

**CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE COLLEGE
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

ARTICLE I: DEFINITION

The Graduate College is a unit of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College and has, subject to the authority delegated to the Colleges by the Board of Trustees, academic jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to and related to academic standards of graduate degree and certificate programs and the admission, support, and degree certification of graduate students, with the exception of the Degree of Doctor of Medicine.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

The faculty of the Graduate College consists of the President, the Provost, the Dean of the Graduate College, and all persons who are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College via the processes established by the Graduate College and its faculty.

A. Eligible Faculty

University faculty members eligible for membership in the Graduate Faculty (“eligible faculty”) are those holding a primary or adjunct appointment as an Officer of Instruction, Officer of Research, Officer of Extension, Officer of the Libraries, or Clinical Faculty at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Senior Lecturer. Emeriti faculty who were members of the Graduate Faculty when they became emeriti are also eligible.

B. Regular Research and Scholarship-based or Practitioner-Based Appointment

1. Initial Appointment

Members of the University Faculty shall be appointed to the Graduate Faculty by the Dean of the Graduate College. Individuals shall become Regular Members of the Graduate College by application to the Dean of the Graduate College upon or following initial tenure track, research, clinical, extension or library faculty appointment providing the following criteria are commonly met:

- a. The individual has the highest academic degree in their field or has earned unusual professional distinction.
- b. The individual’s appointment in their department or program requires competent and sustained research or other scholarly activity appropriate to the discipline, or sustained professional achievement, as indicated by the Chair and Dean of the individual’s unit.
- c. The faculty member’s Chair (or their equivalent) and their Dean endorse the appointment of the individual to the Graduate Faculty.
- d. The applicant demonstrates a sustained record of scholarly or professional accomplishments, involvement or planned involvement in the teaching and mentoring of graduate students, and a demonstrable commitment to inclusive excellence in graduate education.

2. Reappointment

Continued regular membership on the Graduate Faculty shall require demonstration of a sustained record of scholarly or professional accomplishments and commitment to graduate education. Graduate Faculty membership will be reviewed in conjunction with academic review of graduate programs, based upon the criteria specified for initial appointment.

C. Emeritus Research and Scholarship-Based or Practitioner-Based Appointment

Graduate Faculty who retire with emeritus status may request to the Dean of the Graduate College to continue their Graduate Faculty status for a three-year renewable term. The request will include demonstration of a sustained record of scholarly accomplishments and commitment to graduate education that will continue.

D. Adjunct Research and Scholarship-Based or Practitioner-Based Appointment

Individuals who hold adjunct appointments to the faculty at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or Senior Lecturer may apply for Graduate Faculty status for a three-year term subject to the criteria in Section B1. The three-year term is renewable contingent upon continued adjunct status.

E. Ex Officio Research and Scholarship-based or Practitioner-Based Appointments

Presidents, Provosts, and Deans as Academic Administrative Officers who are not already Research and Scholarship-based or Practitioner-based Members shall be Ex-Officio Members of the Graduate Faculty.

F. Graduate Faculty Membership Responsibilities and Privileges

Responsibilities

Members of the Graduate Faculty shall uphold the core canons of University policy, *Our Common Ground* shared values, and a commitment to the inclusive mentoring and the holistic wellbeing of all students. Members of the Graduate Faculty are expected to teach graduate students effectively, and in a professionally appropriate manner, and to direct the research/professional development of graduate students so that they progress toward degree completion in a timely manner appropriate to the field.

Privileges

1. Any member of the Graduate Faculty may serve among the minimum number of members of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation committee that are required to have Graduate Faculty status.
2. Only a Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty
 - a. shall serve as a graduate program director/coordinator (required faculty leader of the program) appropriate to their discipline;
 - b. shall be the primary advisor for a master's thesis or a doctoral dissertation;
 - c. may, for up to one year after leaving the institution, and with the permission of the Dean of the Graduate College and the Graduate Program Director, continue to serve as the primary Advisor for a current doctoral dissertation or master's thesis. They may continue to serve as a primary Co-Advisor with a Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty serving as Co-Advisor until that student has completed their degree.

