

Graduate Faculty Status at TWU

(Approved by the Graduate Council on January 21, 2026, pending Executive Committee edits; finalized by the executive committee on February 4, 2026)

I. Rationale

A majority of universities that award graduate degrees have established procedures to identify faculty members specifically qualified to train students in advanced degree programs. These members are then identified as the Graduate Faculty. The main responsibilities of the Full Graduate Faculty are to conduct scholarly research and creative work of high quality, to both teach and advise graduate students effectively, and to direct the research of graduate students. The graduate student research referred to specifically in this document will be that of theses, dissertations, professional papers, capstones, and other culminating scholarly projects. Responsibilities of Teaching Graduate Faculty within the scope of the Graduate Council are typically limited to teaching and advising graduate students effectively. Listed below are the University-wide performance expectations for those faculty who have these responsibilities at Texas Woman's University.

II. Expectations for Current Graduate Faculty Members

Members of the Graduate Faculty at TWU must continually satisfy both University-wide standards and those specific to individual academic components. The primary consideration is whether the faculty member is currently an active and productive scholar and sufficiently prepared to teach at the graduate level. The University wide performance expectations for current members are as follows:

A. Scholarship

1. Possession of the terminal academic degree in the member's field or recognition for substantive and distinctive contributions to the targeted discipline involved.
2. Evidence of current involvement in scholarly research and/or creative activity. This evidence may consist of the publication of books and refereed articles, obtainment of research grants and contracts, recitals, exhibitions, performances, or other demonstrations of scholarship appropriate to the discipline.

B. Intellectual Leadership

1. Active participation in regional, national, or international meetings in or related to the respective discipline.
2. Recognition of intellectual attainment and creative activities by awards, prizes, or fellowships.
3. Serving on editorial boards of scholarly journals; editing scholarly books or reviewing manuscripts; publishing book reviews in the discipline; or reviewing grant proposals for major funding agencies.

C. Experience in Graduate Education

1. Two cumulative years of service as a member of graduate student research advisory committees (theses, dissertations, professional papers, capstones, or other culminating scholarly projects), including previous advising experience in graduate education at other institutions. Individual academic units may impose additional or more stringent requirements. Only Full members of the Graduate Faculty whose qualifications have been reviewed by the Membership Committee, recommended and granted Full Faculty status may serve as major advisors of students' research committees, and the dissertation chair endorsement is required to serve as major advisors for dissertation committees.
2. Development of new graduate courses or recent effective teaching of graduate courses. A faculty member's recent Periodic Performance Review: Evaluation and Recommendations, Student Course Evaluations, and other evaluative methods used by the faculty member's academic component may provide documentation of effective teaching.

III. Qualifications for Initial Membership-Levels with Their Criteria and Duties

Academic components may choose additional specific guidelines for the selection of Graduate Faculty members which are aligned with the general University-wide selection criteria listed here. Interpreting these guidelines is the responsibility of the Graduate Faculty within the various academic components or schools. The component guidelines are subject to approval by the Graduate Council.

- A. TWU recognizes four categories of graduate faculty status: Full with dissertation chair endorsement, Full, Teaching, and Ex-Officio. The functions and roles of the first three categories are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Functions of Graduate Faculty at Each Level

	Full w/ dissertation chair endorsement	Full	Teaching
Eligible to...			
Teach Graduate Courses	X	X	X
Chair Dissertations	X		
Chair Theses	X	X	
Chair Professional Papers, Capstones, and Other Culminating Scholarly Projects	X	X	
Serve on Dissertation and Thesis Committees	X	X	
Serve on Professional Papers, Capstones, and Other Culminating Scholarly Project committees	X	X	X
Serve on Graduate Council	X	X	
Vote in Deliberations of the Graduate Faculty	X	X	
Term Length	6 years	6 years	6 years

Nominations and recommendations for membership in the Graduate Faculty shall be based on the university criteria listed below in Table 2 as well as any additional criteria established by the faculty member's home academic component.

Table 2: Eligibility Criteria for Graduate Faculty at Each Level

	Full w/ dissertation chair endorsement	Full	Teaching
Requirements			
Earned the terminal qualifications in the teaching discipline or related field (<u>as defined by SACSCOC</u>)	Required	Required	Required*
Significant contribution to scholarship and intellectual leadership in the field or related fields (as outlined above)	Required		
Active participation in scholarship and intellectual leadership in the field or related fields (as outlined above)	Required	Required	
Evidence of prior effective teaching experience	Graduate level	Any level	Any level
Two years prior service on thesis and dissertation committees	Required		
Employment Type	Full-time Tenure-track	Full-time Faculty (Tenure-track or Clinical-track)	Non-Tenure track, visiting, and adjunct faculty

* Candidates without the terminal qualifications in the field may be considered on a case-by-case basis (see section IV.D).

