

Appointment of Graduate Faculty

The Graduate Faculty directs work and research towards graduate degrees and serves in an advisory capacity to the Graduate Council. Membership demonstrates high attainment and high professional standing. The Graduate Faculty is composed of those members of the general faculty of the university (full-time teaching, research or extension) who meet the requirements based on academic qualifications, experience on graduate committees, teaching of graduate courses, and research attested by scholarly publications or other proof of creativity; professional excellence, activity, and dedication. Full (five years) or associate (three years) member appointments are made by the Graduate Dean upon recommendation of the Graduate Council. Recommendations to the Graduate Council are made by the Credentials Committee, appointed by the Graduate Dean. Members of the Graduate Faculty are listed in the Graduate Bulletin and on the Graduate School Website. In some cases, outside experts (non-Alabama A&M University employees) are appointed to the Graduate Faculty as Special Members for a fixed duration.

Procedure for Nomination

Each nomination to the Graduate Faculty must be approved by a majority of the members of the Graduate Faculty in the nominee's department, by the department chairperson, and by the academic dean. The nomination letter must be signed by the nominee, graduate coordinator of the unit, the department chairperson, and the academic dean. It is then sent to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, who in turn forwards the applications to the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee, which meets once a semester, evaluates the applications and makes recommendations to the Graduate Dean.

Qualifications

Nominees to the Graduate Faculty must hold the terminal degree, Ph.D., in their teaching or research discipline. However, in certain disciplines where the accrediting bodies recognize Master's level degree as the terminal degree (examples: MFA, MLS), that degree is considered as the terminal degree. If the terminal degree is not held, exceptional achievement is expected in research or other scholarly and creative activities which establishes the faculty member as a recognized authority or leader in the field involved.

The nominee must have three years experience participating regularly in the graduate program at Alabama A&M University, or at another institution of higher education, or have demonstrated in some outstanding manner ability to direct graduate level research. If experience has been gained in other than academic institutions, it must be documented.

Participation in a graduate program includes service on graduate student advisory committees, teaching graduate courses, participation in graduate seminars, and direction of graduate research. However, it is not specifically required that the nominee should have taught at the graduate level during the three years. Experience in industry, government, and similar activity which may prepare a faculty member to direct the scholarly development of graduate students may be considered.

The nominees must have served on at least three examining committees. These may be three final master's examinations or three doctoral examinations, general or final, or combinations of these. Waiver of this requirement is rare and must be justified on the basis of exceptional research and publication achievements, as well as other experience.

Scholarly and Creative Activities

Publication requirements are satisfied by at least two full-length research articles carried in reputable refereed journals identified as such by the faculty in the nominee's department or academic area. Research methods or other analytical methods and techniques in these articles should be appropriate to the nominee's field. The nominee must be the senior author of at least one of these articles.

Publication of a book or research monograph satisfies this requirement completely if it makes a scholarly contribution to the field of specialization and demonstrates clearly the author's research competence.

Papers or manuscripts accepted but not yet published may be used to meet these requirements upon proof that the work has been accepted for publication.

Where publication is not the customary goal of scholarly and creative activity, proof of comparable achievement is required. When evaluating artistic fields, the originality, scope, and depth of the nominee's work determines the criterion for artistic merit. Distinguished exhibition or quality performance is evidence of excellence in research and creativity.

In addition, evidence of scholarly commitment may also include: reading papers before learned and professional organizations; writing book reviews, scientific and industrial reports, popular articles, or similar materials; rendering consulting service demonstrating professional standing; participating in activities of appropriate scholarly, scientific, and/or professional organizations by holding office or serving in other responsible capacities; performing significant administrative duties connected with the graduate program of department or of the University; and obtaining extramural support.

Reappointment

Full members are subject to re-evaluation at the end of their five-year appointment. Requests for reappointment are made by the faculty member to the department chairperson, who calls for a vote by the department's Graduate Faculty members and follow the procedures described under the *Procedures for Nomination* section. Here, the contributions made by the nominee primarily since the last nominations are considered. Not showing evidence of scholarly accomplishments, described under the *Scholarly and Creative Activities*, since the last appointment may result in the denial of reappointment.

Those denied reappointment may not serve as a major advisor to graduate students. They may, however, serve on advisory committees for students. They may teach 500-level courses but not those at the 600 level or above. Department chairpersons should reassign the individual's graduate students and higher level classes as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the spring semester following written notification of denial of reappointment.

Appeals

Those denied appointment or reappointment to the Graduate Faculty may appeal by letter to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The letter should have the approval of the departmental chairperson and the academic dean, and should detail the reasons for the appeal. An Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Graduate Dean. The report of the Appeals Committee is acted on by the Graduate Dean except when the Appeals Committee is deadlocked. Such cases go to the full Graduate Council.

Associate Graduate Faculty Members

Those with terminal degrees but not yet qualified to be a full member on the Graduate Faculty may be granted associate membership. The nomination procedure is similar to the one followed for the full membership and described under *Procedure for Nomination*. These members assume the responsibility and exercise the privileges of full membership except they may not direct doctoral committees. They can chair master's level committees and serve on doctoral and masters level thesis committees.

An associate member is appointed for 3 years, during which time application for full membership may be initiated when the faculty member believes qualifications have been met.

Reapplication

University faculty members denied Graduate Faculty membership, reappointment, or associate membership may reapply at any time the requirements for membership have been met.

Graduate Faculty Appointment Exceptions

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Credentials Committee, and the Graduate Council have the responsibility of determining whether nominees are qualified to direct the research and scholarly development of graduate students. Exceptions to the rules may be made for faculty members with outstanding records of achievement and national standing in their fields who may not in all cases meet the other requirements.

Special Members

Special membership is reserved for scientists, scholars, artists, and other highly qualified individuals from other universities, federal and state agencies or international bodies that are willing to serve on graduate student advisory committees or teach a course or conduct a workshop, etc. The nomination in this case is made by a single Graduate Faculty in a Department and approved by the Department chair, academic dean and the Graduate Dean. The lengths of these appointments are specific to the duration of the task for which the person is appointed.