

## 1. GRADUATE FACULTY

The academic integrity of graduate programs rests primarily with the academic deans and the graduate faculty in the respective colleges. The main responsibilities of the members of the graduate faculty are to (1) teach graduate students effectively, (2) foster independent learning, (3) enable students to contribute to a profession or field of study, (4) conduct scholarly research and creative work of high quality, (5) maintain proficiency in their discipline, (6) ensure graduate programs in their discipline are relevant and of high quality, and (7) cultivate the research and scholarly endeavors of graduate students. The University encourages each graduate faculty member to best use their particular strengths whether through course instruction, guiding academic research, professional supervision, or mentoring. Each of these functions and more contribute to the overall excellence of a graduate program.

The University recognizes that academic deans, in consultation with their faculty, are the best arbiters of graduate faculty status designation. Therefore, the University recognizes the right of the deans to propose that faculty either will or will not serve as a graduate faculty member. The University also acknowledges that under certain circumstances, deans will adjudge non-tenure track faculty as eligible for graduate faculty status. For these reasons, the academic deans will report graduate faculty status to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

1.01 Graduate faculty status at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) will have two categories: Graduate Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty. Categories are based on the distinction between SHSU tenured/tenure track faculty (Graduate Faculty) and all other faculty (Associate Graduate Faculty). Status is in no way limited by the graduate programs offered in each department/school/college.

- a. Tenured/tenure track faculty members awarded Graduate Faculty status may teach graduate classes, serve on thesis and/or dissertation committees, serve on the Graduate Council, and chair theses and/or dissertations. Graduate Faculty status does not guarantee the individual faculty member the opportunity to chair theses and/or dissertations, as this is a decision to be made by the academic dean in consultation with the department chair and the graduate program director.
- b. Associate Graduate Faculty status may be granted for a non-tenure track faculty member teaching in a graduate program. Associate Graduate Faculty status is granted only for one year and may be renewed. Associate Graduate Faculty may teach graduate classes, serve on thesis and/or dissertation committees, serve on the Graduate Council, and chair theses and/or dissertations. Associate Graduate Faculty

status does not guarantee the individual faculty member the opportunity to chair theses and/or dissertations, as this is a decision to be made by the academic dean in consultation with the department chair and the graduate program director.

## 2. INSTITUTIONAL CRITERIA FOR GRADUATE FACULTY STATUS

Members of the graduate faculty ordinarily (a) possess a terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline from an institution accredited by a recognized accrediting agency, (b) demonstrate evidence of currency in the literature of the discipline, (c) are effective educators at the graduate level, and/or (d) are consistently active in scholarly and/or creative accomplishments. One or more of these criteria may be waived with approval of the dean in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies. Individual program leaders, department chairs, and college deans should work collaboratively to make the initial determination for new tenure-track faculty members.

If upon review, a member of the graduate faculty has in the judgment of the academic dean ceased to present requisite credentials, that academic dean may notify the Dean of Graduate Studies of removal of that faculty member from graduate faculty status. Reviews of graduate faculty status would normally take place initially at the graduate program committee level in the concerned department and would then move to the department chair for further consideration before reaching the appropriate dean's office. The terms and duration of a removal should be determined by the academic dean and should otherwise comply with pertinent University policies.

The colleges and/or departments/schools are expected to provide more specific guidelines for award or removal of graduate faculty status based upon the norms and expectations of their particular disciplines and provide copies of these guidelines to The Graduate and Professional School.

2.01 Criteria for Graduate Faculty Status – Graduate Faculty status requires documented evidence of excellence in appropriate scholarly and creative activities on a current and sustained basis. These scholarly and creative efforts must be peer-reviewed scholarship, performances, or competitive externally-funded contracts or grants in the discipline or related area of assigned graduate responsibility. In addition, for Graduate Faculty status, a faculty member must be tenured/tenure-track.

2.02 Criteria for Associate Graduate Faculty Status – Associate Graduate Faculty status requires documented evidence of scholarly and creative activities. These scholarly and

creative efforts must be peer-reviewed in the discipline or related area of assigned graduate responsibility. Scholarly and creative efforts include, but are not limited to, publications, performances, competitive externally-funded contracts or grants, and presentations at scholarly conferences. For Associate Graduate Faculty status, appropriate professional experience may be used in conjunction with or in lieu of scholarly and creative activities.

- 2.03 Notwithstanding satisfaction of the above requirements, conferral or retraction of Graduate Faculty or Associate Graduate Faculty status is within the sole discretion of the University as represented by the presiding academic dean; no member of the faculty is conveyed a property right or entitlement to such status, nor does retraction of such status impact a liberty interest in one's name or reputation.

### 3. REVIEW OF COLLEGE CRITERIA FOR GRADUATE FACULTY STATUS

The colleges and/or departments/schools are expected to provide specific guidelines for graduate faculty status based upon the norms and expectations of their particular disciplines and provide copies of these guidelines to The Graduate and Professional School and the Graduate Council. College guidelines are to be reviewed every five (5) years and resubmitted to the Graduate Council for approval.

### 4. APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT PROCESS

- 4.01 Nominations for appointment to Graduate Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty status typically occur at the initial employment year. A review of Graduate Faculty status is conducted at the time of the third-year progress toward tenure review. A review is also conducted during tenure and/or promotion deliberations. Subsequently, Graduate Faculty status is reviewed at the time of post-tenure review. Academic deans should keep records demonstrating completion of expected status reviews for all graduate faculty in their colleges. Associate Graduate Faculty status is reviewed annually.

- 4.02 Applications may be submitted at any time in a faculty member's career and are not connected only to the reappointment timelines. Applications are submitted to the appropriate academic dean and may be initiated by the individual faculty member, the appropriate departmental/school chair, or that academic dean. Resulting designations should be reported to the Dean of Graduate Studies using the Graduate Faculty Status Form and an accompanying current faculty vita.

5. EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ <signed>  
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ 12/17/2024

**CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original: October 14, 1980                      Review Cycle: Five years\*  
Reviewer: Academic Affairs Council              Review Date: Spring 2029

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ <signed>                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 12/16/2024  
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.,  
Provost and Sr. Vice President  
for Academic Affairs

\*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.