



Graduate School - Graduate Council

GRADUATE POLICY UPDATE

Major Professors

Issue: Define and clarify qualifications to serve as Major Professor

Major Professor

The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the department to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. If a Major Professor cannot be identified or in the event a Major Professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another Major Professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement Major Professor should confer with the Program Director for available options. If no other options exist the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and Major Professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, should be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

- [Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities, such as presentations, publications, performances, exhibitions, patents, inventions and research grants as defined by the discipline.](#)
- ~~be active in scholarly pursuits as evidenced by at least one referred publication in the last three years.~~
- [be regular graduate faculty, as defined by the University. Faculty who do not meet this definition may serve as Co-Major Professor with faculty who do.](#)
- [Demonstrate leadership characteristics that produce student success \(for example serving as a mentor or being a member of a committee that graduated a student\)](#)

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate School.

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In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e. for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the committee and another faculty is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. It is important that one of the Co-Major Professors be accessible on the university campus for the student to make satisfactory progress on the thesis/dissertation. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.), the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as "Co-Major Professors" and jointly serve in that role. Consequently both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e. committee form, change of committee form, admission to candidacy, etc.)

(Co-) Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities

Available on the Graduate School Website: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/policies.asp>

Committee Member Definition

All graduate faculty as defined by the university and the college/department and approved by their department and college are assumed by Graduate School as qualified to be a member of a Graduate Doctoral Committee. Persons desiring to serve on a Graduate Doctoral committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (e.g., visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the university and the college/department must submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the Department, College, and, as needed, Graduate School for each committee.

Committee Members must meet the following requirements:

- be regular graduate faculty, as defined by the University.
- Demonstrate leadership characteristics that produces student success (for example being a member of a committee that graduated a student)

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the to the Dean of Graduate School.

Reviewed by committee 5/5/09 – REVISIONS IN PROCESS; NOT FINAL

Full Council

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Catalog Year: 2010-2011

Graduate Faculty Definition

The University of South Florida recognizes Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty.

Graduate Faculty is defined to consist of all tenure-track or tenured faculty appointed at the Assistant, Associate, or Professor rank, who holds a terminal degree or equivalent in their discipline. Graduate Faculty members are eligible to teach graduate courses and may direct and serve on master's, specialist, and doctoral level committees. ~~To chair a doctoral level committee, a~~ Graduate Faculty member must engage in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities, such as [presentations](#), publications, performances, exhibitions, patents, inventions and research grants.

Affiliate Graduate Faculty membership may be granted by the Graduate School Dean to individuals whose skills or expertise meet criteria established by the College. Affiliate Graduate Faculty membership is in effect for a specified period of time and specific purposes. Affiliate members may be eligible to teach graduate courses, to serve on master's, specialist, and doctoral level committees, to direct master's and specialist's level committees, and to co-direct doctoral level committees, at the discretion of the College. Emeritus Professors and retired or recently resigned professors may also be appointed as Affiliate Graduate Faculty with the approval of the College and Graduate School Dean.

For a current list of Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty in any program contact the program director or coordinator.