

WVU College of Creative Arts and Media

Graduate Faculty Membership Criteria

(updated November 2024)

Members of the graduate faculty continue to play an important role in graduate education at West Virginia University and the College of Creative Arts and Media. Graduate faculty are responsible for program content, they serve on graduate student committees, they instruct graduate level courses and seminars, and they assure the quality of preparation of the University's graduates. Generally, nine-month graduate faculty members, once they have agreed to either chair or serve on a master's or doctoral student's committee should make every effort to fulfill this obligation even during those periods when they are not under contract, e.g., summer terms.

Direction of graduate study requires not only a high level of expertise in the faculty member's field of concentration but sufficient standing in the field to lend credibility to students' degrees, not only within the immediate geographical region but throughout the nation and beyond. Therefore, it behooves graduate faculty to become and remain professionally active in ways that keep their skills refreshed, advance their knowledge, and maintain involvement in appropriate professional and public circles where they hold reputations as active professionals the fields in which they direct graduate students. For those in academic areas, this should include an ongoing program of research and publication; for creative artists, this should include continuing production, performance, and publication of new works; and for performers, appearances in significant venues appropriate to their performance areas.

This document serves to further clarify the [University policy about Graduate Faculty Membership](#) for specific disciplines within the College of Creative Arts and Media.

LEVELS OF GRADUATE FACULTY

There are four levels of Graduate Faculty membership: Regular membership, Associate membership, Graduate Faculty Instructor membership, and Emeritus Graduate Faculty membership.

Regular Membership

Regular members must hold an appointment that includes research/creative activity, and they may chair students' committees or direct master's and doctoral research, theses, and dissertations.

Schools and colleges set and publish quantitative and qualitative criteria regarding scholarly activity. These criteria are to be applied for the appointment to, as well as continuation of, graduate faculty membership. These initial criteria and any subsequent amendments of changes are subject to approval of the University Graduate Council and usually include many of the following: publication in a major peer-reviewed journals, publication of books and book chapters, invited and/or competitively selected presentations of scholarly work at national and international meetings, and/or presentations and performances of artistic work at professionally recognized events.

To be eligible and approved for appointment as a Regular Member, the faculty member must:

- Hold an appointment in a tenure-track, teaching, or service position.
- Either 1) hold the terminal degree, or 2) have attained the rank of Associate Professor and demonstrated a level of professional activity which is the equivalent of a terminal degree.
 - If a School Director and/or School's Director of Graduate Studies believes a faculty member who does not meet the above qualifications warrants Regular Graduate Faculty membership, they should make a formal request to the College's Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for consideration. Past and current research and teaching accomplishments can be used as justifications for this request.
- In musicology, music theory, music education, music therapy, art education, art history, art therapy, and theatre history/criticism, the terminal (doctoral) degree is normally required.
- In music composition and playwriting, "equivalent creative activity" is defined as "extensive performance of authored works in a wide variety of media by recognized professionals, including concert artists or professionally esteemed performance groups and/or a record of prizes, publications, recordings, and critical acclaim."
- In music performance, studio and visual arts, and theatre design and performance (including the conducting of bands, orchestra, or choral ensembles, acting, stage direction, stage design and technology, and creative dramatics), "equivalent creative activity" may be defined as the equivalent of one or more of the following:
 - Approximately three years of full-time study on an advanced level, with several public performances and/or exhibitions which can attest to the individual's attainment
 - OR-
 - Substantial experience as a successful performer, studio or visual artist, or theatre artist in a full-time context or as a juried exhibiting artist (preferably under professional management with a professional producing or exhibiting organization)
 - OR-
 - Substantial experience as a successful teacher as demonstrated by the professional attainment of one's students. Acknowledgment of an appropriate level of one's training or achievement by professional peers outside the

University will be considered in the assessment of equivalence.

- Have had at least three years of full-time successful teaching experience in higher education.
- Have knowledge of contemporary standards and practices, and a record of continuing study and active professional engagement in the area of expertise pertinent to the member's current appointment. For Regular membership, "a record of continuing study and active professional engagement" may be defined as:
 - In musicology, music theory, music education, art education, art history, and theatre history/criticism: continuing research appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. The activity should include either a) publication in refereed journals; books, either issued by publishers of recognized standing or well-reviewed in appropriate journals; or b) invited or competitively selected presentation at international, national, or significant regional meetings. Creative work may also be taken into account when appropriate.
 - In music performance, studio and visual arts, and theatre design and performance: an on-going program of off-campus public performance and/or creative, pedagogical, or scholarly activity appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. Performance activity may be in a variety of situations and should include international, national, or significant regional appearances, presentations, and exhibitions.
 - In music composition and playwriting: continuing to bring new works appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education to public performance. Commercial publication or recording of works may be taken into account.
 - In music conducting: continuing achievement appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. The activity may be in a variety of situations, but should include guest conducting, appearances before musically discriminating listeners at an international, national, or significant regional level, or appearances with WVU ensembles at significant professional meetings.

Activities which are equivalent in significance to the above and which have a clear bearing on the faculty member's role in graduate education shall be considered in the evaluative process.

In all cases, the quality of the activity, not mere quantity, must be of utmost importance.

All faculty members with Regular membership must be reviewed every three years.

Associate Membership

Associate members may perform the same functions as a Regular member with the exception of chairing students' committees or directing master's theses and doctoral dissertations (or equivalent). Associate members may also teach graduate courses, but to do so they must hold an appointment or courtesy appointment in an academic department or program.

