

**OPERATING PAPER FOR**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT MARTIN GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**SECTION ONE**

**Introduction**

- I. Purpose and Functions of the Graduate Studies Office
  - A. The Graduate Studies Office is the central agency for organizing and supervising the graduate instructional program of the University and for developing that program toward the highest level of excellence.
  - B. The Graduate Studies Office cooperates with the Faculty Research Office to mesh graduate instruction and research into mutually supporting programs and to integrate both programs into the total effort of the University.
- II. Relation of the Graduate Studies Office to Other Agencies of the University
  - A. The office serves all Colleges of the University.
    1. The Graduate Faculty is organized as a single faculty encompassing Graduate Faculty members from the University.
    2. The Graduate Council is established in accordance to the guidelines of the Faculty Senate as an all-University body, with appropriate representation from major academic disciplines offering graduate work.
    3. The Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible administratively for graduate instruction and research in the University.
    4. The Office of Graduate Studies falls within the administrative jurisdiction of the Academic Vice Chancellor of the University.
  - B. The Office of Graduate Studies is the central coordinating agency for the graduate program of the University.
    1. Because the Graduate Program is essentially a joint effort, there are close working relationships between the Office of Graduate Studies and the departments, faculties, and colleges of the University.
    2. The members of the Graduate Faculty are drawn from the faculties of the various academic units of the University.
    3. The Graduate Council draws its membership from all sectors of the Graduate Faculty and is set up to assure adequate representation of all academic areas as well as to achieve an all-University point of view.
    4. The Dean of Graduate Studies has responsibility for coordinating, encouraging, and stimulating the graduate program in all academic units.
- III. Relationship of this Operating Paper to the original Charter of the Graduate Program, the policies and practices subsequently approved by The University of Tennessee at Martin Graduate Council, and the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate.

- A. This Operating Paper implements the original Charter of the Graduate Program and the policies and practices subsequently approved by The University of Tennessee at Martin Graduate Council and the Faculty Senate.

## SECTION TWO

### Organization of Graduate Studies

#### I. Organization for the Formulation of Policy

##### A. The Graduate Faculty

In terms consistent with UT Martin's mission, this section defines the graduate faculty categories, describes the criteria for membership in each category, and articulates the process by which individual selection is made. It builds upon and supersedes the criteria established and amended in 1993.

Membership in the graduate faculty is not an automatic consequence of appointment to a faculty position.<sup>1</sup> It requires submission of an application and approval by the department chair, college dean, and the Graduate Council. Membership is based on evidence of scholarly accomplishments beyond those required for undergraduate instruction. "Graduate education inherently implies a greater depth of training, with increased specialization and intensity of instruction. . . . Most important, there is vital concern for the generation of new knowledge, through research, in addition to the transmission of what is already known."<sup>2</sup> Appointment to the graduate faculty demands knowledge of current scholarship in the relevant teaching field. Because continuing professional activity is a distinct part of a faculty member's work at the university, the criteria stated below must be met to attain and maintain graduate faculty status in one of the four categories.

#### 1. Appointment Categories: Appointment Terms & Rights/Eligibility

##### a. Full Membership

Full members receive a five (5) year appointment and are eligible for reappointment every five years subject to the criteria specified below (see 2a). They may teach any assigned graduate course, direct theses, serve on thesis committees, and serve on comprehensive examination committees. They are eligible for appointment/election to college graduate level curriculum and degree appeal committees (and university committees consistent with Senate Bylaws).

##### b. Associate Membership

Associate members receive a three (3) year appointment. Those receiving an initial appointment at the associate level should meet the criteria for full membership by the end of three years. They may apply for one (1) additional three-year appointment under the conditions specified below (see 2b). They may teach graduate courses and serve on thesis and

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<sup>1</sup> The following positions grant the administrator full graduate faculty membership as long as they hold the position: Academic Vice Chancellor, Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Dean of each College within the University **which offers graduate work**.

<sup>2</sup> C. W. Minkel and Mary P. Richards, *Components of Quality in Master's Degree Programs* (Tennessee Conference of Graduate Schools, 1986), 1.

comprehensive examination committees. They are eligible for appointment/election to college graduate level curriculum and degree appeal committees (and university committees consistent with Senate Bylaws). They are not eligible to direct theses until they have served as a committee member on one (1) thesis.

c. Special Membership

Special members receive a three (3) year, renewable appointment. They may teach graduate courses and serve on thesis and comprehensive exam committees as specified on their application. Special members who hold regular faculty appointments are eligible for appointment/election to college graduate level curriculum and degree appeal committees (and university committees consistent with Senate Bylaws).

d. Temporary Membership

Temporary members receive a one (1) semester appointment that can be renewed one time only. They may teach graduate courses as specified on their application.

