

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

POLICY NUMBER – ACAF 6.01

POLICY TITLE – GRADUATE FACULTY SELECTION AND EVALUATION POLICY

SCOPE OF POLICY – USC UPSTATE

DATE OF REVISION – SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER - PROVOST

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE – OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Graduate Faculty Selection and Evaluation Policy is to ensure that faculty teaching graduate courses are held to a standard appropriate for graduate level instruction.

DEFINITIONS

- Graduate Faculty – Tenured/tenure track faculty approved to teach at the graduate level.
- Graduate Instructor - Instructors approved to teach at the graduate level.
- Adjunct Graduate Faculty - Adjunct faculty approved to teach at the graduate level.

POLICY STATEMENT

Graduate Faculty Selection Criteria

For appointment to teach at the graduate level, the following minimum criteria must be met:

- Possession of appropriate terminal degree in his/her field. The requirement that candidates hold the terminal degree may be waived for Graduate Instructors or Adjunct Faculty members in cases where individuals have made extraordinary contributions in scholarship, creativity and/or their profession. Documentation must be provided through completion and approval of a Faculty Justification Form for each graduate course taught.
- Evidence of recent creative or scholarly productivity consistent with unit criteria

PROCEDURES

To be considered for an appointment to teach a USC Upstate graduate course, a candidate must be recommended in writing by the dean and the department chair (in colleges with departments) who will forward the recommendation to the SACSCOC Institutional Accreditation Liaison to certify they meet SACSCOC qualifications. See Graduate Faculty Appointment Form. Faculty can be appointed to one of the following statuses:

Graduate Faculty

Graduate Faculty members advise graduate students, teach graduate courses, compose appropriate items for and evaluate Master's comprehensive examinations, chair thesis committees, direct research projects, and participate in graduate program development, revision, and accreditation processes.

Graduate Instructor Status

Graduate Instructors advise graduate students, teach graduate courses, compose appropriate items for and evaluate Master's comprehensive examinations, serve on thesis committees, direct research projects, and participate in graduate program development, revision, and accreditation processes.

Adjunct Graduate Faculty Status

Adjunct faculty members teaching in graduate programs are expected to meet the same faculty qualifications as Graduate Faculty or Graduate Instructor. They may be expected to serve on thesis committees, direct independent studies, assist in program development and revision and accreditation processes.

Appeal Process

Faculty members who feel they have been inappropriately denied the opportunity to teach at the graduate level may appeal to the appropriate Dean for reconsideration. If satisfaction is not attained, the faculty member may appeal to the Graduate Committee. If still not satisfied, the faculty member can pursue the matter through the grievance process as specified in the Faculty Manual.

Graduate Faculty Evaluation Criteria

Faculty members teaching at the graduate level are expected to demonstrate a high level of competence in teaching and scholarship. Continued professional development is essential for this to occur. It is expected that individual faculty members take the initiative, supported by the University, in promoting and enhancing their own growth as teachers, scholars, practitioners and professionals. Faculty members should consider, among other strategies, taking additional graduate work in the discipline, attending professional meetings and in-service training, and writing and presenting scholarly works in their fields. Graduate faculty members are evaluated on the basis of the administrative review process and criteria used for other faculty members at USC Upstate. Graduate faculty members are expected to maintain a "Highly Effective" or higher rating in two of the three criteria of annual review -- teaching effectiveness and scholarly and creative activity. For tenured faculty members, the most recent annual review will be utilized for this purpose. Loss of Graduate Faculty status may result from a rating of "Effective" or less on any of those two annual review criteria. Faculty members who have lost Graduate Faculty status and wish to appeal may do so in accordance with procedures outlined in the Faculty Manual.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE, AND FEDERAL POLICIES

- [SACSCOC Guidelines on Faculty Credentials](#)
- [USC Upstate Faculty Manual](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

- December 10, 2021 – Update to make current
- September 26, 2024 – Renumbered due to Columbia duplication