



To: Graduate Studies Committee

From: Tammy D. Barry 
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education

Date: March 1, 2024

RE: Request for updates to the Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual

The Graduate School requests consideration of three changes to the Policies and Procedures Manual as described below.

1. Chapter 9 – Graduate Assistantships

The recent ratification of the [WSU UAW Contract](#) requires major revisions to [Chapter 9 - Graduate Assistantships](#) as well as some minor changes to other sections in relation to graduate assistantships in the Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual. These revisions must have an effective date of August 16, 2024. A joint Human Resource Services – Labor Relations – Graduate School group will begin revising Chapter 9 in mid-March 2024. Given the time required to make these revisions and the legal requirements for contract implementation, we ask permission to forgo the standard Faculty Senate review process. As an alternative, we request one-time permission to seek direct approval from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee this summer once Chapter 9 and related revisions are ready.

2. Adjusting the Policies and Procedures Manual to reflect recent changes to the Faculty Manual

Prior to February 1, 2024, the WSU Faculty Manual restricted short-term adjunct faculty to only serving on graduate student advisory committees, whereas short-term adjoint faculty were allowed to co-chair such committees. Changes to section I.B.1.d in the Faculty Manual now allow short-term faculty eligibility for participation on graduate student advisory committees to be determined by the graduate program bylaws and the vice provost for graduate and professional education. The relevant passage from the updated faculty manual states:

Short-term faculty may hold one-semester to three (3) year fixed-term or contingent contracts (defined in I.B.1.c.(1)). The equivalent of a master's degree or higher is normally required. Alternative credentials will be approved in consultation with unit faculty, by the administrative head and chancellor, and ultimately by the provost. Voting rights within a unit are determined by the unit bylaws. Eligibility for participation in graduate education is determined by the program's graduate bylaws, the Graduate Policies and Procedures, and the vice provost for graduate and professional education.

To address this change, the Graduate School requests the Graduate Studies Committee approve minor changes to the Policies and Procedures Manual as follows.

Revised Chapter 1 D.2.d.iii

The duties of members of the Auxiliary Graduate Faculty include approving programs of study leading to advanced degrees, serving on and co-chairing graduate advisory committees, and performing other duties related to graduate education.

Current Section Chapter 1 D.2.d.iii

The duties of members of the Auxiliary Graduate Faculty will be to approve the programs of study leading to advanced degrees, to serve on students' graduate advisory committees, and to perform other duties related to graduate education. Also, according to section I.B.1.d.4 of the Faculty Manual, adjunct faculty are permitted to co-chair graduate advisory committees.

Revised Table in Chapter 2, Section D.2.e

Membership and Roles of the Faculty of the Graduate School								
						Allowed Committee Roles ¹		
	<i>Appointment</i>	<i>Ranks</i>	<i>Initial Nomination</i> ²	<i>Term</i>	<i>Renewal Nomination</i>	<i>Chair</i>	<i>Co-chair</i>	<i>Serve</i>
Auxiliary Graduate Faculty	Short-term Track	Adjoint ³	By chair or director	Three years	Renewed every three years, nomination by chair or director		✓	✓
Auxiliary Graduate Faculty	Short-term Track	Adjunct ³	By chair or director	Three years	Renewed every three years, nomination by chair or director		✓	✓

³ The *Faculty Manual* defines adjoint and adjunct faculty participation on graduate student committees in section I.B.1.d-4

3. Simplifying Graduate Program Responsibility Statements

The Graduate School requests simplifying the definitions in section 1.D.2 Graduate Program Participants to standardize terminology around roles with actual practice. The goal is to align language in the Policies and Procedures Manual while providing program flexibility. Specifically, the Graduate Program Director role is often delegated from the department chair or school director, whereas the responsibilities of the Graduate Program Coordinator frequently overlap with either the Graduate Program Director or the Graduate Academic Coordinator. As such, it was difficult to discern the specific role of a Graduate Program Coordinator by title alone. Updating the language to capture these specifics in titles for purposes of the Graduate School both streamlines these program roles and matches common structures.

Requested Language

a. Responsibilities of the Graduate Program Director (GPD)

The Graduate Program Director is a faculty member who provides overall academic and administrative leadership for the graduate program. Key responsibilities include overseeing the development of program policies and curricula, recruiting and admitting students, advising graduate students, overseeing program assessment, coordinating graduate activities within the program, representing the program's interests to university leadership, and presiding over graduate faculty meetings. The GPD is also typically delegated

signatory authority on admission decisions, program changes, and graduate student paperwork by the department chair or school director. Due to this scope, the GPD may additionally hold a position as the associate chair or associate director of graduate studies. Upon student entry, the GPD and graduate program committee provide interim advising until permanent advisor assignments.

b. Responsibilities of the Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC)

The Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC) is commonly a staff position supporting the Graduate Program Director in administering the program. Essential functions include assisting faculty with recruitment, admissions, assessment, curriculum updates, tracking student progress, and guiding students on policies and requirements. The GAC manages daily activities, record keeping, and Graduate School coordination to facilitate operations. The GAC enables the Graduate Program Director to focus on academic leadership by handling crucial administrative work. The Graduate Program Director may also fulfill the GAC role in smaller units.

Current Language

a. Responsibilities of the Graduate Program Director

The director of a graduate program is expected to provide overall academic leadership, develop and implement program policies, represent the interests of the program to the campus and university administrators, and call and preside at meetings of the program faculty. In many programs, the director will be the chair of the department to which the majority of the faculty belong. However, this is not required. When the department chair is also the graduate program director, specific responsibilities may be delegated to a faculty member designated as the Graduate Program Coordinator.

b. Responsibilities of the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC)

The Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) recruits, admits, and advises students in the graduate program. In addition, the GPC will serve as interim advisor to new graduate students in the program. The GPC should be a member of the program's graduate program faculty and a WSU employee and is the official representative of the academic unit that offers the graduate program. The GPC maintains familiarity with the policies and procedures of the Graduate School and provides overall coordination of graduate activities within the program. In addition, the GPC generally has the departmental signature authority for recommendations for admissions, and changes to programs of study, advisory committees, and majors. The director of the program may also serve as the GPC.

c. Responsibilities of the Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC)

The Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC) typically is a staff position that assists the department chair, director of the program, GPC, and program faculty with the administration of the graduate program, including recruitment, admissions, and academic implementation. The GAC provides support by ensuring that Graduate School and departmental policies and procedures are followed, assisting with graduate student recruitment, coordinating daily activities and information with the Graduate School, and processing forms and maintaining student records in the Graduate Research Management (GRM) module within myWSU. The academic coordinator often supports graduate students by providing information and guidance on program requirements and deadlines. In smaller units, the GPC may also fill the responsibilities of the GAC.