2. Appointment Criteria

a. Full Membership

**Initial Appointment.** For an initial appointment, applicants must have regular faculty status and hold the terminal degree in the teaching field. They must also have at least three (3) years full-time teaching experience at the college level in a regionally accredited institution, completed after receipt of the terminal degree. All applicants must provide evidence of ongoing scholarly/creative and professional work in the field of expertise. For the initial appointment, the evidence provided must include the period since completion of the terminal degree.

**Renewal.** Faculty holding full membership are expected to satisfy credentials that warrant renewal of full membership. If requesting renewal of a previous/current appointment, the evidence of ongoing scholarly/creative and professional work in the field of expertise must be provided for the period since previous appointment. Although research and scholarly productivity may be defined differently in each discipline, the following guidelines will be applied.

- (1) The activity involves a studious inquiry or examination.
- (2) The activity seeks either to discover and interpret new concepts, theories, laws, facts, relationships, or perceptions OR seeks to advance the application of them.
- (3) The results of scholarship (creative endeavor) and other professional activity are in a form accessible to external peer review appropriate to the mode of scholarly/creative production. For example, in the performing arts there may be a provision for formal, public presentation and peer evaluation. In other disciplines there may be a provision for external peer evaluation of products such as archival or published research, presentations before professional societies, licensure and certification, or significant consulting activity that validates the scholarly accomplishment.

Consistent with these guidelines, the applicant must show continuous peer reviewed scholarly/creative activity throughout the last five years and have a minimum of four activities. Activities must be selected from the following categories and are considered as one activity unless otherwise indicated.

- (a) Publication of Scholarly Text. Scholarly texts requiring independent review procedures. Must be published as primary or co-authorship. If the publication has not yet appeared in print, the applicant must submit evidence that it is “in press.”
  - (a.1) Initial publication of text as primary author or co-author (equivalent to three activities)
  - (a.2) Initial publication of text as primary or co-editor.
  - (a.3) Revision of subsequent editions of text as author or editor.
- (b) Publication of Chapter in Scholarly Texts. Chapters in scholarly texts requiring external peer review procedures.
- (c) Publication of Article or Essay. Article or essay in an externally peer-reviewed publication at the regional, national or international level.
- (d) Scholarly Presentations. Two scholarly works presented at the regional level or one scholarly work at the national or international level (equal to one activity). The scholarly works may include papers, posters, workshops, or other presentations consistent with the current practices of the discipline and must have been subject to external peer review.
- (e) Creative/Artistic Presentation or Product Design. An original work for presentation/performance or a product designed and exhibited at the regional level or above. The activity must have been subject to external peer review.
- (f) Research/Grants/Other Professional Activities. These must be equivalent in contribution, rigor, and externally peer-reviewed status to the publication or artistic presentation criteria defined above. The burden of evidence rests on the applicant to prove that the activities presented meet the criteria.

b. Associate Membership

Automatic Initial Appointment (Years 1-3 following completion of a terminal degree). Regular faculty who completed a terminal degree within the last three years may receive an automatic initial appointment upon submission of a graduate faculty application and curriculum vita. The automatic initial appointment cannot extend beyond the third year following completion of a terminal degree.

Initial Appointment (Years 4-6 following completion of a terminal degree). Regular faculty who completed a terminal degree within the last 4-6 years may submit a graduate faculty application and curriculum vita requesting associate membership for the time remaining in the six-year period following completion of the degree.

Renewal of Automatic Initial Appointments (Years 4-6 following completion of a terminal degree). Associate members with automatic initial appointments are expected to satisfy credentials that warrant full membership (see 2a above) at the end of their appointment. However, automatic initial associate membership may be renewed one (1) time only for no more than three (3) years. A letter from the department chair must accompany the application; it must address the applicant's teaching effectiveness at the graduate level and progress toward attaining full membership.

