

Overview of Graduate Faculty Membership

Because appointment to the MTSU Graduate Faculty demands knowledge of current scholarship in the discipline and because continuing professional activity is a distinct part of a faculty member's work at this university, individuals seeking appointment to the graduate faculty of the university must provide evidence of scholarly productivity and engagement that meets the expectation of their discipline and the Graduate Council.

Only members of the MTSU Graduate Faculty are eligible to teach 5000/6000/7000 level graduate courses (including dual-listed UG/GR courses) or to serve on thesis or dissertation committees. Graduate faculty members in doctoral degree granting programs who wish to chair a dissertation committee must be endorsed for such service by their program and approved by the graduate dean.

Recognizing that variations in scholarship (research and creative activity) exist across disciplines and believing that scholars within a particular discipline are best positioned to know acceptable levels of scholarship for that discipline, the Graduate Council **requires each graduate program to develop procedures for review of applications and to establish minimum criteria for eligibility for appointment to graduate faculty appropriate for its discipline.** Discipline specific criteria established by individual programs must be equivalent to or exceed the general criteria established by the Graduate Council and must be approved by the Graduate Council.

Programs who establish their own criteria will send the reviewed and acceptable candidate applications as well as a memo stating the names of approved faculty members to be approved by the Graduate Council. Programs who simply adopt the Graduate Council guidelines below must send individual faculty applications with appropriate signatures to be reviewed and recommended by the Faculty and Curriculum subcommittee of the Graduate Council.

Academic deans and associate deans are granted full membership.

Procedures for Applying for Graduate Faculty Membership

Graduate faculty membership is a 5-year renewable appointment.

Initial review of applications for graduate faculty membership occurs at the department/program level. For programs who elect to use Graduate Faculty membership options A-C below, applications and supporting documentation are reviewed and recommendations for appointment are forwarded to the Graduate Council.

The signed [application form](#) and attached documentation are forwarded to the College of Graduate Studies, Sam H. Ingram Building, Box 42. The Graduate Faculty and Program Review sub-committee review all applications and make recommendations to the Graduate Council which then makes recommendations to the dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Programs who have developed their own criteria and approved their own faculty will send forward their candidates' applications in addition to a memo stating the names of all approved faculty.

Persons accepted for graduate faculty membership receive notification from the College of Graduate Studies and their acceptance is noted in the Graduate Council minutes.

Full Initial or Reappointment

These criteria apply to tenured and tenure-track faculty in programs seeking appointment to the graduate faculty of Middle Tennessee State University and serving in programs that have not approved discipline-specific criteria.

Applicants for graduate faculty membership must hold the terminal degree in the teaching field. If the terminal degree is not a doctorate in the field, the application must include an approved [MTSU Academic Preparation Certification \(APC\)](#) verifying that the applicant meets SACSCOC criteria to teach at the graduate level. **If an APC form is necessary, it must go through the Provost's Office for signature first.**

Requirements for Consideration

Along with the **completed application**, applicants must include:

- **A recommendation letter -whether initial or reappointment-** from the department chair (or the Graduate Program Director if in an interdisciplinary graduate program) which describes graduate teaching expertise. If the applicant has not previously taught graduate courses the letter must specifically address instructional expertise in the areas of anticipated instruction.
- **Evidence** of Research, Creative, or other Scholarly Activities. See below for specifics.

Note that it is not sufficient to simply provide a listing of activities. Examples of required documentation include first page of article, title page of book, printed program or review of performance, proceedings from meetings showing date and citation. DO NOT SIMPLY INCLUDE A CV.

The applicant must meet one of the following criteria for Publications, Presentations or Ongoing Research, Creative, or Other Scholarly Activities.

A) Publications:

These require primary authorship or relevant co-authorship. If not yet in print, the faculty member may submit documented evidence of acceptance (i.e., in press).

Within the last five years the applicant must:

- have published **a scholarly book** requiring independent review; **OR**,
- have published **two** articles or essays in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

B) Presentations:

Presentations include the presentation of scholarly papers at professional meetings.

Within the last five years the applicant must:

- have presented scholarly conference papers to at least **two** international or national conferences or **three** regional conferences. The submitted activity must have been subject to external (off campus) review and be equivalent in contribution and rigor to the publication criteria defined above.

C) Combinations:

A combination of presentations and papers (1 peer-reviewed article or essay and 1 national/international conference or 1 peer-reviewed article or essay and 2 regional conferences).

Must be recommended by the Graduate Council and approved by the Dean, College of Graduate Studies.

These are minimum standards in assessing graduate faculty membership. Individual programs may apply different standards by vote of the faculty of the program as long as they are equivalent or more stringent and are approved by the Graduate Council and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Adjunct Membership

Part-time adjunct faculty members and full-time faculty members on non-tenure track appointments at MTSU, and individuals who are not MTSU faculty members but have specific expertise pertinent to graduate programs may be recommended for membership on an adjunct basis. Adjunct membership must be renewed every three years.

Adjunct members may not direct doctoral dissertations or Master's theses, but may serve as committee members/readers and may teach graduate courses.

Requirements for Consideration

If assigned to teach a graduate course the individual must hold the terminal degree in the teaching field. If the terminal degree is not a doctorate in the field, the application must include an approved [MTSU Academic Preparation Certification \(APC\)](#), approved by Academic Affairs verifying that the applicant meets SACS criteria to teach at the graduate level.

The applicant must also:

- Provide a [current vita](#) as evidence of qualifications to execute assignments successfully;
- Provide a [recommendation letter](#) from the department chair (or the Graduate Program Director if in an interdisciplinary program);
- Be recommended by the Graduate Council;
- Be approved by the Dean, College of Graduate Studies.

For persons seeking adjunct graduate faculty membership for *purposes other than instructing graduate courses*,

- the department chair (or Graduate Program Director if in an interdisciplinary program) should provide a letter stating specific expertise/qualifications related to the specific graduate faculty duties to be assigned.
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College of Graduate Studies Criteria for Chairing a Doctoral Dissertation

These criteria apply to faculty holding graduate faculty membership that wish to chair a doctoral dissertation. Approval is granted for the purpose of chairing the dissertation committee of a specific student and ends with the graduation of the student. Likewise, if the graduate student fails to enroll in two consecutive semesters the approval must be reconsidered at the time of the student's reenrollment.

The request for approval to chair a dissertation is made at the time the [Dissertation Advisory Committee Form](#) is submitted and the doctoral student is advanced to candidacy.

Requirements for Consideration

Candidates for Dissertation chair must:

- hold the doctoral degree in the discipline and must be teaching in a doctoral degree granting department or in interdisciplinary doctoral programs;
- be a member of the Graduate Faculty;
- be recommended by the graduate program director.

These are the minimum standards to chair a dissertation committee. Individual programs may apply different standards by vote of the faculty of the program as long as they are equivalent or more stringent and are approved by the Graduate Council and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.