

Office/Contact: Graduate School

Source: Higher Learning Commission Policy: Assumed Practices; SDBOR Policy 4:43; University Policy 2:13

Link: <https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/assumed-practices.html>;

<https://www.sdbor.edu/policy/documents/4-43.pdf>; <https://www.sdstate.edu/policies-and-procedures/section-2-academics>

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY Policy and Procedure Manual

SUBJECT: Graduate Faculty and Graduate Student Advisory Committee

NUMBER: 2:27

1. Purpose

This policy and its procedures describe who may receive the privilege and serve as a Graduate Faculty member at the University and the conditions of such service in conformity with applicable SDBOR Policies.

2. Definitions

- a. Committee: Graduate Student Advisory Committee.
- b. Committee Chair: the Full Graduate Faculty member responsible for conducting the business of an approved Graduate Student Advisory Committee.
- c. Degree-Type: a category of graduate degree without reference to the underlying academic discipline (e.g. Master of Science, Doctor of Philosophy).
- d. Co-Chair: a Graduate Faculty member of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee assigned specific functions by the Committee Chair; an optional designation within the committee. For example, direct supervision of the student's thesis or dissertation project may be assigned to a co-chair.
- e. Plan of Study: a list of the courses that the student must pass to successfully complete the degree program.

3. Policy

- a. Graduate Faculty
 - i. Automatic ex-officio membership to Full Graduate Faculty status includes:
 1. The President, all Vice Presidents, College Deans, and heads of departments with graduate programs, provided they possess requisite terminal or professional doctoral degrees.

2. Department Heads whose department offers graduate courses but not graduate programs, and who are not otherwise Graduate Faculty members.
- ii. Eligible faculty to hold Full Graduate Faculty status are those who:
1. Hold a tenure-track, tenured, research, clinical or librarian-rank appointment;
 2. Hold the designation of Assistant Professor, Assistant Research Professor, or above;
 3. Hold a terminal degree or professional doctorate; and
 4. Maintain currency in the discipline through research, publications, and/or other scholarly activities.
- iii. Privileges of Full Graduate Faculty include:
1. Service as a Committee member;
 2. Service as a Committee Chair or Co-Chair;
 3. Service as a Graduate Faculty Representative on Committees;
 4. If elected, serve as a member of the Graduate Council; and
 5. Act on matters of policy and standards concerning the Graduate School.
- iv. Professional doctorate degree holders with Full Graduate Faculty status may only serve as Chair for a Committee for the Degree-Type which they hold. Waivers may be issued on a case-by-case basis by the Director of the Graduate School or designee, if the faculty member has sufficient academic or professional experience within the discipline on which the student's work is based.
- v. Full Graduate Faculty status may be awarded to personnel associated with the University under the auspices of Cooperative Agreement # 1434-10HQRU1549¹ and who are academically qualified but otherwise not eligible for faculty privileges.
- vi. Eligible Faculty to hold Associate Graduate Faculty status are those who:
1. Hold a terminal degree or professional doctorate; or
 2. Hold Emeritus Status (SDBOR Policy 4:43 and SDSU Policy 2:13); and
 3. Maintain currency in the discipline through research, publications, and/or other scholarly activities.

¹Agreement For Establishment And Operation of the South Dakota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit by the United States Geological Survey, Department Of The Interior and the South Dakota State University and the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and the Wildlife Management Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010.

- vii. Privileges of Associate Graduate Faculty include:
 - 1. Service as a Committee member or Co-Chair; and
 - 2. Service as a Graduate Faculty Representative.
- viii. Qualifications for teaching graduate level courses (500-800 level) will be determined by the standards of the accrediting body.

b. Graduate Student Advisory Committee

- i. All graduate students in thesis master's (option A) degrees and doctoral degrees must form a Committee for advisement of their thesis or dissertation activities.
- ii. Committees supervising master's degree students must be composed of at least three (3) members. These include:
 - 1. Committee Chair;
 - 2. Additional member(s) with expertise relevant to the student's project; and
 - 3. Graduate Faculty Representative.
- iii. Committees supervising doctoral students must be composed of at least four (4) members. These include:
 - 1. Committee Chair;
 - 2. At least two (2) additional members with expertise relevant to the student's project; and
 - 3. Graduate Faculty Representative.
- iv. Committee Chairs, with Department Head approval, may request additional Committee members for either a master's or doctoral Committee.
- v. Adjunct faculty members or University employees holding a master's degree who fail to qualify as Associate Graduate Faculty members may serve on Committees. Such Committees must contain the minimum number of Full/Associate Graduate Faculty in addition to the master's degree holder.
 - 1. A Committee may only include one master's degree holder.
 - 2. Addition of the master's degree holder does not alter the maximum number of committee members allowed.
 - 3. The master's degree holder is not considered as having Associate Graduate Faculty status.