* Exceptions for part-time faculty may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

B. Ex-Officio Members

Ex-Officio Members shall include the President of the University, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice Provosts, the Dean of the Graduate School, Deans, Associate Deans, and Academic Component Administrators. Ex-Officio Members will have the same duties and privileges as Full members of the Graduate Faculty. Ex-Officio members wishing to chair dissertations should apply for full status with dissertation chair endorsement. Upon reentry into a regular teaching faculty position, former Ex-Officio Members shall apply for renewal of membership on the Graduate Faculty after a transitional period of four years. The transition period allows for increased participation in discipline-specific scholarly activities before renewal is required.

IV. Procedure for Graduate Faculty Membership Application

- A. Nominations and recommendations for Full membership on the Graduate Faculty (with or without dissertation chair endorsement) shall be made by the academic component's Peer Review Committee. The election process within the component shall include these steps:
 1. The candidate must complete the Application for Graduate Faculty Membership along with the Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) form and the curriculum vitae and submit documentation through the Workflow/SharePoint site under Graduate Studies.
 2. Each academic component will have their Peer Review Committee review and approve graduate faculty applications.
 3. Applications that have been approved by the Peer Review Committee shall be forwarded to the academic component administrator and the College Dean, who will review the applications, make recommendations, and then forward the applications to the Graduate Council.
- B. All newly hired full-time faculty (tenure-track, non-tenure-track) and adjunct faculty who are hired specifically for teaching graduate courses and who are credentialed by Academic Affairs to teach graduate courses will automatically be granted Teaching Graduate Faculty status. Such faculty do not need to apply for Teaching Graduate Faculty status, and may apply for full status with or without dissertation chair endorsement, as appropriate.
- C. The Membership Committee of the Graduate Council will review applications for full status and make recommendations to the Graduate Council. In the event of a recommendation for denial of membership at the Full level (with or without dissertation chair endorsement), the academic component administrator of the candidate may request an opportunity to appear before the Membership Committee to provide a qualitative interpretation of the candidate's materials. The academic component administrator shall be the only person eligible to become involved in this stage of the approval process. Upon approval by the Graduate Council, the appointment to the Graduate Faculty will be made by the Dean of the Graduate School.

D. Although the terminal degree in the discipline is required for Full Graduate Faculty Status (with and without dissertation chair endorsement), exceptions may be made to teach graduate courses under unusual circumstances and then only upon recommendations by the Academic Component Administrator and the Dean of the College to the Dean of the Graduate School. Requests should be made for specific courses based on unusual programmatic needs and must indicate the qualifications of the individual being recommended. Approvals are granted for a two-year period and can be renewed.

V. Renewal of Membership

Each person having membership on the Graduate Faculty (with or without dissertation chair endorsement) must reapply for membership by the end of December **every six years**.

Faculty will monitor their individual membership status, however, when applicable, the Dean of the Graduate School will notify a faculty member regarding the procedure for renewal. In the case that a faculty member does not continue to meet criteria for their prior level of status, their status will be revoked. As a result, the faculty member will not be permitted to chair committees for professional papers, theses, or dissertations, to vote in the deliberations of the Graduate Faculty, or to serve on the Graduate Council except with the written permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.

VI. Appeal Process for Graduate Faculty Status

When a membership decision is unfavorable, the faculty member has the option of appealing to her/his supervisor, specifically, the Academic Component Administrator, College Dean, or Graduate Dean. The ultimate authority, however, is the Provost. It is expected that supervisors will work collaboratively with their faculty to make sure all graduate faculty members understand the responsibilities and criteria for membership. Faculty are expected to be familiar with the criteria and ensure they meet all criteria in advance of application. Early intervention and mentoring is key in ensuring that faculty be successful in meeting the criteria.

VII. Removal from Graduate Faculty

When graduate faculty members are not adequately meeting the expectations of TWU Graduate Faculty, a review for removal from the Graduate Faculty may be initiated. This process may be initiated by the Dean of the Graduate School, or may be requested by the Academic Component Administrator or College Dean. The Dean of the Graduate School will consider all evidence presented by both the faculty member and the party initiating the requested review and make a recommendation to the Provost regarding removal. All decisions regarding removal of Graduate Faculty members will be made by the Provost.