3. Only a Regular or Emeritus Member of the Graduate Faculty
 - a. shall be entitled to one vote on all matters presented to the Graduate Faculty;
 - b. shall serve as the Chair of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation defense committee.
4. An Emeritus Member of the Graduate Faculty may continue to serve for up to one year as the primary Advisor for a doctoral dissertation or master's thesis initiated while still a Regular Member. After that period, the Emeritus Member may continue to serve as a primary Co-Advisor with a Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty serving as Co-Advisor until that student has completed their degree.
5. An Adjunct or Emeritus Member of the Graduate Faculty may, with permission of the Graduate Program Director, serve as the primary Co-Advisor for a doctoral dissertation or master's thesis in conjunction with a Co-Advisor who is a Regular Member of the Graduate Faculty.

G. Revocation of Graduate Faculty Status

The Graduate Faculty status of a member of Graduate Faculty may be revoked if that member fails to meet any or all of the expectations outlined above. Beyond the periodic program review process for Regular Graduate Faculty, and the reappointment process for Adjunct and Emeriti Faculty, outlined above, the Dean of the Graduate College may revoke Graduate Faculty status if a member of the Graduate Faculty fails to fulfill the responsibilities of a member of the Graduate Faculty to teach graduate students effectively, and in a professionally appropriate manner, and to direct the research/professional development of graduate students so that they progress toward graduation in a timely manner appropriate to the field. Failure to teach graduate students effectively and/or to direct the research and professional development of graduate students also includes, but is not limited to, abuse of power, intimidation, and any acts covered by the University's Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy, its Amorous Relationships with Students Policy, or its Misconduct of Research Policy.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

The officers of the Graduate College shall be the Dean of the Graduate College and the Associate and Assistant Dean(s). The Dean shall preside at all meetings of the Graduate College and the Graduate Faculty. The Dean shall designate an Associate Dean to preside in their absence.

ARTICLE IV: THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Membership

The Executive Committee represents the breadth of professional leadership and diverse perspectives on the University's graduate endeavor from both graduate faculty and students.

The voting members of the Executive Committee of the Graduate College shall consist of the Dean of the Graduate College, who shall serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Associate and Assistant Dean(s), Research and Scholarship-based or Practitioner-based members of the Graduate Faculty, and graduate students.

The majority of the Executive Committee membership constitutes a quorum.

The Graduate Faculty of each of the following eight stand-alone Colleges and Schools of the University of Vermont shall elect one member to the Executive Committee: the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arts and Sciences, Education and Social Services, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, and Nursing and Health Sciences, the Larner College of Medicine, the Grossman School of Business, and the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources.

The Dean of the Graduate College shall consider appointing additional Regular Research and Scholarship-based or Practitioner-Based members of the Graduate Faculty to help ensure the Committee represents the breadth of the University's evolving graduate endeavor, considering the size of enrolled student populations and the diversity of degree types, disciplinary domains, and interdisciplinary graduate training spaces across Colleges and Schools.

Based upon nominations submitted by the Graduate Student Senate, the Dean of the Graduate College shall appoint one graduate student member to represent each of the eight above-named stand-alone Colleges and Schools of the University of Vermont, and one graduate student member to represent cross-collegiate, interdisciplinary graduate programs housed in the Graduate College, as equal voting members of the Executive Committee.

The Registrar's Office shall have standing, non-voting representation on the Executive Committee.

Additional members of the Senior Leadership Team of the Graduate College shall attend the Executive Committee as non-voting support staff.

The Executive Committee may invite non-members to attend at its discretion, e.g., Deans and/or lead faculty to present proposals for the modification, creation, or termination of graduate programs, or postdoctoral scholars to discuss matters pertinent to that community.

The Dean shall annually appoint a Recording Secretary who shall be responsible for recording minutes of the proceedings of the Executive Committee and the Graduate Faculty meetings; the recording secretary shall not be a voting member of the Executive Committee.