Associate membership cannot extend beyond the sixth year following completion of a terminal degree.

c. Special Membership

Special membership is intended for regular, visiting, and adjunct faculty who have special academic expertise or professional experience and who demonstrate competence in particular course(s) or discipline(s) of instruction but who otherwise do not meet the criteria for full membership. If they lack a terminal degree in the discipline, they must complete the standard form required by SACS to demonstrate equivalent competency and provide appropriate official documentation. A renewal application must also demonstrate currency regarding the special academic expertise or professional experience related to the specified course(s) or discipline(s) they will teach or the committee on which they will serve.

d. Temporary Membership

Faculty who have special academic expertise or professional experience but who otherwise do not meet the criteria for special membership may be granted temporary membership to serve an emergency need. The appropriate SACS form must be completed (with appropriate official documentation) if the applicant lacks a terminal degree in the appropriate discipline.

3. Powers of the Graduate Faculty

- a. The Graduate Faculty is empowered to determine academic policy on all matters having to do with the graduate program, except as authority is otherwise assigned by the Bylaws, Policies and Practices of the Board of

Trustees, or as its autonomy is limited by academic and administrative relations with other units of the University.

- b. Academic responsibility for graduate standards, for recommending establishment of new graduate programs, and for recommending graduate degree requirements rests with the Graduate Faculty.
- c. The Graduate Faculty may delegate its powers to the Graduate Council, reserving these rights:
  - (1) To review the minutes of each Graduate Council meeting which are on file in the Graduate Studies Office.
  - (2) To refer agenda items and issues to the Graduate Council.

B. The Graduate Council

1. Size, Composition, and Term of Office

a. Size and Composition

- (1) The Coordinators of each graduate program shall be ex officio voting members.
- (2) Membership will include at least one graduate faculty representative of all colleges represented on the graduate faculty and will be appointed by the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.
- (3) One graduate student will be appointed, on a rotating basis, by the Coordinator of the colleges/departments offering a master's program.
- (4) The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Dean of Graduate Studies shall be non voting ex officio members with the Dean providing the services of executive secretary.
- (5) The Faculty Senate President and President-elect shall be non voting ex officio members.

b. Term of Office

- (1) Faculty members serving on the Graduate Council shall be appointed to three-year terms. Terms will be concurrent with membership on the Faculty Senate and shall be staggered in such a manner that not more than three members will complete their term of office in any one year.
- (2) Terms of office shall begin on July 1.
- (3) A member shall be eligible to serve a second full term only after the lapse of one or more years following the last period of service.
- (4) The student representative on the Graduate Council shall be appointed to a one year term.
- (5) A person serving part of a term as a replacement shall be eligible for election to an immediately following term.

- (6) If a vacancy on the Graduate Council occurs between regularly scheduled appointments, the Faculty Senate shall select a replacement according to its Bylaws.
- (7) The Graduate Council shall be empowered to determine whether a vacancy exists.

## 2. Powers and Functions of the Graduate Council

- a. The Graduate Council is empowered to act as agent for the Graduate Faculty with delegated power with regard to the following and is subject to requisite Faculty Senate, administrative and Board approval:
  - (1) Study policies and procedures concerning graduate student recruitment, admission, retention, and degrees requirements.
  - (2) Recommend changes as needed to maintain academic standards in a manner consistent with the mission and goals of the University.
  - (3) Study the graduate curricula; consider requests for curriculum and course changes; initiate suggestions designed to improve the curriculum; study intercollege, interdepartmental, extension, and summer programs; consider what graduate programs are academically wise and financially practicable; and recommend to the Senate policies concerning such programs.
  - (4) Review graduate student appeals concerning university policies, if previously approved by the college degrees committee.
  - (5) Study action taken by college degree committees and report persistent patterns of variance from degree requirements to the Faculty Senate.
  - (6) Take action on all nominations for Graduate Faculty status.
  - (7) Recommend policy, on matters within Graduate Studies jurisdiction, regarding graduate teaching and research assistantships and fellowships.
  - (8) Maintain a continuing two-way flow of information and recommendations between the Graduate Council and the Graduate Dean, the Graduate Faculty, the colleges, departments and faculties, the central administration, and other interested parties.
  - (9) Maintain a continuing self-scrutiny concerning the procedural and substantive effectiveness of the Graduate Council.
  - (10) Maintain a continuing study of effective means of enlisting the services and ideas of Graduate Faculty members not serving on the Graduate Council, as well as all other interested parties.

## 3. Committees of the Graduate Council

- a. The Graduate Council shall be empowered to establish and terminate its own committees and subcommittees, both standing and ad hoc.
- b. The Chair of the Graduate Council, in consultation with members of the Council, shall appoint the chair and the members of these committees.

