

# **Graduate Faculty Appointment Policy**

## **A. Graduate Faculty**

Recognizing that faculty roles are many and varied, the University of Florida identifies faculty members who are active in the delivery of educational programming at the graduate level as members of the Graduate Faculty. A key aspect of graduate education is the longstanding tradition that a graduate student's academic program, and in particular the scholarship or research giving rise to the graduate student's thesis/dissertation will normally be guided by a committee of faculty members. Membership in the graduate faculty at the University level is required for, and confers the privilege of serving as chair, co-chair, or member of graduate students' committees within the faculty member's home department/unit. It also confers the responsibility for being willing to serve as an external member on the supervisory committees of graduate students in other departments, or as a representative for the Minor Area of study.

Academic units are strongly urged, with the concurrence of their graduate faculty, the unit chair/director and the dean, to formally express policies enunciating greater detail and specificity regarding the privileges of graduate faculty membership at the unit level, including the involvement of graduate faculty members in supervising students, teaching assignments, voting privileges and the like. Privileges and responsibilities of graduate faculty membership established at the academic unit level may vary considerably, reflecting the unique graduate educational requirements of diverse fields. Such unit level policies should be expressed in written policy statements, perhaps as part of departmental bylaws or similar documents.

## **B. Criteria for Appointment to the Graduate Faculty**

It is assumed that all University of Florida faculty appointees in full-time, tenured or tenure-accruing positions at the rank of assistant professor or above, in academic units offering a graduate degree are fully qualified to serve as members of the Graduate Faculty. Hence they will be appointed to the graduate faculty upon their appointment to the University faculty, in a process that is effectively automatic.

Other University of Florida faculty members, including those in titles defined by UF Regulations as equivalent to the traditional assistant professor/associate professor/professor series, as well as part-time, courtesy, affiliate, the lecturer series, and other faculty titles are *eligible* to become members of the graduate faculty of the University of Florida, subject to the following minimum requirements:

- Proposed graduate faculty appointment(s) must be in a graduate-degree-granting department/academic unit, college, or center.
- Graduate faculty appointees must have the terminal degree appropriate to their academic field or discipline, or must show a comparable level of attainment through experience.
- Appointment to the graduate faculty must be supported by a vote, with a two-thirds majority, of the graduate faculty in the appointing academic unit. Eligibility of the voting membership for this purpose is determined by each academic unit/department.

- The proposed graduate faculty appointee must meet any criteria established by the appointing college and/or department, and must have the endorsement of the department chair/director and the dean of the college.

Reflecting the University's interest in encouraging interdisciplinary research and scholarship, University of Florida faculty members may be appointed to the graduate faculty for the purpose of serving on student committees in more than one academic unit. The process for such second or subsequent appointments to the Graduate Faculty is similar to that outlined in Item C. below. It should be noted that appointment to the graduate faculty in any specified academic unit will normally have the effect of making a faculty member ineligible to serve as an external committee member for students pursuing degrees within that unit.

Persons who are not members of the University of Florida faculty may participate on graduate students' committees or other elements of graduate education through one of several less common mechanisms. For example, former University of Florida faculty members who have either retired or resigned may wish to continue (extend) their graduate faculty membership for purposes of continued participation as members of existing University of Florida the supervisory committees; persons affiliated with the University in a senior staff or administrative position, or as an adjunct or visiting faculty member, may be qualified to serve on student committees; people who are unaffiliated with the University may have special talents, skills or expertise that would be of particular value on a committee supervising the studies of a specific graduate student. Departments seeking to determine eligibility for appointment to the Graduate Faculty or for special appointment to a specified student's supervisory committee should contact the Graduate School for guidance and assistance.

### **C. Procedures for Appointment**

Appointments to the Graduate Faculty are formally made by the Dean of the Graduate School. As noted previously, the process for such appointments, in the circumstance of full-time faculty appointees in tenured or tenure-accruing positions will take place in close coordination with their appointments to the Faculty and the related employment processes. All other proposed appointments to the Graduate Faculty are initiated by the academic unit seeking the appointment. The process requires approval by the academic unit and the college, as well as submission of the candidate's credentials, voting results and completed nomination form. In general, the nomination should reflect a decision by the graduate faculty in the nominating unit that the appointment will serve the needs of its graduate students, enhancing the capacity of the nominating unit to provide outstanding graduate education experiences and supervision. Thus the nomination must include a statement that clearly expresses the purpose of the nomination, the anticipated role(s) of the nominee in the nominating unit's graduate degree programs and the manner in which the nominee's credentials and experience are consistent with those anticipated roles. Nominations are reviewed by the Graduate School. Upon approval, appointment to Graduate Faculty is formalized in a letter from the Dean of the Graduate School. Graduate faculty appointees are included in the graduate faculty database, and their supervisory committee activities (the number of committees, role as chair, co-chair, etc.) are reported for inclusion in the data requirements associated with the tenure and promotion processes.

Nominations must be submitted through the Graduate Information Management System (GIMS).

Academic Units are reminded that they may terminate a Graduate Faculty appointment at their discretion by communicating that decision to the Graduate School.