Appointed and elected faculty members of the Executive Committee shall serve for three years. A member who has served three years shall be eligible for reelection or reappointment for a consecutive term. After two consecutive terms, the member must wait one year before serving another term. A faculty member may take leave from the Executive Committee before the end of their three-year term. In the case of an elected member, if the leave does not exceed one academic year and does not represent the final year of the member's term, the Dean of that College and the member shall agree upon another member of the Graduate Faculty as a substitute; in the case of an appointed member, the Dean of the Graduate College shall name the substitute. For a leave period that exceeds one year or represents the final year of the member's term, a new representative shall be elected by the unit that had elected the member on leave or, in the case of an appointed member, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College, to serve a full three-year term.

Graduate student members of the Executive Committee shall serve once-renewable terms of one year for Master's students and two years for doctoral students.

ARTICLE V: DUTIES AND OPERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. Duties of the Executive Committee

Review, evaluate, and make recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate College concerning proposals for the creation, modification, or termination of graduate degree and certificate programs.

Confer on the establishment and alteration of policies relating to graduate study and bring recommendations for action to the Graduate Faculty.

Monitor the assessment and evaluation of graduate and post-bac professional education throughout the university, including by requesting and reviewing periodic reports on the current status of all graduate degree and certificate programs (e.g., enrollment, program ranking, graduate outcomes, specialized accreditation) and, as necessary, to conduct its own review of such programs.

Periodically advise the Dean of the Graduate College on the appropriate portfolios and balance of discipline-based and interdisciplinary graduate and post-bac professional degree and certificate programs being offered by the University as a whole, as well as on national and global trends in graduate education.

On a regular basis, report its actions to the Graduate Faculty. Any action of the Executive Committee may, upon appeal by a motion introduced at a meeting of the Graduate Faculty, be referred to the Faculty for final decision.

B. Operations

1. The Dean of the Graduate College as Chair of the Executive Committee may create Sub-Committees to deliberate on specific areas within the general remit of the Executive Committee and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
2. The Graduate Faculty, the Executive Committee, or the Dean of the Graduate College may create *ad hoc* committees for the purpose of studying specific problems and preparing proposals thereto. These committees shall be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College and shall terminate when their assignment is complete.

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

The Graduate Faculty shall meet at least twice during each academic year. Those present at a duly called meeting constitute a quorum.

The Dean of the Graduate College shall prepare the agenda for each meeting from proposals submitted by faculty members, the Executive Committee, and administrative officials. Items presented in the form of a petition signed by five percent of the Graduate Faculty membership shall be included on the agenda.

The agenda of each regular Graduate Faculty meeting shall be distributed to the faculty membership at least one week preceding the meeting. Adoption of a resolution shall require a majority vote of the faculty attending a given Graduate Faculty meeting. If five or more voting members request an electronic referendum, the resolution shall be voted upon by electronic ballot by the Graduate Faculty. The resolution shall be considered adopted if a simple majority of those responding favor it.

Motions to appeal an action of the Executive Committee shall require a majority vote of the faculty attending the Graduate Faculty meeting. The decision of the faculty attending the meeting shall prevail unless one voting member present at the meeting requests an electronic referendum. In the case of an electronic referendum, every regular and emeritus member of the Graduate Faculty shall be allowed at least one week to respond. The resolution shall be considered adopted if the majority of the referendum responses favor it.

Special meetings may be called by petition signed by five percent of the Graduate Faculty. Matters for which the one-week notice has not been provided shall not be acted upon until the following Graduate Faculty meeting. This shall apply to the agenda of special meetings.

The Graduate Faculty meeting shall be governed by the rules contained in the Robert's Rules of Order, Latest Edition, and such other special rules as the faculty shall adopt. In cases of any inconsistencies or differences, the Constitution and those special rules established by the Graduate Faculty shall take precedence.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution shall be presented for discussion at a duly called Graduate Faculty meeting. At least one week prior to the meeting, electronic notice of the substance of the amendment shall be sent to the Graduate Faculty. Subsequently, the amendment shall be approved by two thirds of those responding to an electronic ballot.

Approved 3/17/1953

Amended 12/17/1963, 10/01/70, 5/09/80, 9/17/87, 2/24/92, 1/16/2009, 5/2/2013, 4/3/2014, 11/24/2015, 5/10/2019, 11/30/2020, 11/26/2021, 11/28/2022. 11/29/2023.