- c. These committees may embrace such areas as Graduate Admission and Retention, Graduate Advising and Registration, Graduate Faculty, Graduate Program Review, Graduate Recruitment, Graduate Research and Writing, Graduate Student Affairs, and any other matters under Graduate Council jurisdiction.
- d. These committees may establish such subcommittees as may be necessary.
- e. Committees or subcommittees of the Graduate Council may include non-members as well as members of the Council.

4. Officers of the Graduate Council

- a. The Chair of the Graduate Council shall be elected annually from the graduate faculty membership of the Graduate Council at its last regularly scheduled meeting of the Spring semester.
- b. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall provide a secretary to transcribe the minutes of each meeting.

5. Relation of the Graduate Council to the Faculty Senate

- a. In accordance with Article IV, Section V of the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate, the Graduate Council will study the graduate curricula; consider all requests for curriculum and course changes; initiate suggestions designed to improve the curriculum; study intercollege, interdepartmental, extension, and summer programs; consider what graduate programs are academically wise and financially practicable; and recommend to the Senate policies concerning such programs.
- b. All matters not specifically designated above or mentioned in Article IV, Section V of the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate will be reported by the Graduate Council directly to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs through the Dean of Graduate Studies.

C. The Departmental or College Graduate Committee

1. Size, Composition, and Term of Office

a. Size

The Departmental or College Graduate Committee shall have a membership of at least three.

b. Composition

The composition of the Committee is to be determined by the dean.

Faculty membership on the college committee shall be members of the graduate faculty who have been approved for full, associate, or special membership by the Graduate Council.

c. Term of Office

The term of office of members is to be determined by the department or college.

2. Powers and Functions of the Departmental or College Graduate Committee
  - a. The Committee serves as the liaison agency between the academic unit and the Graduate Council.
  - b. The Committee, or its delegate, will assume the responsibility of determining the admissibility of applicants to the graduate program of the department.
  - c. The Coordinator will maintain current records for each graduate student, and these records may be examined by faculty members upon request.
  - d. The Coordinator must approve each candidate's Master's Degree Plan before it is forwarded to the Graduate Dean. Petitions for changes must also meet with the approval of the Committee or its delegate before being forwarded to the Graduate Dean.
  - e. The Committee shall specify the style and form of thesis or problems in lieu of thesis and share with the advisor the responsibility for having the thesis meet standards established by the department and the Graduate Office.
  - f. The Committee will maintain a continuing review and evaluation of the department or college's graduate program(s) and make recommendations to the appropriate administrative officers.
  - g. The Committee will hear student degree appeals. Only those petitions which the committee approves and which involve University-wide policies must be submitted to the Graduate Council.

## II. Organization for the Administration of Policy

### A. The Graduate Dean: Powers and Responsibilities

1. The Graduate Dean as administrative head of the Graduate Program has all powers and responsibilities appropriate to that role, exercises leadership in the development of graduate education at the University, and is accountable to the Academic Vice Chancellor.

### B. The Graduate Dean: Functions and Duties

Illustrative but not inclusive of the specific functions and duties of the Graduate Dean are the following:

1. Recommending new policies or modifications of existing policies to the Graduate Council.
2. Working with the Graduate Council in assembling the factual bases and acquiring the perspectives necessary for effective policy formulation.
3. Acting as liaison between the Graduate Council, the central administration, and the faculties and administrations of the colleges, departments, and faculties.
4. Exercising continuing efforts to maintain and improve overall educational standards, in cooperation with the Graduate Council, the central administration,

and the faculties and administrations of all academic units involved in the graduate program.

5. Acting, in accordance with Graduate Council policy and upon recommendation by the relevant administrative officer of the academic unit involved, upon such matters as applications for student admission or reinstatement, the awarding of degrees, and petitions for waiver of--or exception to--rules and regulations.
6. Acting, in accordance with Graduate Council policy and upon recommendation by the relevant administrative office of the academic unit involved, upon such matters as approval of thesis committees, approval of transfer courses, and approval of changes in Degree plan.
7. Allocating and assuming budgetary responsibility for fellowships should discretionary funds be made available for this purpose to the Graduate Studies Office.
8. Participating with academic deans in the allocation of such other graduate awards as assistantships.
9. Maintaining all necessary records concerning students, the Graduate Faculty, the Graduate Council, and other matters of importance.
10. Working with the other deans, chairs, and relevant administrative officers in regard to any appointments that involve prospective members of the Graduate Faculty, and making appropriate recommendations on these matters to the Academic Vice Chancellor.
11. Publishing a yearly report containing statistical information on graduate enrollment by degree program and academic unit.
12. Representing the University in accordance with the role of the Graduate Dean in dealings with other universities, professional associations, and other persons and bodies outside the University.
13. Preparing the catalog in which the latest approved requirements for advanced degrees are listed. This catalog is the definitive statement of degree requirements, and faculty members and students have the responsibility of fulfilling the requirements set forth therein.
14. Acting, on behalf of the Graduate Council and in accordance with Graduate Council policy, upon matters which arise on an emergency basis.

