must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for review and final approval.
- C. A college may request to have a Member, Associate Member, or Adjunct Member, removed from the Graduate Faculty if the faculty member has been grossly negligent and/or ineffective in the performance of his or her responsibilities. In such cases the faculty member's supervisor must submit a written recommendation for removal. The supervisor's recommendation must be reviewed first by the unit's academic dean and then by the Dean of Graduate Studies before being forwarded to the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. Each reviewer shall forward his or her recommendation to the next reviewer, with the final determination made by the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **VII. Appeals Procedure**

Any faculty member wishing to appeal decisions made pursuant to these policies and procedures must notify the Dean of Graduate Studies in writing and submit relevant information in support of his or her appeal. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall notify the appropriate academic dean, the Graduate Affairs Team, and the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs when such an appeal has been submitted. The appeal shall be reviewed by the faculty member's academic dean, the Graduate Affairs Team, and the Dean of Graduate Studies in the order indicated before being forwarded to the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. Each reviewer shall forward the appeal (including all supporting documentation attached by the faculty member) with a recommendation to the next reviewer, with the final determination made by the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs.

## **VIII. Amendments to the Guidelines**

The Graduate Affairs Team and Dean of Graduate Studies may periodically review and recommend amendments to these Guidelines, in order to promote the quality and integrity of the university's graduate degree programs and to ensure consistency with the standards of the university's regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Recommendations to amend the Guideline require a simple majority vote by a quorum consisting of more than 50% of the Graduate Affairs Team's eligible voting members. Recommendations shall be submitted to the Faculty Senate for review prior to being forwarded to the Provost or Provost's designee.