Graduate Committee

Committee Membership

Master’s, Educational Specialist, and Doctor of Philosophy sections of this publication state Graduate Committee membership requirements for the respective degree. The student and committee will submit a completed committee request form to the Graduate School which must include the following information for each committee member.

- Typed name
- Level of Appointment (1 or 2)
- Name of academic department that appointed the committee member to Graduate Faculty
- Committee member’s signature

The student and Graduate Coordinator are also required to sign the form.

If the student experiences a problem concerning committee membership, the student should follow the academic appeal procedure outlined in Graduate Student Academic Grievance Procedure (AOP 12.37) .

Membership Changes

Committee membership changes are submitted to the Graduate School on the graduate committee change form. The new and departing committee member(s) and the student must sign the form. If, subsequent to the administration of the final or oral/written comprehensive examination, a student’s request to remove a member of the graduate committee is not met with the approval of that member, then the student must submit to the Dean of the Graduate School a written request containing suitable justification for removal of the committee member. The Dean of the Graduate School will then decide if removal is necessary and accordingly inform the student, the committee member, the major professor, and the Graduate Coordinator.

MSU Graduate Faculty

MSU Graduate Faculty members (http://catalog.msstate.edu/graduate/faculty) are listed by college/department in this Catalog.

Graduate Faculty Membership Levels

Graduate Faculty membership is approved by the Department Head, College Dean, and Graduate School Dean using the Initial Appointment Form on the Graduate School website. Qualifications and responsibilities for each level are given below and must be followed.

Level 1 Qualifications

An individual appointed to Level 1 Graduate Faculty must

- have an earned terminal degree (highest degree awarded in the discipline) in or related to the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility;
- be a full-time employee of Mississippi State University, holding the rank of assistant professor or assistant research professor or assistant extension professor or assistant clinical professor or higher without any qualifying designations such as “visiting,” “emeritus,” or “adjunct”;
- have demonstrated and maintained noteworthy accomplishments in research and/or creative achievement, as defined in the Faculty handbook (6.1.2);
- and have demonstrated experience directing graduate research and independent study, thesis, or dissertation.

Level 1 Responsibilities

An individual appointed to Level 1 Graduate Faculty may

- teach graduate-level courses in each field of specialization if the individual meets all requirements outlined in AOP 13.09, Credentials for Teaching;
- serve as a chair of master’s non-thesis, master’s thesis, specialist non-thesis, or specialist thesis committee within the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility;
- serve as a member of doctoral committees and doctoral dissertations within Department of appointment or outside Department;
- serve as a chair of doctoral committees and/or director of doctoral dissertations within the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility.

A Level 1 term of service is ten years. Initial appointments require approval of the Department Head, College Dean, and Graduate School Dean.

Level 2 Qualifications

An individual appointed to Level 2 Graduate Faculty must

- have an earned terminal degree (highest degree awarded in discipline) in or related to the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility;
• be a full-time employee of Mississippi State University, holding the rank of assistant professor or assistant research professor or assistant extension professor or assistant clinical professor or higher or have been appointed as Emeritus or Adjunct Faculty;
• have demonstrated and maintained a record in research and/or creative achievement, as defined in the Faculty Handbook (6.1.2).

**Level 2 Responsibilities**

An individual appointed to Level 2 Graduate Faculty may

• teach graduate-level courses in each field of specialization, if the individual meets all requirements outlined in AOP 13.09, Credentials for Teaching;
• serve as a member of master’s non-thesis, master’s thesis, specialist non-thesis, or specialist thesis committee within Department of appointment or outside Department;
• serve as a chair of master’s non-thesis, master’s thesis, specialist non-thesis, or specialist thesis committee within the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility (must be full-time MSU employee);
• serve as a member of doctoral committees and doctoral dissertations within Department of appointment or outside Department
• serve as a co-chair of doctoral committees and/or director of doctoral dissertations with a co-director, who has Level 1 Graduate Faculty status, within the faculty member’s area of graduate responsibility.

A Level 2 term of service is ten years. Initial appointments require approval of the Department Head, College Dean, and Graduate School Dean.

A Level 2 Graduate Faculty member may apply to have his/her appointment status changed to a Level 1 Graduate Faculty status when the conditions for Level 1 status have been met. A status change from Level 2 to Level 1 requires the approval of the Department Head and College Dean and is then communicated to the Graduate School.

**Non-Graduate Faculty Committee Members**

For a thesis committee, three members are the minimum required and two of those must be members of the Graduate Faculty. These may be either Level 1 or Level 2 Graduate Faculty. For a doctoral committee, four members are the minimum required and three of those must be members of the Graduate Faculty. At minimum, at least one of the doctoral committee must be Level 1 Graduate Faculty status in order to serve as the major professor and committee chair. In all cases where the advisory committee consists of numbers above the minimum, greater than 50% of the committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Non-Graduate Faculty committee members are expected to have a graduate degree or commensurate expertise in the field of study. The decision whether or not a person who does not hold Level 1 or Level 2 status is qualified to serve on a thesis or dissertation committee will be determined by the department/college.

Non-Graduate Faculty committee members can serve as a co-thesis director of research with a Level 1 or Level 2 member of the Graduate Faculty or can serve as a co-dissertation director of the research along with a Level 1 member of the Graduate Faculty. Non-Graduate Faculty committee members cannot serve as a major professor or committee chair. If a non-Graduate Faculty committee member serves as co-thesis director or co-dissertation director, it is expected that the individual will have education and research expertise commensurate with Level 2 and Level 1 Graduate Faculty, respectively.