### **SECTION THREE**

#### **Rules of Procedure and Bylaws**

- I. Rules of Procedure and Bylaws for the Graduate Council
  - A. Calling of Meetings
    1. The Faculty Senate will set the dates for regular meetings. The Graduate Dean or Chair of the Graduate Council shall call additional meetings of the Graduate Council.
    2. The Graduate Council shall meet at least three times each semester during the academic year.

3. Meetings may be requested by the Graduate Dean, the Academic Vice Chancellor, the Chancellor, or upon petition by three members of the Graduate Council or ten per cent of the Graduate Faculty.
  4. Meetings shall be open. However, the Council may conduct closed sessions for the purpose of hearing student or faculty appeals or when the intent of closing the session is to protect the reputation of an individual. In conducting a closed session, the following requirements shall be met:
    - a. Except in cases involving student appeals, a motion to conduct a closed session must be made and carried by a majority vote in open session.
    - b. Except in cases involving student petitions, no final action may be taken in a closed session.
    - c. No matters may be discussed in a closed session other than those announced prior to the convening of the closed session.
- B. Agenda for Meetings
1. The agenda for any Graduate Council meeting shall be set by the Graduate Council Chair.
  2. The agenda of any Graduate Council meeting must be circulated to all members of the Graduate Faculty at least three days in advance of the meeting.
  3. If matters not on the announced agenda are to be discussed, action should not be taken until a subsequent meeting except under unusual circumstances and then as governed by the rules of order adopted by the Graduate Council.
  4. Items may be placed upon the agenda at the request of the Graduate Dean, the Academic Vice Chancellor, the Chancellor, or upon the request of members of the Graduate Council or the Graduate Faculty.
- C. The Conduct of Meetings
1. The Chair of the Graduate Council shall preside.
  2. The Graduate Council shall adopt its own rules of order and if not specified otherwise will follow Roberts Rules of Order.
  3. The attendance of one more than half of the voting members of the Graduate Council shall constitute a quorum.
- D. All other rules of procedure and Bylaws for the Graduate Council that prove to be necessary, and are not in conflict with the rules and Bylaws listed above, are to be formulated by the Graduate Council and require no ratification except by that body.

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **Amendment and Reapportionment**

- I. Amendment

- A. Change in the policy-making or administrative structure herein described must be initiated by the Graduate Council or the Graduate Dean and is subject to Graduate Council and Faculty Senate approval, and requisite administrative approval. Proper notice of the contemplated change must be given and adequate opportunity for expression of opinion must be provided in an open meeting. The proposed amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the Graduate Council members.
  - B. The rules of procedure and bylaws of the Graduate Council contained in this document may be amended by action of the Graduate Council, as a representative body of the Graduate Faculty, with proper notice of the contemplated change and adequate opportunity for expression of opinion. A two-thirds vote of the Graduate Council membership is required.
  - C. The rules of procedure and bylaws of the Graduate Council, other than those contained in this document, may be amended by action of that body, with proper notice to all members of the contemplated change and adequate opportunity for discussion. A two-thirds vote of the Graduate Council membership is required.
- II. Reapportionment
- A. The apportionment of membership in the Graduate Council shall be kept under continuing scrutiny and shall be subject to necessary changes by amendment of this document.
  - B. Among the particular aspects of Graduate Council apportionment to be kept under scrutiny are the following:
    1. Representation among subject-matter areas.
    2. Ex officio representation.
    3. The size of the Council.

## **SECTION FIVE**

### **Effective Date**

This Operating Paper for the Graduate Program will become effective upon approval of the Graduate Council, the Faculty Senate, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees.

Approved by the Graduate Council on January 13, 1982 and by The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees on June 17, 1982. Amended by the Graduate Council on February 28, 1991. Amended by the Faculty Senate on November 26, 1991 and approved by the Chancellor on March 23, 1992. Section Two. I.A.2. revised December 10, 1993. Section Two I.A.1 and 2 revised by Graduate Council and approved by Senate April 25, 2000. Section 2.1.A.2 approved September 1, 2006. Section Two.I.B.1.b.(2) and Section Two.II.B. revised August 2008.