vi. Duties:

1. The Committee Chair assists the student in developing a suitable Plan of Study, provides continuing guidance and counsel, assists in choosing and recruiting members for the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, evaluates student academic and thesis/ dissertation progress, serves as a contact for the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, chairs Graduate Student Advisory Committee meetings, votes on official business before the committee, and ensures the completion of the degree requirements.
 2. A member of the Committee assists the student in developing a suitable Plan of Study (doctoral students only), provides continuing guidance and counsel, evaluates student academic and thesis/ dissertation progress, and votes on official business before the committee.
 3. The Graduate Faculty Representative represents the Graduate Faculty of the University to ensure the supervision of the student is carried out with sufficient integrity, to ensure minimal academic standards are maintained, and to act as an advocate and counselor for the student. The Graduate Faculty representative is either chosen by the student and advisor/committee or assigned by the Graduate School.
 4. The Graduate Student Advisory Committee is responsible for the evaluation of the Final Oral Exam for master's candidates (option A) and the evaluation of the Comprehensive Exam and the final Dissertation Defense for doctoral candidates.
- vii. Committee members must make themselves available for regular meetings with the student and the Committee.
- viii. Evaluation of student performance and committee business:
1. Evaluation of student performance shall be determined by the casting of votes of the members of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee.
 2. Each member, and only members, of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee shall vote.
 3. A result of 'pass' consists of a majority of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, including the Graduate Faculty Representative, voting to pass the student.
 4. A result of 'fail' consists of a majority of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee voting to fail the student.
 5. If voting results in neither a 'pass' nor a 'fail', the vote is a tie. The Head of Department, following appraisal by the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, shall cast the final vote.

4. Procedures

- a. Full Graduate Faculty status is granted to all tenured or tenure-track faculty positions of

Assistant Professor or above.

- b. Associate Graduate Faculty status is requested by the department then forwarded to the Director of the Graduate School or designee and Graduate Council for approval.
- c. The Department Head is responsible for notifying the Graduate School, should circumstances of any Graduate Faculty in the relevant department experience a change of status within the University and require a re-evaluation of appropriate service or change of Graduate Faculty status.
- d. Removal of Graduate Faculty status requires adherence to the procedures described in SDBOR Policies 4:14 and 4:4. The removal must also receive the recommendations of the appropriate Department Head and College Dean, and the approval of the Director of the Graduate School or designee.
- e. Approval of Plan of Study
 - i. The Plan of Study for thesis (option A) master's degrees should be completed by the student on the appropriate form maintained by the Graduate School. The student should initiate the process and forward the Plan of Study for approval to the Chair of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee who should forward to Director of the Graduate School or designee for approval.
 - ii. Non-thesis master's (option B, C and D) students should initiate the process and forward to their advisor, then if approved, forwarded to the Director of the Graduate School, or designee, for approval.
 - iii. The Plan of Study for doctoral degrees should be completed by the student on the appropriate form maintained by the Graduate School. The student should forward the Plan of Study to the Chair of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee for approval, then to each member of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee. If approved by the Chair and by each member of the Committee, the Plan of Study should be forwarded by the student to the Director of the Graduate School or designee for final approval.
 - iv. The Chair of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee shall be approved by the Department Head. The balance of the committee shall be determined by the student in consultation with the Chair. The student is responsible for securing participation of Graduate Faculty members on the Graduate Student Advisory Committee. The student should complete the appropriate form, obtainable from the Graduate School, for setting the membership of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, securing all required signatures of the Committee members, and then forwarding the approved form to the Director of the Graduate School or designee.
 - v. The Chair of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee may appoint a Co-Chair of any Committee member to assist with the supervision of the student (e.g., supervision of day-to-day research activities). Such an arrangement must be approved by the student and forwarded as a recommendation for approval to the Director of the Graduate School or designee.

- vi. A Committee member, Committee Chair, student, or Department Head may request adjustments to the Committee. Such requests should be forwarded to the Director of the Graduate School or designee for approval. Alternatively, the Director of the Graduate School or designee may adjust Committee membership as necessary.
- vii. The Department Head shall inform the Graduate School if and when a member of the Graduate Faculty can no longer discharge their duties consistent with the policies of the University.

5. Responsible Administrator

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, or designee, is responsible for the annual and ad hoc review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of policy and modifications to this policy.

SOURCE: Approved by President on 01/31/2018. Revised; Approved by President on 04/21/2021.