To be eligible and approved for Associate membership on the Graduate Faculty, the faculty member must:

- Hold at least an M.A, M.M. degree (or professional equivalent).
- Have knowledge of contemporary standards and practices, and a record of continuing study and active professional engagement in the area of expertise pertinent to the member's current appointment.
- For Associate membership, "a record of continuing study and active professional engagement" may be defined as:
 - In musicology, music theory, music education, art education, art history, and theatre history/criticism: continuing research appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. The activity should include either a) publication in refereed journals (print or electronic); books, either issued by publishers of recognized standing or well-reviewed in appropriate journals; or b) invited or competitively selected presentation at state or regional meetings. Creative work may also be taken into account when appropriate.
 - In music performance, studio and visual arts, and theatre design and performance: an on-going program of off-campus public performance and/or creative, pedagogical, or scholarly activity appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. Performance activity may be in a variety of situations and should include state or regional appearances, presentations, and exhibitions.
 - In music composition and playwriting: continuing to bring new works appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education to public performance. Commercial publication or recording of works may be taken into account.
 - In music conducting: continuing achievement appropriate to the individual's role in graduate education. The activity may be in a variety of situations, but should include guest conducting appearances before musically discriminating listeners at the state or regional level, or appearances with WVU ensembles at significant professional meetings.
- Have knowledge of contemporary standards and practices, and a record of continuing study and active professional engagement in the area of expertise pertinent to the member's current appointment.

Have had at least three years of successful teaching experience in higher education.

Graduate Faculty Instructor Membership

Graduate Faculty instructor members are those with specialized training, expertise, or other qualifications for teaching at the graduate level. Members will be evaluated according to the terms of their academic appointment.

Members may instruct graduate courses, but may not advise, supervise, or serve on graduate committees for theses, dissertations, or equivalent projects.

To be eligible and approved for Graduate Faculty Instructor membership, the faculty member

must:

- Meet current College guidelines for graduate instruction, consistent with faculty qualifications and accreditation policies

Emeritus Graduate Faculty Membership

Emeritus Graduate Faculty membership allows retired faculty to complete any committee responsibilities or other commitments to graduate students. New responsibilities should only be assigned if the individual continues to be evaluated by the College or associated School.

Emeritus Members may remain on the graduate faculty upon conferral of [University] emeritus status by the College. Emeritus members may also continue to serve in the role they previously held (regular, associate, or instructor) if they continue to meet the College's continuation requirements.

To be eligible and approved for Emeritus Graduate Faculty membership, the faculty member:

- Must still be included in the college/school's review process
- May continue as defined by their [committee] role, with the exception that the university requires there be at least one co-chair who is a current WVU faculty member at the time of a defense of a thesis or dissertation
- May, as co-chair or committee member, complete any existing thesis or dissertation oversight established prior to retirement
- May not accept new commitments to be the sole chair of a thesis or dissertation once emeritus status has been conferred
- May not serve on graduate council.

Exceptions

The following individuals must also meet the same criteria (Regular or Associate) for review, approval, and continuation as tenure-track graduate faculty:

- Visiting Professors may be appointed as members of the graduate faculty for the term of their appointments, but cannot chair committees.
- Faculty holding non tenure-track appointments may be considered for Associate or Instructor graduate faculty membership.
- Off-campus professionals willing to participate in graduate education may be acceptable as graduate faculty, but may not chair student committees. Exceptions may be approved by the Director of Graduate Education.
- Individuals holding faculty appointments at institutions participating in cooperative doctoral programs may be considered graduate faculty, subject to School or College review.

Other Information

Degree Candidates: Normally, no candidate for a degree at WVU may be a Regular or Associate member of the graduate faculty. Individuals seeking exceptions to this policy must submit a petition to the Director of Graduate Education.

Faculty Pursuing Advanced Degrees within the College: No faculty member holding a tenured or tenure-track position at the rank of Assistant Professor or above in a program unit may be admitted to a graduate degree program offered through that unit. Only those individuals in other ranks or in non tenure-track positions can simultaneously pursue a degree in their own unit. Faculty holding professional rank may be admitted to a graduate degree program in another program unit.

CRITERIA FOR CONTINUING APPOINTMENT

Periodic re-evaluation is necessary to ensure that faculty continue to be active in the areas of research, performance, and/or creative work in which they direct graduate students so that their knowledge remains current and their abilities sufficient to provide quality direction.

The annual faculty evaluation is intended to assist graduate faculty members in gauging their continued progress in scholarship, research, or creative activity. The review process for graduate faculty membership should coincide with the annual review process of all faculty. The results are placed in the individual's personnel file.

It will be the responsibility of each School with the College of Creative Arts and Media to establish a process for the review of each faculty member who has received or is eligible for graduate faculty membership. The reviews of faculty members with graduate faculty membership must occur at least once every three years. Based on these reviews, the Director of the School (or designee) will make a recommendation to the College of Creative Arts and Media Dean's Office concerning the graduation appointment of the reviewed faculty member. Recommendations must be limited to: award of appointment, continuation with current membership, change of membership, or termination of graduate faculty membership. Based on the criteria above, each recommendation must also include a brief summary of evidence supporting the recommendation.

It will be the policy of the College of Creative Arts and Media's Dean's Office to accept the recommendation put forth by the Director of the School.

APPEALS

Appeals regarding graduate faculty membership classification in the College of Creative Arts

and Media are handled using a three-level system:

- Level 1 – the faculty member meets with the Director of their respective School
- Level 2 – the faculty member meets with the Dean (or designee) of the College of the College of Creative Arts and Media
- Level 3 – the faculty member follows [University grievance policies](#)

- Please note that the 15-day timeline discussed in the above policies will begin after Level 1 (the meeting with the Director of the respective School).

Faculty may also wish to consult the information on [BOG Faculty Rule 4.2 - Appointment, Promotion, Tenure, and Dismissal For Cause](#).